

WHALLEY AND GUILDFORD

A REPORT ON SOCIAL ISSUES AND INITIATIVES IN SURREY, BC



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I. Executive Summary

We live in a part of the world envied for its affluence and stability. Yet astonishingly it can take as little as three months for someone in our community to move from a position of economic and social stability to a position of complete instability. A mother flees with her children from an abusive relationship; a teenager leaves home and becomes enmeshed in drugs; depression, illness or an unexpected tragedy reduce one's self-esteem and coping mechanisms to the point where one loses one's job. In the midst of general socio-economic wellbeing there is a seemingly intractable consistency of poverty among certain groups. And increasingly those pockets of poverty are concentrated in a series of low rent urban districts threaded along the SkyTrain, with Vancouver's Downtown East Side (DTES) at one end and North Surrey at the other. Many of the residents and workers consulted in the preparation of this report were concerned with increasingly visible crime, youth living on the streets, drug use, and prostitution.

Several socio-economic indicators point to neighbourhoods at risk in parts of north Surrey. Whalley and Guildford, for example, have an above-average incidence of rental dwellings, low household incomes and people paying 30% or more of their gross household income on rent, English As A Second Language school enrolments, and high unemployment rates for Aboriginals and people with disabilities. Whalley, in addition, has an above-average incidence of female lone parents, visible minorities, Aboriginals, people with disabilities, people with less than Grade 9 education, criminal activity, and high unemployment rates. Guildford has the highest transiency rate of Surrey's communities.

Major social issues in Whalley and Guildford include:

- **Poverty**—frequently the common thread underlying other social issues—most evident in local food bank usage and most severe among lone parents, recent immigrants, Aboriginals, elderly unattached women, and people with disabilities, including the many individuals with a mental illness underlying other behaviours such as substance misuse.
 - **Homelessness and affordable housing.** Lengthy waiting lists and turnaway numbers are evidence of the obvious need for a variety of social or supported housing.
 - **At risk youth.** There is widespread agreement on the inadequate services and resources for youth, particularly residential services for those who are not ready for independent living, and other resources to stabilize at risk youth and at risk visible minority youth. This is a particularly significant issue for Surrey, given the higher proportion of children and youth here compared with other large municipalities in Greater Vancouver.
 - **Many single parent moms** face a desperate challenge to climb out of poverty—even to find emergency housing and the affordable day care that will enable them to pursue work or training. There is a high rate of teenage moms in Surrey.
 - **Drugs and alcohol.** There is a virtual absence of detox and residential treatment services in the South Fraser region. Extensive waiting lists for counselling suggest that service providers may be overwhelmed by the demand. Fetal alcohol syndrome and babies with low-birth weight are serious concerns.
 - **Drug-related crime, including prostitution, and violence** were concerns raised by many of those consulted who live or work in the Whalley-Guildford area.
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Surrey has a broad range of well-run health and social services with dedicated and professional staff. Yet five key challenges are evident.

1. Lengthy waitlists raise the question of whether Surrey lacks the volume of services appropriate to a city with its large and still rapidly growing population—services of all kinds from day care to family resource centres to youth safe houses. There is a perception that funding for these services has not followed the dispersal of the population from Vancouver out to the South Fraser area.
2. The broad range of services may not be known to consumers or may appear to be a patchwork of discontinuous delivery points. Many services are “gatekept”, with admission based on restrictive eligibility criteria, leaving few walk-in services where individuals can identify themselves as having a need and get a service.
3. It is particularly difficult for young people, people with mental illness or people with language barriers to navigate through the convoluted maze of government and non-profit operations. Consequently, many people don’t know where to turn for the assistance that does exist, have to travel great distances to access the services, or are ineligible for a particular program. Those with challenging behaviours and multiple issues, such as mental illness and drug addiction, can fall between the cracks. A number of residents and service providers consulted for this report expressed the desire, or are looking, for a more co-ordinated approach to the planning and delivery of social services.
4. There is a tension between the caretakers’ concern for individuals with social needs and the reluctance of local communities to have these services in their midst due to the view of residents that a concentration of services in one location serves as a magnet attracting more individuals with social issues. Increasingly a third voice is added to these concerns—that of middle class families whose children or relatives are caught in an addiction syndrome without the availability of rehabilitative services in their own community. The latter are advocating for a dispersal of services outside of the Downtown East Side and outside of Whalley-Guildford. Should we concentrate services where the needs are greatest, or does this create ghettoization? Do some groups need very specialized age- or language-specific services or can ‘mainstream’ services with appropriately trained staff offer the necessary choice for individuals?
5. Continuum of services is important, to prevent youth from recycling into drug use after a short detoxification treatment, for example, or a young sexually assaulted woman from being given medical attention and then left without counselling follow up. Residents, service providers and governments are all seeking integrated strategies. As one interviewee for this report urged, “we have to get together and figure out what we are all doing and get a bigger game plan.”

