



## SURVEY OF THE STATUS OF YOUTH CENTRES ON SUSTAINABILITY - 2008

### Details of Survey

Total youth centres reporting: 35  
 Reporting high risk of closing: 21  
 Reporting low risk of closing: 14  
 Reporting receiving some degree of Municipal Support: 12

Our survey received responses from 35 youth centres, or 24% of 144 youth centres that we are in contact with in Ontario; we are excluding another 20 youth initiatives that do not have a dedicated space for youth activities – an essential feature determining a youth centre. Apart from one reporting from Toronto, all youth centres reporting are located in towns and smaller cities.

### Results

40%, 14 youth centres, who felt they were not in danger of closing; 12 of these centres reported municipal funding – generally 25-35% of operations (one reported receiving 85% from their municipality and another 100% funding Federally, being located on a military base). In most cases, municipal funding on the average comes out of municipal Parks & Recreation budgets and supports one staff person. Apart from 2 communities, all other respondents reported that municipal funding was insufficient for long-term sustainability.

60%, 21 youth centres, reported they were in risk of closing, including 4 who received some municipal funding.

All relied on volunteers and project funding, with the Ontario Trillium Foundation being the project funder most often mentioned. The United Way, and The Ministry of Health (through their CIAF program) being the principal project funders. Single instances of funding included a local bank, YWCA, School Board, National Crime Prevention, and a community foundation. When in-kind support is available from municipalities, in no instance was this sufficient to sustain the youth centre.

Reports named 36 communities where youth centres that have closed within the past two years.

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|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Arnprior      | 10. Elliot Lake       | 19. Manitouwadge | 28. St Clair Beach   |
| 2. Atikokan      | 11. Exeter            | 20. Marathon     | 29. Thunder Bay (#1) |
| 3. Barry's Bay   | 12. Garson            | 21. Mattawa      | 30. Thunder Bay (#2) |
| 4. Belle River   | 13. Hearst            | 22. Moose River  | 31. Thamesville      |
| 5. Chatham       | 14. Ignace            | 23. Morrisburg   | 32. Timmins          |
| 6. Coniston      | 15. Kapuskasing       | 24. Nippigon     | 33. Tottenham        |
| 7. Constance Bay | 16. Kenora            | 25. Renfrew      | 34. Tweed            |
| 8. Dryden        | 17. Leamington        | 26. Rockland     | 35. Vanier           |
| 9. Ear Falls     | 18. Manitoulin Island | 27. Russell      | 36. Wallaceburg      |

14 Locations of Youth Centres reporting sustainability	21 Locations of youth centres reporting danger of closing
➤ Guelph	➤ Acton
➤ Ingersol	➤ Arnprior
➤ Orillia	➤ Blenheim
➤ Orleans	➤ West Lorne
➤ Osgoode	➤ Chipman Inc.
➤ Perth	➤ Cornwall Inc
➤ Petawawa	➤ CYPRES
➤ St. Thomas	➤ Dresden
➤ Sturgeon Falls	➤ Essex
➤ Sudbury	➤ Kapuskasing
➤ Toronto	➤ Kemptville
➤ Oakville	➤ Merrickville-Wolford
➤ Valley East	➤ Pic River
➤ Walden	➤ Thunder Bay (YC#1)
	➤ Thunder Bay (YC#2)
	➤ Sharbot Lake
	➤ Osgoode
	➤ Pembroke
	➤ Smiths Falls
	➤ St. Mary's
	➤ Grimsby
	➤ Tilbury

**General Conclusions:**

1. A high number of youth centres are closing yearly due to lack of core funding. But given the demand that TYPS sees from community groups, many others opening annually, relying on volunteers mostly and short-term project grants.
2. Based on the respondents, youth centres most in danger of closing are in smaller communities, mostly rural.
3. The majority of youth centres operate in an atmosphere of continuous crisis in terms of sustainability.
4. Municipal funding is available in a minority of cases and provides a minimum base for short-term sustainability, giving youth centres the ability to supplement operational expenses with project funding.
5. The sources reported for project funding are surprisingly few in number. It is not clear whether this is due to a lack of funding sources, or lack of staff time to seek out additional project funding – likely both factors are operating. Only 5 youth centres reported being able to access United Way funding; in rural areas funding options are minimal. Rural communities do not have the tax base to support municipal funding of youth centres; one regional council reported that a 1% rise in the mill rate would only bring in an additional \$20,000.