

Is Brandon Child and Youth Friendly?

A Community Consultation

Submitted to:

Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centred Prairie
Communities

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Introduction

This document profiles the results of the community consultation into Brandon's strengths and weaknesses in supporting the well being of our children and youth. An array of community members were asked to share their opinions on the factors that influence the well being of children and youth in Brandon, their key concerns and their suggestions on how to make Brandon a better place to live for children and youth.

Many of the trends and issues relating to children and youth in Brandon were explored and documented in the previous phase of research, the community literature review. However, there were several areas in this report in which there were gaps or more information was needed to clarify or explore the trends and issues. During this phase of research several key informant interviews were held with a number of people who had particular expertise with specific issues that effect children and youth to help add to our information base.

It is felt by the researchers that the results of this report will be most useful when combined with the results of the Phase I report on a review of community literature. A summary document comparing the results of the two reports will be forthcoming.

Methodology

The findings used to create this report were from three main activities; community focus groups, key informant interviews, and a logic model analysis. Survey tools used for the community focus groups and key informant interviews were submitted to the Brandon University Ethical Committee for ethical approval. The survey tools can be found in Appendix A. All focus group participants were asked to sign a letter of consent for participating (Appendix B).

Community Focus Groups

This report contains the results from three focus groups that were held with community members to assess their perceptions of Brandon as a community and its issues and needs as related to children and youth in our community.

The first focus group was held at the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre. Fourteen parents participated in this focus group. The participants were primarily members of a parent support group held at the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre. Most of the parents had participated in a program for young parents in the past and had continued to meet together after completing that program. Staff from the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre arranged the focus group and recruited parents who were interested in participating.

The focus group questions and format was tested at this focus group. This resulted in several changes being made to the focus groups questions that were implemented in the following focus groups.

An advertisement in the newspaper and on Access 12, posters and handouts put up at organizations and grocery stores and an e-mail to the Brandon Network asking for the

information to be passed on were methods used to gain participation in the following two focus groups.

A number of youth were also approached and spoken with in smaller groups to gather their opinions.

Key Informant Interviews

A number of service providers and other community members were identified in the last phase of research by our Brandon Network as having particular expertise in regards to child and youth well being factors in Brandon. During this community consultation process many of these individuals were approached and asked to share their opinions and expertise. The questions asked of these key informants were similar to those in the focus group, with additional questions being asked based on their area of expertise. They were given a copy of the summary report from the literature review and asked to comment on any points they felt that they could share information about.

A list of organizations that we spoke to key informants from can be found in Appendix C.

Logic Model Analysis Meeting

On June 17th, Darren Lezubski, Director of the Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Friendly Prairie Communities, and Chris Leskiw, a facilitator from Winnipeg, visited Brandon for the purpose of meeting with Brandon Network members to fulfill Health Canada's requirement of having a logic model plan for the Centre. Approximately 15 service providers, university students and project members attended the meeting. The meeting provided a great opportunity for our Network members to have a say in the goals of the Centre and Brandon's activities. It also provided the opportunity for several new people to become familiar with the Centre and involved in the Brandon Network. The findings from this meeting have been incorporated into this report. The notes from the meeting can be found in Appendix D.

What is a Child and Youth Friendly Prairie Community?

Those who participated in this phase of community consultation helped to paint a picture of what a “child and youth friendly prairie community” would look like. Participants envisioned that such a community would have the following attributes:

- A safe and healthy place to be a child.
- Available support for families and to raise a family.
- Community is aware of how to be child and youth friendly.
- Children and youth have things to do at all times of year, regardless of age or income.
- The input of youth is valued and they speak with a united voice.
- Celebration of cultural diversity.

What Makes Brandon a Good Place to Raise Children?

The community members we spoke with generally felt positively about raising children in Brandon. The array of resources, supports and services for children, youth and parents was seen as a positive feature of Brandon. Participants felt that as a whole, Brandon had a lot of activities for children. Several of the parents we talked to had moved to Brandon from smaller rural or northern locations in part because Brandon had more supports and activities for children than the communities from which they came. Brandon was seen as a better option for raising their children. A couple of parents had moved from larger cities and felt that the smaller size of Brandon was a positive feature for raising their children.

Parents listed numerous supports and services in Brandon that they felt were beneficial to raising children including health, recreation, childcare and educational services. Youth also indicated that there were many things to do in Brandon.

The quality of life in Brandon was also seen as an advantage to raising children. Most parents expressed that they felt safe in their community. Participants expressed that Brandon was small enough so that you know your neighbors and their kids and that others in the community also know your children.

The ability to get around the city by foot or bicycle was also seen as advantage to living in Brandon. This made it easier for parents and children to get to many programs and services. Youth indicated that Brandon was small enough to get around without depending on parents or vehicles.

Brandon was also felt to be a friendly community. The number of people who care in the community was seen to be a huge asset of the community, whether for personal support from friends and neighbors, or in finding volunteers or community leaders to undertake community improvement initiatives.

Brandon's size also gave services an advantage to working together in that there is only one school division and one health authority in the city. The organizations in Brandon also have long standing relationships with each other that makes communication between the groups easier. Service providers felt that this ongoing networking and partnerships between them helped minimize children and youth falling through the cracks due to lack of communication between agencies.

An aboriginal elder noted that Brandon has numerous resources and activities that Aboriginal youth benefit from in comparison to reserves. The children benefit and bring this message back to reserve communities.

Key Concerns in Brandon

Community members were asked to identify non-child or youth friendly features of Brandon, missing supports or services and trends or issues that affect children in Brandon. They were also asked to offer suggestions as to how Brandon could better support children, youth and families. This section profiles the issues of concern that were identified, as well as suggestions from community members to improve these areas.

Issue: Affordable activities for youth

When speaking with youth, the need for more activities was definitely a main theme. Youth having “*nothing to do*” was considered to be a large concern by almost all of those we spoke to during our community consultations. Ensuring that activities for youth were affordable was also a concern. Youth indicated that “*everything costs money*” and that often “*you have to be a member to be a part of things*”. They also felt that there was not enough offered to keep youth interested in the community.

Participants indicated a need for having places for youth to hang out and the need for kids to have choices. The lack of activities for youth was felt to be a contributor to youth crime such as vandalism. Participants felt that providing more activities for youth would impact on negative aspects such as youth crime and addictions in Brandon.

