



NWT Youth Forum 2007

February 1-2, Yellowknife



Youth Forum 2007

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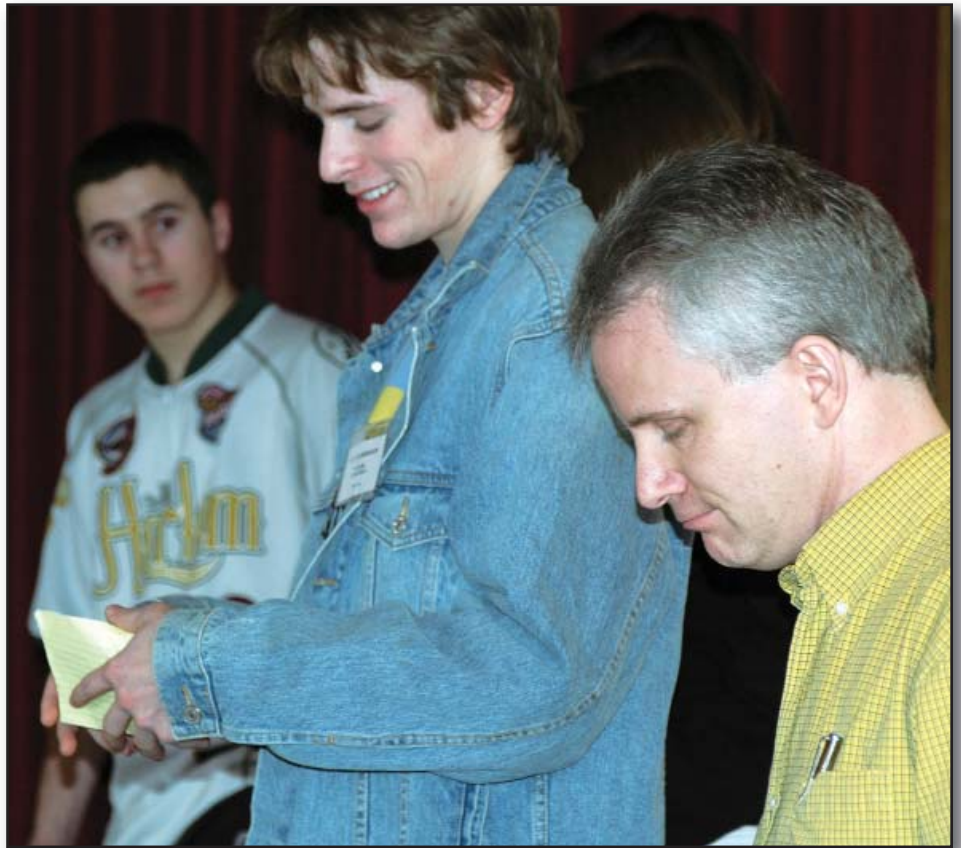
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Executive Summary

In late 2006, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs through Sport, Recreation, Youth and Volunteerism began to recruit Youth Ambassadors for the 2007 Canada Winter Games. The selection process involved bringing together 29 youth leaders, ages 15 to 20, from 26 NWT communities. To prepare the youth ambassadors for the Canada Winter Games, Sport, Recreation, Youth & Volunteerism brought the newly selected ambassadors to Yellowknife from February 1 – 4, 2007 for an ambassador orientation workshop and a youth forum.

As part of the Youth Forum, a facilitated consultation session was held on the morning of February 2, 2007 at the Explorer Hotel. The previous work of the youth involved in the Northern Strategy consultation workshop was reviewed. The participants were encouraged to put forward their own individual suggestions or areas of concern that would be presented to the Minister of Youth. The suggestions were each discussed to ensure all the participants understood their meaning and the relevance to the youth of the NWT. The participants then voted on the suggestions to establish priorities for a subsequent brainstorming session.



Facilitators grouped the 20 suggestions and areas of concern for youth into five broad categories: sport & recreation, employment, global warming, alcohol & drug abuse and cultural programs. The participants were broken into two brainstorming groups which resulted in the generation of 32 recommendations.

A lunch for the Youth Forum was hosted by Minister for Youth, Michael McLeod, at the Prince of Wales Heritage Café. Following the lunch, the participants presented the top five categories along with the 32 recommendations to the Minister. Following the presentation, the floor was opened up to the participants to ask the Minister their own questions on the issues relating to youth in the NWT.