These issues are urgent, complex and interconnected. They present enormous challenges to which people don’t always know the answer, indicating the amount of work that remains to be done. The stark reality is that without assistance in dealing with the serious personal issues arising from these situations, many individuals are not ready to enter and learn at school, to get and keep employment, or to undertake the training needed in today’s economy.

Along with the tremendous challenges, particularly the limited resources available, there are also opportunities to serve people in a more proactive and preventive way. As noted elsewhere, every dollar spent in prevention saves \$7 in treatment. Residents, businesses, service providers, charitable organizations and government all have important roles to play. There are many local examples of initiatives, partnerships and role models on which to build at all levels in our community, not the least of which are the survivors of poverty and other social ills themselves, who demonstrate remarkable resourcefulness and will in order to reclaim their lives.

II. Introduction

This report arises from the *Community Impact Profile* produced for Surrey Social Futures in 2000, which highlighted some acute social issues in the north Surrey communities of Whalley and Guildford. It focuses more narrowly on these areas and at the same time explores in greater depth a number of social issues that put people at risk in terms of income, health, safety and homelessness. In addition to identifying key issues, this report aims to quantify those issues, where possible, and to put the issues in the context of new or ongoing local initiatives to address them.

The report takes the form of a literature review and consultation process rather than original research. It incorporates available statistical data (Census data and existing secondary documentation) as well as studies, Internet and newspaper articles and reports, and anecdotal information from key informants, including service providers and others who live and work in the Whalley-Guildford area and elsewhere in Surrey. Over eighty individuals representing residents in Whalley and Guildford as well as local business, governments and non-profit organizations were consulted in the preparation of the document.

In contrast with Vancouver's Downtown East Side (DTES), the Surrey area has not been the focus to date of exhaustive studies and reports. There is little readily available data specific to the communities of Whalley and Guildford, other than Census data and RCMP District reports. Because such micro area data are not available, and because many of the issues and jurisdictions are city-wide, reference is also made to Surrey-wide data and trends, and in some cases to jurisdictions such as School District 36 (Surrey/White Rock), the Surrey Human Resource Centre (HRC) service area (Surrey, White Rock and Delta), or the South Fraser Region (including Delta and Langley).

The local initiatives cited here do not claim to be a comprehensive representation of the many programs and services available in Surrey. They focus on services provided in Whalley and Guildford or those available for designated groups, and are merely some of the items for consideration that came to light during the research and consultative process. They are included in this report to put the issues in the context of some of the programs and services currently addressing community needs.

III. Key Social Issues

A recent study notes that the number of poor people living in Canada's big cities rose dramatically (by nearly 34%) between 1990 and 1995. Although the Canadian economy subsequently recovered from the downturn which contributed to this increase, the study nevertheless revealed a trend toward the poor "becoming far more concentrated not only in urban areas, but in the core of big cities". Another report similarly documents "neighbourhood poverty". Although "not a universal problem in all Canadian cities, it seems to be an inevitable trap for certain groups, regardless of where they live." ¹

1. Surrey and the Whalley-Guildford Area

1.1 General Characteristics, Geography and History of the Whalley-Guildford Area

Surrey is the second largest city in British Columbia, with an estimated population in 2001 of 344,000. Because of its affordable housing and large existing immigrant population, over the past few decades Surrey has become home to large numbers of immigrants and to young families. With its broad range of industries, growing businesses, vibrant multicultural community, and excellent transportation links to Greater

Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and the United States, Surrey is an influential city in the Lower Mainland and province.²

Whalley is located in the northwest corner of Surrey. It spans the area between the Delta border on the east, the Fraser River (including the Patullo Bridge) on the north, 144th Street (the borders for Guildford and Fleetwood) on the east, and the line between 90th Avenue and 80th Avenue on the south. It features the modern Gateway commercial complex, three SkyTrain stops, and Surrey Place Mall with its fledgling Technical University of BC.

The largest community in Surrey in terms of land area, Whalley is also the site of some of the earliest residential and commercial development. Known as a very friendly family-oriented community in past decades, today it is bisected by the major commercial thoroughfare of the King George Highway which transports people and goods from Vancouver and neighbouring municipalities to the US border. Growth slowed in Whalley and shifted east to Guildford and other communities in the early 1960's when the Port Mann Bridge and Highway 1 provided another link between Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and the rest of Canada.

Guildford, to the east of Whalley, follows the Fraser River to the Langley border further to the east, and is bordered by Fleetwood and Cloverdale in the south between 96th Avenue and 84th Avenue respectively. Guildford's landmarks are the Guildford Shopping Centre, the Asian Centre currently under construction on 104th Street, and the Guildford Community Centre, of which phase one will open in the late spring of 2001. Much of the booming residential and commercial building in this community relates to the handy access to Highway 1 and the Port Mann Bridge, en route both to Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley.

1.2 Instant City

Whalley and Guildford are the older crest of a tidal wave of expansion. Surrey appeared to leap into existence overnight to become the second largest city in the province. It remains one of the fastest growing cities in one of the country's most rapidly growing regions.

Table 1

	Population Growth, 1986 - 2000				
	1986	1996	% Chg '86-96	2000	% of Total
Surrey	188,356	317,290	68.5	340,094	8.4%
Vancouver	454,087	537,587	18.4	565,905	13.9%
BC	3,004,074	3,882,043	29.2	4,063,760	100.0%

Source: BCStats

Between 1991 and 1996 it grew by 24% (down from the remarkable 35% growth rate between 1986 and 1991), a full ten percentage points higher than the rate for Greater Vancouver. In fact, the five-year period between 1991 and 1996 saw over one-quarter of all new families to Greater Vancouver heading for Surrey. The latter topped all municipalities in growth among all categories of family size, taking (for example) 31% of the growth in families with five or more persons over this period.³

The annual rate of population growth in Surrey has slowed recently to under 2%, down from the torrid 4.8% per year pace between 1991 and 1996. As Table 2 shows, it remains high by regional standards. Over the next few decades Surrey and the other urban regions of the Lower Mainland/Southwest BC will be the second fastest-growing area in the province after the Thompson/Okanagan region.⁴

Whalley and Newton, each with a population of 75,000, were Surrey's largest communities in 1996, accounting for nearly one half of the City's total population of 304,400. Guildford, with 44,000 residents, was the fourth largest community, with 43,000 people or 14.5% of the total population (Figure 1 below). Together the two northern communities of Whalley and Guildford account for nearly four out of ten Surrey residents.

The City's population projections for its communities between 1996 and 2001 show interesting growth patterns. Although smaller than Whalley in terms of population, Guildford's estimated growth between 1996 and 2001 is much greater than Whalley's. The City estimates that Whalley has grown by only 2.7% to around 77,000, whereas Guildford now totals approximately 48,300 people—a growth rate of 9.8%.