Participants also indicated that there was a need for the feeling of ownership of programs by kids. It was suggested that instead of just providing youth with activities, facilitation youth creation and planning of the activities that they wish to see in Brandon would be more effective. Youth indicated that they would like to be involved in the planning and promotion of activities.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***Construct a skateboard park (Update: Dedicated space has been allocated for a skate park)***

Participants felt that the skateboard park that has recently been constructed in Brandon was a step in the right direction. The fact that youth were involved in lobbying for this was seen as very positive and as one of the reasons that it will be useful for kids. One participant commented that we should look at the positive activities that children and youth are already doing on their own and help provide more opportunities for them. The skateboard park is an excellent example of this.

The high usage of the skate park by youth in its first month of existence and the positive feedback by youth demonstrates that a skateboard park in Brandon was a needed resource for kids. Youth especially indicated a desire to see more skateboard and rollerblade parks in the city.

- ***Coffeeshouses or drop in centers for youth***

Having safe places for youth to go to hang out was suggested. The Brandon Friendship Centre and Youth for Christ were the two existing drop-in centres that were identified by participants. Having more drop in centres to provide youth with more choices and to give them places other than the mall to hang out were suggested. Providing opportunities such as having a place for young musicians to jam or to allow youth to just get together and

have coffee were suggested. Youth indicated a need for a place to hang out at night without getting cleared off by security. They encouraged the idea of having a place for youth to get together for coffee and also indicated a desire for more places that offered youth entertainment such as live bands. A place with music and entertainment that was accessible to youth was felt to be lacking.

- ***Hold open gyms in all areas of the city***

The Lighthouses program and programs at the YMCA, which open gyms during evening hours for children to participate in unorganized sports, were viewed very positively and participants indicated that more programs like these need to be put in place. Open gym programs in all areas of the city were encouraged. It was felt that schools should be more open to providing their gym facilities in the evenings and on weekends. Participants felt that community volunteers and groups should provide the lead in supervising open gym activities. Having the kids utilizing the services involved in the planning of activities was also encouraged to provide kids with a sense of responsibility and ownership of the program. Utilizing community centres more often to run activities for children and youth was also suggested.

- ***Promote leadership activities for youth***

Leadership is important for a strong community and the leadership skills we instill in our children now will impact Brandon in 20 years as kids grow up. Providing more activities such as volunteerism that encourage leadership among young people was suggested as a way to raise the self esteem of youth, make them feel more part of the community and to provide youth with something to do.

Youth indicated a desire to participate in raising money to fund youth activities and came up with a number of suggestions for activities that they could hold as fundraisers.

- ***Arts, cultural and life skills activities***

While many of the activities for youth discussed focused on recreational activities, activities such as arts, drama, music and cultural learning were also felt to be important for young people. As with recreational programs, it was important that these activities be provided at low or no cost to allow all children to participate.

One participant commented that with all of the skilled musicians that we have in Brandon it should not be that difficult to find the resources to run a grassroots level music program. The same could be said about other arts programs.

Another suggestion was to run a cultural or historical program that utilized the Brandon Riverbank and activities such as camping in the area around Brandon. Youth indicated an interest in having more cultural programs in Brandon that looked at the diversity and history of Brandon.

Teaching youth life skills in a non-classroom setting was another suggestion. One participant commented that this is very similar to what 4H programs are doing. Participants in 4H programs learn skills such as sewing, cooking and building.

Using our recreational centres to highlight cultural diversity was also a suggestion made.

- ***Youth oriented activities at community events***

Youth indicated that they enjoyed community events such as the recent downtown street dance and indicated a desire to see more youth oriented activities at these gatherings.

- ***After school and Friday and Saturday evening programs***

Programming offered before and after school was a need seen for children whose parents were working at these hours and would otherwise be on their own during these times. More Friday and Saturday night activities were also felt to be needed. The YMCA Friday night program is a good option for kids but more options should be available for kids to choose from.

Issue: Affordable sports/physical activities

Parents noted that having children in sports can be expensive, even for two-parent families, but even more so for single parent families. The opportunity for all kids to participate in sports was seen as important to the growth and well being of children. No child should be excluded from having the opportunity to participate. One participant commented, “*all kids should have the opportunity to be part of a team and to have a coach and be taught the life skills that comes with that experience.*”

Suggestions for improvement

- ***Financial breaks for single parents and lower income families***

Providing more breaks for the children of single parent families and lower income families to participate in sports was recommended. One of the suggested way of doing this was to have sponsored “free leagues” in a variety of sports that had volunteers providing supervision and coaching and held only local games against each other to minimize costs.

Another suggestion was implementing a sports equipment program that provided used sport equipment to children who could not afford to buy the equipment required to participate in organized sports.

- ***More unstructured physical activities***

Providing kids with the opportunity to participate in a variety of unstructured physical activities through means such as open gym programs were recommended. It was suggested that particularly for the ages 12 to 15 kids are wishing to try a variety of activities and that this should be encouraged. Providing safe environments and supporting opportunities for kids to create their own activities such as providing nets for street hockey and places for skateboarding were also recommended ways to encourage physical activity.

- ***Encourage physical activity for all age groups and both sexes***

Participants felt that it was important that all age group had opportunities to participate in recreational activities. It was also important that physical activities for girls, especially teenage girls, be addressed, as many girls are not remaining in physical activities past this age. Programs with a sensitivity toward the different gender needs and wishes were encouraged.

- ***Increase awareness of programs to help kids participate in sports***

While several different programs that assist in financing children's participation in sports were identified in the community consultations, many parents were not aware of these programs. An increased awareness of programs that help kids participate in recreational activities is needed.

Issue: Housing

Access to affordable and appropriate housing was seen as a significant challenge in Brandon. The need for more affordable housing, either private or public rental units, was seen as an issue for all of Brandon including families looking for housing in Brandon as well as youth moving out on their own.

It was felt that rents were high in the city compared to incomes and that there were not many rental units available. The condition of available affordable housing was also a concern.

The Aboriginal Elder we consulted indicated that there are some occurrences of aboriginals being told a place has "just been rented" though not as much as perhaps in the past.

Suggestions for improvement

○ Provide more affordable housing in Brandon

Many participants were aware that a variety of studies regarding housing had been done in Brandon. The need for more affordable housing in Brandon was felt to be widely acknowledged. Initiatives to provide affordable housing were identified but it was felt that there was still much more that needed to be done.

The term "affordable" also came into question. "Affordable housing" has many meanings and what some may consider as affordable is still out of the price range of many individuals. Ensuring that housing that was "affordable" by a variety of definitions was a concern.

○ Raise housing standards

The condition of housing available in Brandon, especially in the price range that could be afforded by lower income individuals and families was a concern. Many of the housing units in lower rental brackets are in poor condition. Encouraging or requiring landlords and homeowners to raise housing standards was suggested. One of the suggested methods of doing this was through the promotion of programs that encourage neighborhood upkeep. Another suggested method was to start a program that lends out lawnmowers and other tools to upkeep homes to assist renters or homeowners who did not have these tools and could not afford them.