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Youth Feedback & Recommendations

The promotion and enhancement of youth sport and recreation programs, facilities and equipment.

- More equipment to support and enhance sports and recreation programs.
- More direct support for cross country skiing sport activities such as more equipment for youth, trail setting and coaches, etc.
- More direct support to soccer in the NWT, such as field development and maintenance, nets, balls, etc.
- Increased funding from the Government of the NWT (GNWT) to the communities and youth groups for new facilities, equipment, and transportation for youth to travel to sporting events in other communities.
- Expansion and enhancement of youth facilities and their programs, such as wireless internet access, addition of pool, hockey and foosball tables, basketball courts and better canteens.
- New sport equipment for all schools in the NWT regardless of their size and location.
- Development of better sport and recreation facilities in smaller communities to equal what is available in the larger centers.
- New locations for sporting events and trials such as the smaller communities verses the larger centers.
- Create more sporting events in the NWT (beyond existing programs) to get more youth involved in physical activities and fitness.
- Enhancement of existing sport and recreation programs to create more opportunities for youth in smaller communities to participate in the Arctic Winter Games.



Creation and enhancement of employment opportunities in the North for youth (both in and out of high school).



- Creation of more youth related employment opportunities.
- Summer employment opportunities within the GNWT to include all youth not just post-secondary students returning from school.
- Increase youth employment opportunities within the trades in all northern communities.
- More facilities in the communities to train youth for employment.
- Providing safety training to youth for employment opportunities in the same manner as adult pre-employment programs.
- Increased on-the-job training and work experience programs for youth.

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Addressing global warming in the NWT.

- Providing free recycling bins to encourage community recycling programs.
- Establishment of recycling programs and depots in all NWT communities.
- Promotion of energy efficient vehicles to reduce air pollution.
- Putting pressure through regulations and surcharges on the major contributors to global warming.
- Involvement of youth in the regulatory and approval process for the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline.
- Create awareness programs in NWT schools on the extent of global warming, how to reduce it and the best way to protect our northern environment.

Youth Feedback

"I thought it was really good and informative. People don't always get a chance to do this, and I am so happy to have participated in this session. I think more people should be aware of NWT problems and face them, rather than just ignoring them."

- Robyn Wedzin-Quitte, Behchoko

Prevention of alcohol and drug use/abuse and pregnancies in youth.

- Encouragement of proper moral behavior and promotion of moral values amongst youth.
- Development of realistic school curriculum that teaches the dangers and negative impacts (including consequences) of alcohol and drug use/abuse and pregnancies in youth.
- Development of programs that promote and encourage self-esteem in youth.
- Expansion and enhancement of programs, services and support for teen mothers and youth involved in alcohol and drug use/abuse.
- Creation of safe houses for youth.



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Expansion of "On the Land" and cultural programs in NWT schools to promote traditional lifestyles.

- Focus on the programming that emphasizes "bringing back" culture into the lives of youth.
- Offer more and expanded "On the Land" programs for youth.
- Fund equipment and teaching resources to present "On the Land" programs for youth.
- Make resources available for language programming to prevent the loss of aboriginal languages in youth.
- Involves elders in the design and delivery of "On the Land" and cultural programs in schools.



Youth Feedback

"I thought that the presentation by the NWT youth ambassadors was well planned and executed due to the 2005 workshop conducted beforehand. Speaking directly to government about the issues affecting my community and myself was a chance that I will never forget. It seemed that somebody was actually listening for once and not just trying to avoid the question. I think that the government should hold workshops like this one conducted more often. Brainstorming with a large group allowed me to consider important issues and solutions I had not previously considered."

- *Bhreagh Ingarfield, Nahanni Butte*

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Background

Based on the success of the youth consultation process for the Northern Strategy in April 2005, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs through Sport, Recreation, Youth and Volunteerism included a Youth Forum in the Youth Ambassadors 2007 Canada Winter Games Orientation Program. The Youth Ambassador Orientation Program would bring together 29 youth leaders, ages 15 to 20, from 26 NWT communities.

The event represented an excellent opportunity for the Minister for Youth to consult with youth from across the Northwest Territories. It would allow the Minister to hear the voices of the NWT's youth and to seek their views on the issues affecting northern youth. As with the Northern Strategy consultation process, the Youth Forum would allow the Youth Ambassadors to present their suggestions, concerns and recommendations to the Minister for Youth. The participants would also be given the opportunity to ask questions of their choice directly to the Minister.