○ Family suitable public housing

Some focus group participants indicated that public housing should have more housing suitable for children. This means housing with fenced yards that are located in neighborhoods suitable for raising children. Families with children indicated a specific need for more units with 2 or more bedrooms.

○ Raise social assistance rental allotment amounts

Legislated amounts for rental allowances are quite low when compared to average rental prices in Brandon. These legislated amounts do not seem to take into account that rental prices in Brandon are higher than many other locations. It was recommended that these rental amounts be increased, as many families are currently spending money that should be going towards other necessities on housing costs.

Issue: Income security

Hardships faced by low income families were a significant concern. The use of food banks, the soup kitchen and breakfast programs by families and children illustrate that this concern is very real here in Brandon. Too many children are going to school hungry. Many families and young people in Brandon are struggling to make ends. With their income going to provide food and shelter the money for extras for themselves or their children is just not available. This impacts youth and children by having a limited ability to participate in any activities that have a cost attached to them.

Many young and single individuals are having financial difficulties. City of Brandon Social Services indicated that many of those applying for social assistance are under 30 years of age and single. They also indicated that education and training was one of the main barriers for these individuals in finding employment.

Suggestions for improvement

o School food programs

It was indicated that school food programs and other food bank programs need to be supported to address the immediate needs of kids. It needs to be acknowledged that not all kids are coming to school well fed and after a good night sleep. Programs such as breakfast in schools are very important to the well being of these children and their ability to learn in a classroom.

o Life skills training and support

Youth who are moving out on their own due to family conflict or other reasons do not always have the skills they need to live healthy lifestyles. Life skills training and supportive housing for these youth while they gain the skills that they need to become independent is needed. Youth do not always know where to go for support. More support also needs to be provided to youth when they are seeking information on where to look for assistance in a variety of areas such as accessing financial supports.

It was also stated that children are often victims of poor choices by parents. When a parent does not have proper money management skills it is often the children who suffer by having no food to eat. Programs that address immediate needs but also provide life skills programs for parents are needed. These programs will also hopefully help to break the cycle of poor life skills being passed down to the children.

o Employment training

One of the identified reasons for difficulty in finding employment was the lack of education and training. Having more opportunities to access education and training was seen as a way to address income security needs. Training specific to particular employment was suggested.

- ***Examine minimum wage rates***

It was indicated that the current minimum wage in Brandon leaves individuals working for minimum wage well under the low income cut off rates. This leaves a high number of working poor. It was suggested that minimum wage rates be examined.

- ***Improve system for accessing financial supports***

The system of accessing financial supports such as city social assistance was seen to be somewhat difficult and possibly over restrictive. It was suggested that workers need to be more sensitive to situations such as women leaving abusive partners and youth trying to leave emotionally abusive homes. City social assistance only assists those under 18 in special circumstances, as those under 18 are required to go through Child and Family Services. A more facilitated process for youth under 18 trying to access financial supports when they can no longer live at home was recommended.

Issue: Racism

Racism was viewed to be a persistent problem in Brandon, one with no easy solution.

Several focus group participants and key informants gave personal accounts of their experiences with racism in Brandon and how it affected their lives. Housing, employment, education and access to services were all felt to be affected by racism.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***Provide culturally sensitive curriculums***

Having culturally sensitive curriculums and materials for all students was seen as an important way to decrease racism. One participant shared her experience as a child learning about history and how First Nations people were “savages”. Curriculums that look at the positive history of First Nations people are important. A growing proportion of children in school systems being Aboriginal makes this even more important.

- ***Cultural training for service providers***

Racism is an issue that permeates through all areas of life and those in positions such as teaching and other service provision are not immune to it. It is these positions however that have direct impacts on members of minority populations in Brandon. For this reason it was seen that providing training for teachers and other service providers about Aboriginal and other cultures and ways of life is very important in increasing sensitivity to issues that are affecting the minority populations in Brandon. An increased understanding of different needs would hopefully result in a better provision of services with less bias due to cultural misunderstandings or racism.

- ***Encourage employment of Aboriginal people and youth in the community***

Increasing the visibility of Aboriginal people in the community and highlighting the positive contributions that they make to our community by encouraging employment in all sectors of the community including retail, health and education was one suggested way of decreasing racism.

It was recommended that the health care and education sectors should have a strategy on how to recruit more aboriginal people to work in these sectors in Brandon. More First

Nations people providing service in the community would decrease cultural barriers to those being served.

- ***Cultural celebrations***

Providing opportunities to celebrate and learn about all the other cultures in Brandon was cited as a way to increase tolerance and understanding of all people living in Brandon. Brandon has community members from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Opportunities to learn about these cultures should be encouraged. The Labyrinth of Peace that was recently constructed along the Brandon Riverbank was cited as a good example of this and that initiatives such as that should be supported by the community. Another suggestion for a cultural celebration was to hold a youth multicultural conference in the community.

More education and celebration of other cultures in the school system starting in elementary school was also suggested as a way to decrease racism.

National Aboriginal Day is celebrated on reserves and in small pockets in the community but more could be done in this area.

Issue: Supported housing for youth

When youth are in conflict they often find themselves no longer able to live at home but often youth do not have anywhere else to go. They also do not always have the skills required to live independently or the supports to access financial or other assistance. Youth leaving emotionally or physically abusive homes often encounter great difficulties in accessing money and finding a place to live. Supports to help these youth was an identified theme.

One participant commented that with changes being made to criminal justice with the goals of keeping more youth out of jail that the need for some sort of halfway house would be even larger.

- ***Short term emergency housing for youth***

A short-term emergency housing arrangement for youth to provide youth in conflict an immediate place to stay while investigating longer term solutions is needed. Sometimes this means a place to stay for a few weeks while waiting to go to court or go to a treatment facility.

- ***Half way house for youth***

Longer term housing for youth that provides them with the support they need to gain the skills to live on their own is also needed. This housing should teach life skills such as money management. The Youth for Christ U-Turn houses are addressing this need but they acknowledge that the need in Brandon is much larger than they can currently meet.

Issue: Childcare

Access to reasonably priced daycare with flexible hours was an area where parents felt that Brandon could use improvement. While those parents looking for full-time regular weekday daycare did seem to be able to find childcare for their children, the largest concern was currently accessing part-time, evening or weekend childcare.

It was also seen as important that childcare be seen as early intervention, not just babysitting and that there is a need for childcare to be of good quality and recognize this fact.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***Affordable childcare centres with extended or flexible hours***

Childcare centers with hours that started earlier in the morning and extended later in the evening as well as weekends for parents working part time or shift work was identified as a need. There was also a need identified for more part-time or casual spots for parents who did not have regular set schedules.

- ***Employer support for employee childcare***

The participants in one focus group indicated that employers, particularly large employers that require shift work, should either have daycares on premise or support daycare for their employees.

- ***Provide daycare in high schools for teen parents***

Having a daycare in the high schools for teenage parents was a suggestion for how to remove childcare barriers to those young parents wishing to complete their education. The Brandon School Division is currently exploring this option and it is very close to realization.

Issue: Public awareness of child issues

In striving for Brandon to become a more child and youth friendly community, it was seen as important for the community as a whole to be aware of how factors in the community affected children and youth. Some important issues such as child poverty in Brandon were felt to be in large part overlooked by the general community.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***Public awareness campaigns***

Public awareness campaigns and community education that accurately portrayed the situation of children and youth in Brandon and promoted ways for the community to be child and youth friendly were recommended. The goals of this would be for the whole community to work together to make Brandon a safe and healthy place to be a child as well as to provide industry in Brandon with an awareness of the impact of their actions on the health of children and youth.

It was expressed that media should recognize and deal with the issues that affect kids in the community. Also public education should provide parents with useful information on how to support their own child's health and well being.

- ***More sharing of information between agencies***

As well as providing information to the public, it was also seen as important for services and organizations in Brandon to share information related to child and youth well being in Brandon with each other so that they were better informed when providing their services and creating new programs.

- ***Creation of lobbying groups***

With an increased public awareness of child and youth well being issues in Brandon, community members coming together to form lobbying, advocacy or community action groups to address these issues was seen as very important. Participants indicated a need for the creation of grassroots groups that recognized the importance of child and youth issues and worked to make a change. Through these groups activities and resources for youth and families could be created or encouraged as well as lobbying political powers to have policy influenced based on recognition of child and youth needs.

Youth indicated that they would like to have their ideas listened to by these committees.

Issue: First Nations identity

Aboriginal service providers and parents expressed their opinion that Aboriginal youth are lacking knowledge of their culture and their Aboriginal identity, which leads to poor self-esteem. The public education system does not have a First Nations focused curriculum and aboriginal children do not always learn the positives of their culture and history.

The teenage years were identified as a particular time when all adolescents are trying to discover their identity. While a difficult time for all youth, Aboriginal children were seen as having additional struggles in understanding their identity. One aboriginal youth indicated that a barrier to accessing services was *“feeling insignificant because of who I am”*.

Many of the suggestions for how to improve the situation for First Nations children and youth who were struggling with their identity were also suggestions on how to decrease racism. One participant also indicated that programs that help Aboriginal youth find their identity and improve their self esteem would also be useful to non-Aboriginal children in improving their self-esteem and increasing their awareness and acceptance of other cultures.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***Provide self-esteem building opportunities for Aboriginal children and youth***

Providing more self-esteem building opportunities for youth, especially Aboriginal youth, was recommended as a key component of education. One participant expressed a belief that if more attention was paid to providing children, especially Aboriginal children, with more self-esteem building activities it would have an impact on the justice system in the future by decreasing the numbers of youth before the courts.

Another participant spoke of her experience as an aboriginal child involved in a self-esteem building program and spoke of the benefits that her experience had provided her with in knowing that she was important and had choices.

- ***More Aboriginal role models / Hire more Aboriginal teachers***

Youth having access to more aboriginal role models, especially in the school system, was seen as a very positive way to support Aboriginal youth. Having a person to look up to who has experienced the same situations as the youth are currently experiencing was seen as invaluable. Hiring more Aboriginal teachers and other aboriginal staff in the schools as well as Elders having more visibility in the schools were seen as very important. As the

proportion of children under 15 in Manitoba that are Aboriginal is increasing, more Aboriginal teachers in the schools was seen as a growing need. It was suggested that more should be done to attract First Nations teachers to Brandon.

- ***Educate about the positive aspects of being First Nations***

Culturally based curriculums and cultural programs that educated about the positive aspects of being First Nations and looked positively at Aboriginal history was seen as important to having Aboriginal children understand their own identity. More opportunities to learn about the Aboriginal culture should be provided and encouraged for all children. Having First Nations language courses in the schools was one suggestion.

- ***Educate about family values, family traditions and activities***

Youth having more knowledge of family values, tradition and activities was suggested as a way to increase the positive self identity of Aboriginal youth.

Issue: Mobile kids

With Brandon being in a period of population growth, as well as being known for providing many services such as post-secondary education for the smaller surrounding communities, the issue of “mobile kids” has appeared. Many individuals and families move to Brandon to take advantage of the services being offered here. The Brandon School Division notes a large number of aboriginal families in particular may move in during September and leave in April/May, the result of the child’s parent attending school and then returning to home communities. This results in unique challenges for their children.

As noted in the Phase I Literature Review draft report, the mobility status of Aboriginal individuals residing in the City of Brandon was quite different than the general population, as this group tended to be more mobile and less likely to be occupying the same address over a one-year or five year span of time. The Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council (DOTC) noted several explanatory trends that they see in their clientele. Many Aboriginal people are moving to Brandon from neighboring First Nations communities for university or college. These students often move back to reside in their own community after completing their courses. Other factors that contribute to the mobility of Aboriginal people in Brandon are economic factors. First Nations communities surrounding Brandon are often facing economic challenges, which may contribute to families from these communities moving to Brandon for employment opportunities and better housing. If unable to find long-term employment or housing, these families may return to their home community or seek employment in other communities.

City of Brandon Social Services indicated that all of the clients that they see are generally quite transient and the main factor that they see bringing clients to Brandon is employment, often at Maple Leaf.

It was expressed that with families from a variety of backgrounds coming to Brandon there may be a “pocketing” of different groups in the community. It is the kids that will be expected to live in both the worlds of their family culture and the “Brandon” community culture that they encounter at school. These kids should have supports.

An advantage of this movement from an Elder's perspective is that children are exposed to higher standards of education when in Brandon and take this experience and other experiences here home with them.

Suggestions for improvement

- *Explore service delivery models for mobile kids*

There is a need to study models of delivering education and other services to this type of "mobile" population that meet their unique needs. The Brandon School Division need to be able to assess and meet the needs of children while they are here and to do so in a prompt manner.

- *Friendship development circles*

Implementing programs that provide ways of engaging new students into the school system and the community should be explored and implemented. This is also a need for new young people or families moving to the community. A way to engage these newcomers and welcome them to the community, as well as informing them about the services and resources that are available to assist them in the community is needed.