The objectives of the Youth Ambassadors Winter Games Orientation and Youth Forum were:

- To facilitate discussion on issues important to youth in the NWT and then provide these youth with an opportunity to present them to the Minister Responsible for Youth.
- To provide a complete orientation to the Youth Ambassadors on the 2007 Canada Winter Games including the expectations and responsibilities of each participant.
- To have the Youth Ambassadors complete the NWT Tourism Hospitality Training Workshop.
- To seek input from the Youth Ambassadors on the GNWT Youth Website, its name and the proposed marketing plan.



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Selection of Youth

To recruit the participants as Youth Ambassadors for the 2007 Canada Winter Games and as participants in the Youth Forum, a letter was sent to all NWT communities. The letter, which outlined the objectives of the Youth Ambassador Program and the Youth Forum, was signed by the Minister of Youth and it invited the communities to nominate youth for this once in a life time opportunity.

The nomination criteria for the Youth Ambassadors included the following criteria:

- Ability to attend the 2007 Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse and function as a Youth Ambassador from the NWT.
- Parental permission.
- Recommendations from a nominating organization or individual that confirmed that the youth being nominated was a valid candidate to be a Youth Ambassador and would represent the NWT in a professional manner during the 2007 Canada Winter Games.



The youth demonstrated a balance of interests in his/her community and in his/her personal life (sport involvement, academic achievements, volunteer activities, etc.)

A selection committee from Municipal and Community Affairs reviewed the nominated youths against the criteria. Additionally, the selection committee assessed the nominations to ensure there was effective representation from across the NWT.

The committee further selected the workshop representatives using the following criteria:

- Representation from each region of the NWT;
- Demographic mix similar to the NWT population;
- Equitable female and male representation; and
- Review of the written recommendations received from the nominating organizations or individuals.

The selection committee chose 29 youth participants from 26 NWT communities to become Youth Ambassadors for the 2007 Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse, Yukon, from February 23 to March 11, and to participate in the Youth Forum in Yellowknife on February 2, 2007.

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List of Participants

NAME	AGE	SEX	COMMUNITY
Janeta Pascal	17	F	Aklavik
Robyn Wedzin-Quitte	16	F	Behchoko
Kyle Tutcho	16	M	Colville Lake
Carla Kenny	16	F	Deline
Harley Andre	17	M	Deline
Sheena Sangris	19	F	Dettah
Debra Lori Richards	15	F	Enterprise
Carol Ross	19	F	Fort Good Hope
Jonathon McLeod	17	M	Fort Liard
Bobbi Rose Koe	17	F	Fort McPherson
Murina Sabourin	16	F	Fort Providence
Robyn Balsillie	16	F	Fort Resolution
Skyler Tanche-Villeneuve	17	M	Fort Simpson
Amanda Bradbury	16	F	Fort Simpson
Delaney Poitras	16	F	Fort Smith
Stephanie Kimble	17	F	Hay River
Riley Boden	17	M	Hay River
Carla Norn	19	F	Hay River Reserve
Tanya Snowshoe	16	F	Inuvik
Mathew Gauthier	16	M	Jean Marie River
Bhreagh Ingarfield	15	F	Nahanni Butte
Chelsea Goulet	17	F	N'Dilo
Myles Erb	16	M	Norman Wells
Jerrita Rose Mabel Thrasher	17	F	Paulatuk
Andrea Keogak	20	F	Sachs Harbour
Virginia Kotokak	16	F	Tuktoyaktuk
Laura Krutko	16	F	Tulita
Joshua Baton	17	M	Wrigley
Laura McLeod	17	F	Yellowknife



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Consultation Process

A facilitated consultation session was held with the Youth Ambassadors on the morning of February 2, 2007, at the Explorer Hotel in Yellowknife. The previous work of the Northern Strategy consultation workshop from April 2005 was reviewed with the participants.

The session with the youth followed the "workshop" method and the following activities were used in the process:

- The participants were encouraged to present their own individual suggestions or areas of concern that would be presented to the Minister of Youth.
- Each suggestion was discussed to ensure all the participants understood its meaning and its relevance to the youth of the NWT.
- The suggestions were written onto large pieces of paper and posted onto the walls for the participants to view.
- Each participant was given two votes to help in deciding the priority of the suggestions and concerns for the brainstorming session.
- The voting was emphasized as an important process in determining the priorities to present to the Minister of Youth.
- Once the discussion was finished, the youth then voted on the suggestions or areas of concern posted on the walls.