Issue: Need for alternative education services

The drop out rates in schools is a concern. Children have a variety of learning needs that the traditional school system does not always meet. There is a need to provide flexible education that meets the needs of kids who are struggling in school.

There was discussion about the proposed "alternate school" that the Brandon School Division is currently exploring. The idea of a flexible school environment, which meets the learning needs of students, was viewed positively by those we spoke with. A smaller classroom with more attention per student was also a suggestion.

Brandon Literacy Council Inc. provides alternative educational programming for youth who are out of school. Youth are integrated into the adult literacy program and are striving towards individualized academic/employment goals. They have seen youth attending their service rise steadily from 10 in 1995 to 86 in 1999. Based on the profiles they have gathered, youth attending their service represent underserved Brandon School Division students. They have both aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth attending. They do not recruit youth and they are currently operating with a waiting list. This illustrates that a need for more alternative education options exists.

Youth attending also frequently have problems related to the absence of a supportive family and are often in dire circumstances when it comes to money. A number of issues have been identified that affect and interfere with learning. Youth commonly report that they do not have safe, stable, affordable housing. The community based program has also found it necessary to provide youth with food items and/or they make referrals to agencies such as Helping Hands Soup Kitchen or Samaritan House. Additionally, unidentified mental health issues and problems with money management are considered factors interfering with learning. Alternative education programs need to recognize these issues and factor them into their programming.

Educational programs that meet the needs of youth getting treatment for addictions or spending time in youth remand to Brandon Correctional Centre are needed. There is also need for programming for those who have been expelled from school.

Issue: Need for more preventative preschool programming

A number of sources indicated areas of concern which would suggest Brandon may need to increase preventative programming for children of preschool and elementary age to address social, physical, and cognitive problems.

The school division is experiencing an increase in the number of children entering kindergarten with emotional behavioral problems requiring increased service delivery by school clinicians and teachers assistant support. The degree of complexity of the issues these children are dealing with has increased as well. There are no classrooms in Brandon now, without their share of special needs youth which translates into more requests for Level I, II, III funding. Specialty services such as Speech and Language services are sorely needed.

Suggestions for improvement:

- ***Parenting courses***

Parenting courses focused on raising the “spirited or challenging child”.

Parenting courses on preparing children for school (nutritional, sleep, behavior and attitude) as well as helping the child learn expectations of them as they enter kindergarten.

- ***Speech and language services***

More positions within the Speech and Language area need to be created to serve the level of need in the Brandon area.

Issue: Preventative services for adolescents

A gap in services for adolescents was identified. Participants felt that often when children reach a certain age, usually around junior high, they are no longer provided with services unless they get into trouble. Additionally, the literature review indicated a high number of children that were determined by the school division to be at risk for learning difficulties in the elementary years, with these numbers dropping in the high school years. This is more likely to reflect kids dropping out of school as opposed to not having problems anymore.

Concern was expressed related to adolescents who are expelled from school and how parents or other services address their educational needs when this occurs. Sometimes schools don’t want to know the youth and it becomes the community based services who pick up these youth i.e. Brandon Literacy Council Inc., Youth for Christ, Friendship Centre.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***More preventative services***

Providing more services for adolescents to assist them before they get into trouble was seen as a priority. This encompassed a variety of areas including education, recreation

and social activities but the overall view was to let adolescents know that they are important and that there is help for them without placing criteria that you must be in trouble before you can access help.

- ***Education for youth on youth resources***

Youth not knowing where to go to find help is an issue. They need education on their rights and the resources that are there to help them.

- ***Supports for male adolescents***

Having supports for male youth to deal with issues such as anger management before they get into trouble for it was suggested.

- ***Connecting adult in high school***

When at the high school level students have many teachers and often do not have a consistent teacher or other adult to turn to in the schools. It was suggested that ways for students to have an identified adult to turn to or possibly younger grade students having a peer helper or mentor from a higher grade be explored.

- ***Multiagency planning for educational needs of youth outside of the school system.***

It appears a number of programs are attempting to deal with the continued educational needs of Brandon youth. These youth often have multiple issues, restricted life skills and financial as well as housing needs. This may have been a semi invisible issue in the sense that youth are going to where ever they feel most comfortable which is to varied resources in the community. The exact numbers of youth in this dilemma need to be determined and a profile of their needs established. This may form the basis of plans for an alternate school for these youth.

Issue: Youth employment

Youth employment was another concern that was identified in community consultations. Youth indicated that it is hard to find full time employment with a good wage. Education and training were barriers that were identified for young people seeking work.

Career and Employment Youth Services (CEYS) reports that the number of youth utilizing CEYS has increased over the years. There has been no real trend in the types of jobs being sought, other than currently there are a lot of people who have been at Maple Leaf and are now looking for something else, whereas when Maple Leaf first opened everyone was getting a job there. The numbers of Aboriginal youth have also increased; currently 36% of CEYS clients are aboriginal. There has also been a slight increase in females and visible minorities (self-stated) who have registered with CEYS.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***Employment training***

Providing employment training for those who are not academically inclined was a suggestion. This may mean on the job training or mentorship to provide youth with the skills that they need. Supervision and training in on the job placements were listed as important. Often job placements expect youth to be work ready, placements that put an emphasis teaching youth new skills were identified as a need.

- *Alternate education*

The need for alternate education has been discussed in a previous section. Alternate education should include the mentoring of kids who are not academically inclined to prepare them for employment.

Issue: Addictions

Youth felt that for the 15 to 24 age group drinking and doing drugs was a big problem and that it is worse now than in the past.

Addictions Foundation of Manitoba indicated that there was a rise in the use of alcohol, marijuana and mushrooms.

Contacts with the justice system also indicated that addictions of youth and parents were contributing factors to being in the justice system.

Suggestions for improvement

- *Activities oriented treatment and prevention*

Youth who were interviewed suggested that having more activity oriented programs may be a good prevention method so that kids do not end up needing addictions counselling. It was suggested that an addictions treatment program could be activity oriented.

- *Education on the effects of drug usage*

It was suggested that there is a need for more awareness on the effects of drug use such as smoking pot. Participants acknowledged that educational programs on the risks of drinking and driving have had an impact on the behaviors of young people. Similar research and education into the effects of doing drugs and driving was recommended.

- *Provide services for kids in the community*

As with youth justice services, youth often have to leave Brandon to seek treatment. Southport, a youth addictions treatment centre is located in Portage. Having this type of service locally would make it easier to have families involved in the treatment process.

Issue: Child safety

Safety was a concern expressed by parents. Safety around train tracks, certain neighborhoods, parks and pedestrian crossings were specific concerns. Some low-income housing was identified as being located close to train tracks and not having protective features such as fences around the property.