Facilitators took the 20 suggestions and areas of concerns for the youth participants and grouped them into five broad categories based on their voted priority:

- The promotion and enhancement of youth sport and recreation programs, facilities and equipment.
- Creation and enhancement of employment opportunities in the North for youth (both in and out of high school).
- Addressing global warming in the NWT.
- Prevention of alcohol and drug use/abuse and pregnancies in youth.
- Expansion of "On the Land" and cultural programs in NWT schools to promote traditional lifestyles.

The participants were broken into two brainstorming groups to generate recommendations for the five categories. The group work resulted in the creation of 32 recommendations for presentation to the Minister of Youth.

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Presentation to the Minister of Youth

Following the morning session of the Youth Forum, a lunch was hosted by the Minister for Youth, Michael McLeod at the Prince of Wales Heritage Café. Also in attendance for the lunch was Debbie DeLancey, Deputy Minister for Municipal and Community Affairs, and Ian Legaree, Director of Sport, Recreation, Youth and Volunteerism.

After the hosted lunch, four of the youth participants, who were selected by their peers, presented the outcomes of the consultation and brainstorming sessions to the Minister of Youth along with Ms. DeLancey and Mr. Legaree.

The four selected Youth Ambassadors overviewed the five main categories and presented the 32 recommendations obtained through the morning session of the Youth Forum.

Following the presentation, the floor was opened up to the Youth Ambassadors to ask the Minister questions on issues related to youth in the NWT. The questions were generated by the participants as this

segment of the forum was created to allow youth the opportunity to directly speak to the Minister on the issues that were of importance to them and their communities.

Youth Feedback

"I'd have to say I was very pleased that the youth minister was interested and concerned with the problems we had and the thoughts that we gave him and I was very pleased with that he plans to take action and respond to our thoughts. And it was a very good opportunity to hear what has happened in other communities."

- Riley Boden, Hay River

Some of the questions presented to the Minister of Youth were:

- Accessing funding for youth programs through the GNWT.
- How can funding be allocated directly to youth groups.
- Lack of community or adult guidance and participation in youth programs.
- The lack of youth facilities in the communities.
- Drug and alcohol issues affecting youth and their families.
- Environmental concerns caused by global warming and what the GNWT is doing to reduce it.
- Concerns about the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Project and how youth can be part of the approval process.
- Eligibility for youth to vote in NWT elections.
- Improving youth employment in the NWT.
- Increasing youth access to training in the trades.
- Concerns around youth being left out of GNWT programs because of race.
- How youth can directly contact the Minister of Youth.
- Promoting "On the Land" and cultural educational programs within schools and communities.



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Workshop Outcomes

The Workshop generated 20 areas of concern from the youth participants which were grouped to five broad categories. The participants through group work brainstormed recommendations to address the five categories. This process generated 32 recommendations for the Minister of Youth

The Youth Forum provided a three pronged approach for youth and the GNWT. First, it accomplished the goal of providing a Youth Forum to allow the GNWT to reinforce its commitment to maintaining an active and positive consultation process with youth. Secondly, the Youth Forum provided the Minister of Youth with the information necessary for the evaluation and enhancement of youth programming in the NWT. Finally, the Youth Forum allowed youth leaders from the 26 communities around the NWT to directly communicate with the Minister of the Youth and the GNWT on the issues that were important to them.

The Youth Forum provided feedback to the GNWT on the following areas critical to youth:

- What is important to youth?
- The challenges that youth feel they face in their communities.
- How youth see their futures.
- Frameworks for future consultation forums with youth.
- The direction and priorities for GNWT youth programming.
- The importance of continuing youth forums.
- How the GNWT programs directly benefit youth in the North.

Youth Feedback

"The youth forum was full of information and I liked the fact that the most important issues were addressed and presented. Although we didn't have much time to prepare I felt that everything ran smoothly. Again these concerns were also brought up in community gatherings and community meetings. It was very much like the 2005 Northern Youth Strategy workshop that I attended. I feel that there has been movement during that time and I hope that there will be more progress after this last forum. "

-Jerrita Rose Mabel Thrasher, Paulatuk

Workshop Observations

The Youth Forum proved to be an important process in obtaining consultation from youth on issues that affect them and what solutions they perceive to the issues.