Suggestions for improvement

- *Parents and child safety education*

Education for both parents and children on safety issues such as railroad safety was a suggestion. Parental supervision of preschool children is needed and the education of preschool children on safety issues should come from parents.

- *Fences by railroad tracks*

Prevention methods such as fences beside the train tracks or around houses near the train tracks were recommended.

- ***Increased pedestrian safety methods***

More police enforcement of stopping for pedestrians was suggested. Other recommendations to increase pedestrian safety were to build more sidewalks and to allow for longer lights for pedestrians at intersections.

- ***Programs to discourage vandalism and encourage neighborhood upkeep***

Programs to discourage vandalism and to encourage neighborhood upkeep were felt to be important for a feeling of safety in the community. One parent indicated that a park in her neighborhood was neglected that she would not let her children play there. She recommended that parks have more regular maintenance such as the cleaning up of broken glass.

Issue: Youth justice

Youth involved in criminal activity was a significant concern of those we spoke to and a number of prevention strategies relating to recreation, youth employment and addictions were identified and discussed in previous sections. Several concerns relating to youth who are already in the justice system were identified.

Sending our youth away from Brandon to a youth remand center in Winnipeg was a concern. These kids are being removed from the supports such as family that are available in the community and being isolated in situations that may do more harm than good. As one key informant put it, *“when you are touting family involvement it’s hard to reconcile that with sending kids outside of Brandon for addictions treatment and/or corrections.”*

Another concern was the length of time that is sometimes took to between being charged and appearing in court. This was seen to be particularly harmful when a youth was making positive changes in his or her life and is then sent to court to have a past infraction come back on them and destroy the positive progress that they had been making.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***A local youth corrections facility***

It was felt that Brandon is big enough for our own service of this nature. It was felt having a local youth corrections facility would be a more positive intervention for our kids that would allow more family involvement and provide an easier transition back into the community.

It was recognized that with this type of facility there would need to be programming put in place which is absent when youth are held at Brandon Correctional Centre.

- ***Quicker court appearance procedures***

It was suggested that we work to reduce the amount of time that occurs between a charge and court for youth offenders. It was felt that kids need a more immediate reaction to their actions.

Issue: Gap between youth and other segments of the community

Participants indicated that youth did not always have a sense of community and that there was a gap between youth and other segments of the population such as seniors. With a large portion of Brandon's population being seniors it was felt that this gap contributed to a resistance in the community to provide youth based activities and facilities.

Suggestions for improvement

○ *Listen to kids*

Both the youth and adults that we spoke with saw listening to and valuing the ideas of youth as very important. Having more communication with youth by all segments of the population was suggested. Youth indicated that they would like to have committees and organizations speak to them and take their ideas into account when planning programs or activities. They would also like to be involved in helping to run and promote activities.

○ *Youth and senior mentoring programs*

Participants suggested having a youth and senior mentoring type program as a positive way to reduce the gap between youth and seniors as well as providing positive outcomes for both groups. Ideas for a youth and senior mentoring program took several forms. An "adopt a grandparent" program was one suggestion. Another idea was to have a mentoring program for young parents that would provide the young parents with a person to turn to for support and also provide their children with a grandparent type figure where this may be lacking in their life. Involving seniors in the community to work alongside with youth as volunteers in planning and supervising activities for young people was another suggestion. This would not only help to bridge the gap between youth and seniors but would also be a way to address the need for community volunteers in the running of programs.

○ *Increase awareness of positive activities of youth*

The impression that all youth are gang members and involved in crime and drugs was felt to be prevalent among some older people in the community. A suggested way to reduce this perception is to increase the awareness of the positive activities of youth in the community. Having media in the community more involved in covering some of the positive activities and accomplishment of our Brandon youth is encouraged. Educational sessions with seniors was also a suggestion. Youth indicated that they felt that the media coverage of youth activities often focused on the negatives rather than the positives.

○ *Community activities that involve all ages*

Having community activities such as family fun nights that encourage participation of all age groups was another suggestion in how to make children and youth a valued part of the community. Youth suggested family oriented activities in a group or team structure.

○ *More activities with youth and police*

Providing youth with more opportunities to have positive interaction with authority figures in the community such as the Brandon Police, RCMP, and DOPS was another suggested way of helping youth feel more connected to the community. Several models for this were cited from other communities and some already successful efforts towards this in Brandon were identified.

Issue: Parent involvement in schools

Although the Brandon School Division indicates that parent involvement in schools is very good, some parents indicated that parental involvement in their child's coursework and education varied from school to school. In some schools parents were very involved with their child's day to day school assignments whereas at other schools parents had more minimal involvement and weren't always aware of how their child was doing until report cards and parent teacher interviews. It was also felt that starting at the junior high level, parent involvement in school activities or the child's schoolwork suddenly stopped.

Suggestions for improvement

- *Encourage regular parent and teacher communication*

It was felt that schools should encourage more regular parent and teacher communication and that all schools should consistently encourage parental involvement in their child's schoolwork.

- *Parental involvement past elementary school*

More family activities for parents and older kids (junior high) was a suggestion to keep parents involved with and supported in their child's school life past elementary school. Some parents felt that starting at junior high the supports for parents and their children ceased to exist.

Issue: Activities for children under 5

Some parents felt that there was a lack of activities for children who had not yet reached school age. Organized recreational activities often do not accept children until they are five years old. Parks and playgrounds were also identified as often not having appropriate equipment for toddlers.

Suggestions for improvement

- *Toddler friendly play structures*

One of the suggestions for activities for children under five was the construction of play structures additional to those at schools. These playgrounds should have structures suitable for children under the age of five and be available for parents to access during school hours.

- *More programs for children under 5*

Providing more programs for children under the age of five, including recreational, music and other types of programs such as drama were suggested.

Issue: Bullying in schools

When asked about concerns regarding school-aged children, bullying in the schools was a concern of parents for this age group. Although it may not be as prevalent in Brandon as some places it needs to be acknowledged so hopefully we can keep it from being a bigger problem.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***Less tolerance of bullying***

Less tolerance of bullying in the schools both by the schools and by parents was recommended. Dealing with bullying in ways additional to or other than suspending or expelling the student was also recommended.

- ***Education for students and teachers on how to deal with bullying***

Providing education to teachers and students on the best ways to deal with bullying was suggested. Students could be trained to help mediate student conflicts through a peer helpers program. It was seen as important that these peer helpers also had a person to turn to provide them with support.