The forum, also provides the GNWT with the feedback on the effectiveness, expectations and perceptions of the youth programs it delivers. The Youth Forum reinforced the importance of maintaining an effective consultation process with youth and the benefits of allowing youth to directly communicate to the Minister for Youth and the GNWT.

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Several lessons were learned and reinforced on the process of consulting with youth through the Youth Forum:

- Continue to maintain the consultation process with youth as it has multiple benefits for the GNWT. As with the Northern Strategy consultation process, the participants felt positive about the Youth Forum and openly stated their appreciation that the GNWT was willing to listen to the needs and the concerns of youth.
- The selection criteria created for the Youth Ambassadors be used for future Youth Forums as the caliber of youth participants was high and this was reflected in the 32 recommendations that were generated along with the questions presented to the Minister of Youth.
- The Youth Forum should be over a full one day period to allow for a full and complete consultation process.
- The development of the GNWT's youth web site will be a beneficial tool in allowing the GNWT to communicate and share program information with youth.

As was learned with the Northern Strategy consultation workshop, the focus to the Youth Forum is that communicating and consulting directly with youth in a formal process about their communities, education, needs, concerns and futures, is a critical component for the GNWT to be successful in developing and maintaining effective youth programs.



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Youth Feedback

RANKING	YOUTH CONSULTATION	SUMMARY COMMENTS
10	More recreational infrastructure in the communities	<p>Increasing the recreational infrastructure in the smaller communities will enhance and expand recreational opportunities for youth.</p> <p>Recreation for youth was seen by the participants as an essential component for promoting healthy and positive lifestyles.</p> <p>Recreational infrastructure included keeping facilities current and repaired and upgrading existing buildings to meet new program requirements.</p>
9	Increased job opportunities for youth in NWT communities	<p>Many youth do not have the opportunities to work part-time or during the summer months.</p> <p>Many of the jobs are given to returning post-secondary students which eliminates summer employment opportunities in the communities.</p> <p>Increased employment opportunities allow youth to explore future careers and reduces youth involvement in unproductive behaviors such substance abuse, crime, etc.</p>
8	Global warming issues in the NWT	<p>The participants felt that global warming was a major issue facing the residents of the North and the Government of the NWT.</p> <p>Discussion ranged from better environmental control of northern industries, recycling and the impact of the proposed pipeline.</p> <p>One participant discussed how the climate was changing in her northern community and how it was altering traditional ways of life.</p>

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RANKING	YOUTH CONSULTATION	SUMMARY COMMENTS
6	Alcohol and drug abuse amongst youth	<p>All the participants felt that youth and the issues of drugs and alcohol was a consistent problem in all NWT communities.</p> <p>One participant related how alcohol and drug use by his brothers and sisters was forever altering his family.</p>
6	Enhanced and expanded "On the Land" programs	<p>More and expanded programming for youth to be available through schools, which includes delivery by elders.</p> <p>The participants felt that many of the existing programs were too few and did not increase the skills of youth to be on and live off the land.</p> <p>On the land programs to include an emphasis on traditional knowledge and subsistence skills such as hunting, fishing, trapping, etc.</p>
4	Not enough youth conferences	<p>The participants identified that youth conferences or forums were an excellent tool to allow youth to discuss current issues.</p> <p>Youth from the different NWT communities coming together and sharing in the conferences and forums was seen as a very positive experience.</p>
4	Expanded promotion of healthy lifestyles and practices for youth	<p>Expanded programming that targets health promotion through positive lifestyles for youth.</p> <p>Suggestions included smoking cessation, physical fitness and healthy eating.</p> <p>Concern was expressed over the expense of healthy foods in isolated communities making the more readily available "junk" food cheaper and easier to purchase.</p>