Issue: Family health care

Access to family health care in Brandon was another concern raised by parents. They indicated that it was difficult to get their kids in to see a doctor at times and that they often ended up sitting in walk-in for a long time.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***More pediatricians and nurses***

As are many other locations, Brandon is experiencing difficulty recruiting and retaining health care staff. Parent felt that more pediatricians and nurses are needed to provide care to the children in Brandon.

Issue: Supports for parents of children with special needs

Some parents of children with special needs felt there was not a lot of support available for them as parents struggling with these difficulties. One focus group participant who was the parent of a child with ADHD found that through her experiences, support for parents of learning-disabled children could be improved.

Suggestions for improvement

- ***More support for parents of children with special needs.***

Support groups and workshops for parents of children with special needs was suggested. It was also suggested that updated workshops for teachers on dealing with children with special needs such as ADHD and learning disabilities be held.

Issue: Aboriginal children in care

The Child Welfare System in Manitoba is currently undergoing major restructuring. Aboriginal Child and Family Service organizations will have jurisdiction for Aboriginal children anywhere in Manitoba. In Brandon, this means that Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services (DOCFS) will get jurisdiction over the First Nations children here in Brandon that are currently being served by Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba. Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services currently has jurisdiction of eight Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council reserves and has been in existence for about 20 years.

DOCFS notes that for their organization, the reasons for children being in care have been similar for the past 20 years. Alcoholism is the most predominant reason for children being in care. Lack of parenting skills also contributes to children being in care. The lack of parenting skills has been attributed in part to the residential school system. Many Aboriginals who are now parents went to residential schools when they were children and due to this did not have the opportunity to learn how to be parents. It is noted that many factors in the family and the community contribute to why children are in care but many of the problems seen by DOCFS are alcohol related and have to do with parents not having strong parenting skills.

Barriers to Accessing Programs and Resources

A number of obstacles that prevent parents, children or youth from accessing services were identified. Some of the main issues that were identified as barriers to families, children or youth accessing services were:

- Lack of financial resources.
- Lack of transportation.
- Lack of childcare.
- Strict program/service criteria.
- Unawareness of programs and services in the community.
- Service hours conflicting with employment.
- Fear of asking for help.

The following section provides more detail on the barriers faced and some suggestions for addressing these barriers that were given during the community consultations.

Lack of financial resources

It was recognized that many of the programs, especially recreational programs for children and youth, often had a price tag attached to them. This excluded many children and youth from participating. As one focus group participant put it *“programs for youth need to be free or less”*. Many parents, especially single parents, cannot afford to have their children in activities due to costs. One single mother, speaking of putting her child into organized hockey noted *“It’s hard enough to get them there without having to pay the fees and buy the equipment.”*

Suggestions on how to address this barrier were to have more free programs available, provide funding for lower income families and to look at “sliding scale” models for programs where fees are based on income and family situation. Youth suggested that they could volunteer to assist in activities such as the setting up for or cleaning up after events in exchange for being able to attend at no cost.

Transportation

Finding a way to get to programs or services can pose challenges for families who do not own a vehicle. Youth also indicated that transportation can be a difficulty when trying to get to activities. While the transit system is an option, limited hours of operation and service locations do not always make it the best option for parents trying to get their children to programs or services.

Programs that build in considerations for transportation were recommended. For example, providing transportation to bring a mother and her children to parenting programs or providing transportation to teens participating in recreational programs in various parts of the city such as the Sportsplex, which is not within walking distance for many kids. Youth indicated that they appreciated programs run by the Brandon Friendship Centre that would pick up youth and bring them to activities.

Lack of childcare

Accessing affordable and flexible daycare was seen as a challenge for parents in Brandon. The lack of availability of flexible short term daycare presented an obstacle for parents wishing to participate in short parenting sessions or to go to appointments where they could not bring their child(ren).

It was suggested that more programs should offer childcare as a part of their services. Parents at the Elspeth Reid Resource Centre indicated that the fact that good quality childcare was available for them while they were attending daytime programs was a definite benefit and enabled them to participate in the programs. They recommended this as a model for other programs and indicated that evening programs do have the same need for childcare as well.

Strict program/service criteria

Another barrier to accessing services was strict program or service criteria. Many programs have a set of criteria that are required to be met before participating. This may result in some people who require assistance being unable to find the help they need due to not fitting into exact criteria molds. It was suggested that more sensitivity needed to be given to criteria for accessing services.

One of the examples given was that some programs look strictly at how much a family makes without taking into consideration other factors such as the number of children or bills that the family has. Other programs required an individual or a family to be in trouble before they could access help.

One participant spoke of accessing a program that assisted her with parenting but that she had the support taken away because she was married and “stable”. She felt that she still would have benefited from the program. More flexibility in program requirement was suggested.

Unawareness of programs and services in the community

Unawareness of the programs or services in Brandon that assist children, youth and families was a barrier to parents and youth accessing services. Individuals were often not sure where to find out this information or whether programs to help them existed or not. Traditional methods such as television or newspapers do not always reach those who most need to know about these programs (e.g. those in poverty).

Creating a resource directory for parents was a suggested means of increasing awareness of local resources. It was suggested that such a directory should list activities for children and also indicate which programs are free and which programs are more expensive. It was recommended that this directory be available free of charge at organizations that are frequented by parents, at doctor’s offices, through the Welcome Wagon and given to parents who have a new baby. A similar type of directory for youth was also suggested.

Another suggestion was to have a central place to be able to enquire about programs or services available in Brandon. The visions of what this could look like included a main directory place such as a service kiosk or a host person to contact about what was available and how to best access services.

Service providers felt that one of the ways that they could gain awareness of other programs and services was to continue networking and building partnerships. The knowledge gained through these methods allowed service providers to provide referrals and accurate information to the families and youth that they had contact with.

Service hours conflicting with employment

Programs that were only offered during the day did not meet the needs of some working parents or parents who are going to school. More programs or services offered in the evening for those who work or go to school was suggested. It was also noted that childcare and transportation is also an issue in the evenings.

Youth also indicated that sometimes the hours of programs limited who was able to participate. Evening and weekend programs were best for youth.

Fear of asking for help

A fear of asking for help for a number of reasons was identified as a barrier to accessing programs or services. Some parents struggling to cope with life circumstance and parenting feared having their children taken away from them if they approached organizations for help. Women leaving abusive relationships feared having their ex-partner contacted and given details about their life and location when applying for financial assistance.

The systems of assistance were often felt to be intrusive, punitive and controlling regarding clients' privacy and personal situations. Clients felt that they were on trial and not believed when asking for help and that they were being blamed for the situation they were in. This added insult to injury and made these people less likely to ask for help in the future.