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RANKING	YOUTH CONSULTATION	SUMMARY COMMENTS
4	Moving sports tryouts to the smaller communities rather than major NWT centers	<p>Many of the sporting events and tryouts are being held in the larger communities such as Yellowknife.</p> <p>Moving these sporting events to the smaller communities will allow youth to see and experience the North.</p>
4	More recreational programs for youth	<p>The participants wanted more recreational programs available for youth in the communities.</p> <p>Many felt that active recreational programs were a key element in keeping youth drug and alcohol free.</p> <p>Some communities have limited programs and the recreational opportunities for youth are not equal or consistent between NWT communities.</p>
1	More tobacco prevention programs	<p>Current tobacco and anti-smoking prevention programs were viewed as not being effective in reducing youth exposure to and the use of cigarettes and other tobacco products.</p>
1	More teen pregnancy prevention and awareness programs	<p>Current teen pregnancy awareness and prevention programs are viewed as not being effective.</p> <p>Newer programs with messaging that youth can relate to was seen as being needed to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies being experienced in the North.</p>
1	Existing sporting and recreation equipment needs to be better maintained and updated	<p>Many communities have sports equipment that is outdated and in need of repair.</p> <p>The existing equipment negatively impacts the quality of community recreation and sports programs for youth.</p>

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RANKING	YOUTH CONSULTATION	SUMMARY COMMENTS
1	Absence of high school programs that educate youth and promote post-secondary options	<p>Existing education programs were not adequate in promoting post-secondary options to youth.</p> <p>Schools and educators should increase the promotion of post-secondary learning opportunities to increase graduation from high schools and access to post-secondary learning institutions.</p> <p>By increasing post-secondary options it as felt that this would enhance northern employment for youth in all NWT communities.</p>
No ranking	Promote vehicle safety and awareness programs for youth	<p>Increased and enhanced delivery of the motor vehicle safety and injury prevention programs that target young drivers.</p> <p>Many youth felt that the existing programs were not effective at targeting youth and changing high risk behaviors in motor vehicles.</p> <p>Safety and injury prevention programs to include seatbelt use, impaired driving awareness and the risks of speeding.</p> <p>Expanded delivery of driver training programs for youth in the communities.</p>
No ranking	Enhance agricultural and renewable resource diversity in the North	<p>The participants felt that diversity of the North's renewable resources was not properly being developed.</p> <p>Suggestions for agricultural diversity included crops and other renewable growth options.</p> <p>Discussion included the raising of domesticated animals for harvesting and consumption in the NWT.</p>

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RANKING	YOUTH CONSULTATION	SUMMARY COMMENTS
No ranking	Development and applications of northern specific curriculums for schools	<p>The participants felt that the existing curriculums used in the NWT schools were developed and based in Southern Canada and not reflective of the North.</p> <p>Issues with the existing curriculums were the lack of aboriginal content, limited learning on the development of the North and an emphasis on Southern Canada, which was not relevant to northern students.</p>
No ranking	Lowering the age of voting to sixteen	<p>It was suggested that lowering the age of voting to sixteen would allow youth to have more input into decisions that affect them.</p>
No ranking	Ensure drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs were accessible to all NWT youth	<p>It was felt that existing drug and alcohol programs were only open to certain ethnic groups in the NWT.</p> <p>It was discussed that accessibility of rehabilitation programs was seen in northern communities as being poor or non-existent.</p>
No ranking	Increased support for teenage mothers and young couples with children	<p>Existing support programs do not adequately support teenage mothers or young couples with children.</p> <p>Financial management, life skills coaching and educational support were topics discussed.</p>
No ranking	Increase course options for youth in schools	<p>Course options are different from community to community and from school board to school board in the NWT.</p> <p>Many course options are not available to students in smaller communities</p>

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Appendix A

Agenda

Thursday, February 1

All day

Arrival of Youth Ambassadors
Room Assignments at Fraser Towers
Pictures for accreditation at the games
Overview of weekend/expectations

5:00 - 7:30 pm

Subway supper at Fraser Towers
Canada Games Orientation
Youth Forum Intro

8:00 – 10:00 pm

Northern Arts and Culture Concert

Friday, February 2

9:00 – 9:15 am

Roundtable Introductions at the Explorer Hotel
Each attendee to introduce themselves and spend
2 minutes sharing; Name/Community/Age and one thing
you like about living in your community

9:15 – 9:30 am

Review of 2005 Northern Youth Strategy and Outcomes

9:30 – 10:00 am

Large group discussion and voting on the: Top five youth
issues

10:30 – 11:00 am

Breakout sessions on ways to address these issues
Brainstorm solution ideas
Present back to larger group

11:00 – 11:30 am

Identify spokespersons to present issues and
recommendations to the Minister of Youth

11:45 – 1:00 pm

Lunch with Minister of Youth at the Heritage Cafe

1:00 – 2:00 pm

Prince of Wales Museum
Roundtable introductions (name/community)
Presentation to the Minister of Youth
Questions & Answers with the Minister