It was suggested that case workers who determine eligibility and assess needs should have training to ensure that they are sensitive to gender, race and cultural differences and fully understand issues related to domestic violence and poverty.

Conclusions

While a number of issues have been raised in Brandon, it is also important to acknowledge the excellent programs and resources that do exist in Brandon. The parents and youth we spoke with indicated that they would like to see a continued support of the good resources that are out there.

With funding sources coming and going and focusing on particular issues or problems it is sometimes difficult to keep these programs going once they are no longer “pilot projects”. Continuing to support the resources that are already doing an excellent job of supporting our children and youth in the community is very important.

There is a strong feeling among those we spoke with that it is a responsibility of the whole community to look after the health and well being of our children and youth. The voices of the children and youth in our community need to be valued and listened to, they are not only our future but are also our present.

“It takes a village to raise a child”

Next Steps:

The next steps envisioned by the Brandon Site include the following:

- Distributing to the Brandon Network the goals of phase 2 and 3 along with the guidelines for the research projects
- Deliberation of the issues and possible solutions. Rank ordering of priority areas in conjunction with what is capable within the limited time frame of research activity through a survey of our network and community
- Designing potential projects for the Brandon Network to consider and soliciting project ideas in relation to the main issues identified
- Discussing at our Network Team meetings in October potential projects
- Deciding at our Network Team meetings the most viable projects in November
- Detailing the final project to the expectations required of the Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centred Communities.

Appendix A: Survey Tool

Focus Group and Key Informant Questions

I'd like to talk about what it's like to raise children in Brandon

1. What makes Brandon a good place to raise children?
2. What about Brandon is not helpful / healthy for (your) children? (What are non-child friendly features of Brandon?) (What barriers do you see in Brandon for a good future for children and youth)
3. How should Brandon deal with these features?
4. What do you see as emerging themes or issues in your community relating to children and youth (and your area of expertise)? (What are concerns when it comes to this age group)
 - a) for infants and preschoolers?
 - b) for school aged children?
 - c) for youth (15-24)?
 - d) Are there differences in trends for Aboriginal vs. non-Aboriginal children/youth?

5. What types of supports or services are missing in Brandon for children and their parents?

e) what is missing for infants and preschoolers?

f) what is missing for school aged children?

g) what is missing for youth (15-24)?

6. What obstacles prevent children or parents from accessing services?

7. How could the services (you use) in Brandon be improved?

8. Are there concerns or issues regarding children in Brandon that you feel need further examination?

9. Additional comments.

Appendix B: Informed Consent Letter

Dear Brandon community member:



Are you interested in sharing your opinions on:

- **What affects children and youth in our community?**
- **How Brandon could help support you and your children?**

Centre of Excellence for Child
and Youth Centred Prairie
Communities

If so, I would like to invite you to participate in the research efforts of the Brandon Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centred Prairie Communities.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to discuss along with others in a group format, Brandon as a community and its issues and needs as related to children and youth in our community. You will also be asked to complete a brief survey. Food and refreshments will be provided.

By participating in this focus group you will be helping us gain valuable information that we will be able to use to help support children, youth and families in Brandon.

Participation is voluntary and there will be no negative consequences if you refuse to participate in it, withdraw from it, or refuse to answer certain questions. Confidentiality will be maintained in this project as your name will not be attached to the responses you give, your individual answers will not be shared or presented in any way that would identify you as the source.

If you would like more information about the project, please call:

Elicia Funk – (204) 571-8556
c/o Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centre Prairie Communities
Jeff Umphrey Centre (2021 Victoria Avenue)
Brandon University R7A 6A9
funke@brandonu.ca

To register please fill out the form on the back of this letter or call Elicia at 571-8556.

We appreciate your time and effort in helping us understand the needs of families in Brandon.

Having understood the above information and after being given the opportunity to have my questions answered, I agree to participate in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

If participant is under 18 years of age, signature of parent or guardian

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Appendix C: Key Informant Organizations

- Aboriginal Elder – Clayton Antoine
- Brandon Friendship Centre
- Brandon Literacy Council
- Brandon Police Services
- Brandon School Division
- Brandon Women’s Centre
- Career and Employment Youth Services
- City of Brandon – Community Services
- City of Brandon – Social Services
- Dakota Obijway Child and Family Services
- Early Years Team
- Manitoba Justice - Community and Youth Corrections Services
- Pat Bowslough – Brandon University (Early Child Development)
- Youth for Christ
- Youth Services Committee

Appendix D: Logic Model Analysis Notes

Brandon Logic Model Meeting Notes

Goal: Community is aware of how to be child and youth friendly

Activities:

- Community education
- Media involvement
- Website
- Lobby/advocacy groups

Outcomes:

- Safe and healthy place to be a child
- Determinants of health are factored into programs
- Media recognizes and deals with real issues
- Policy is being influenced, based on recognition of needs
- Industry is aware of the impact of their actions on the health of children and youth

Goal: Information is open and shared

Activities:

- Parent support manual
- Website and database (“virtual library” with research and reports)
- Gathering and sharing of information
- Set up a service kiosk
- Evaluations and assessments
- Regular reports to City Council, MP, MLAs
- Media involvement
- Active participation by agencies in Brandon

Considerations:

- *Accurate information*
- *Ensure literacy is not a barrier*

Outcomes:

- Increased access to services, particularly for youth and families
- Gaps in knowledge are identified
- Ongoing information sharing
- Media recognizes and deals with real issues
- Increased community awareness of the work of the Centre
- Policy is being influenced, based on recognition of needs.

Goal: Youth have a united voice that is listened to and valued

Activities:

- Consultations with youth

- Regular reporting to youth
- Youth multicultural conference
- Integrated advocacy system for youth
- Inclusive and active youth groups

Considerations

- *Culturally integrated youth voice*

Outcomes:

- Actions and results for youth
- Increased access to services for youth
- Youth are involved in running their own services
- Youth are valued
- Youth have a sense of community

Goal: Tangible programs

Activities:

- Information is accessible to support the creation of new programs
- Facilitation of community research
- Support to resources for youth and parents
- Evaluations and assessments
- Ongoing consultations and monitoring (youth, parents, service providers)

Considerations:

- *Ensure inclusiveness*
- *Accessible and affordable programs*

Outcomes:

- Supported parents and youth
- Alternatives for youth
- Programs are useful and appropriate
- Mechanisms are available to provide culturally appropriate services
- Youth are actively involved in running their own services.

Goal: Celebration of Cultural Diversity

Activities:

- Cultural awareness / community education
- Youth multicultural conference
- Cultural celebrations

Outcomes:

- Community is aware of and respects cultural diversity
- Decrease in racism