Table 2

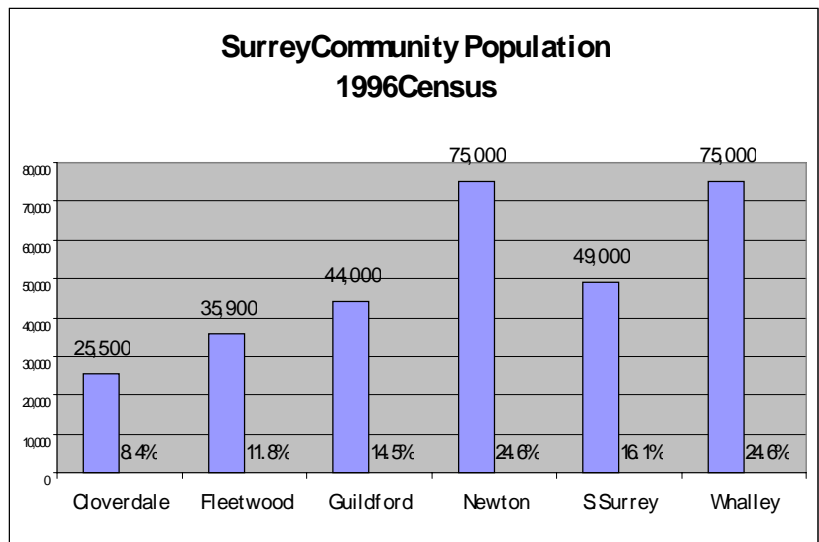
Population Growth, Per Cent Change, 1996 - 2000				
	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00
Surrey	2.7%	1.8%	1.2%	1.2%
Vancouver	1.7%	0.9%	1.1%	1.1%
BC	2.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%

Source: BCStats

Both areas have been overtaken by Newton, however, with its estimated population in 2001 of 91,200 and a five-year growth rate of around 21.6%.⁵

These growth trends mask another reality of Surrey: migration is a fact of life here. Like the province as a whole, it has a high level of people who change residences. Between 1991 and 1996, nearly 60% of the City's people moved at least once. This rate was higher than that for Burnaby, Vancouver and the GVRD as a whole. This may reflect the higher proportion here both of young people, who are more likely to be mobile as they seek employment opportunities and form family units, and of low income residents with characteristically high transiency rates. Guildford had the highest percentage of area residents changing their place of residence over this period (65.6%), while Whalley had the second lowest (at 60%).⁶ This fact, combined with the relatively slower rate of growth in Whalley, suggests that it is in fact a more stable environment in some respects than the other areas.

Figure 1



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

The relationship between transiency and poverty is reflected in the School District's designation of Inner City schools based on a combination of income, income assistance and transience rates. The five schools with highest need on this basis are all located on the Whalley-Guildford corridor between 104th and 108th Avenue.

The two distinctive social features of the City of Surrey are its large youth and immigrant populations, both of which have a significant impact on the kind of issues faced by the residents.

Children

Children are vitally important to any social planning strategy in Surrey primarily because they are the promise of tomorrow, but also because they make up a larger proportion of

Table 3

Youth Population in Whalley and Guildford, 1996				
Age Group	Whalley	% of Total Whalley Population	Guildford	% of Total Guildford Population
0 – 4	6,865	9%	3,515	8%
5 – 9	5,680	8%	3,285	7%
10 – 14	4,625	6%	3,240	7%
Total – Age 0 – 14	17,170	23%	10,040	23%
Total – All Age Groups	74,445	100%	44,360	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

Surrey's population than in other Lower Mainland communities. Increasingly our society comprehends that a preventive investment at the earliest stage of development is one of the most effective contributions to a healthy community. Surrey is a distinctively young community, the result of affordable housing which has attracted many migrant and immigrant families with young children over the past few decades.

The City had the highest percentage of children under age five (8.1%) in the GVRD in 1996, although it ranked second in the degree of increase since 1981 (90.4%, after Pitt Meadows with 103%). In spite of Vancouver's larger population, Surrey has a larger number of children under the age of five (24,680) than Vancouver (24,310). This age group makes up 11.2% of Surrey's population. Now in the age range of 5 to 11, this large group is putting pressure on the City's schools, facilities and services.⁷

In 1996 children in the broader age range of 0 to 14 accounted for nearly 23% of the total Surrey population. This is also considerably higher than in the GVRD (18.4%) and in the City of Vancouver (13.9%).⁸

Table 3 shows that children aged 0 to 14 in 1996 accounted for nearly one-quarter of all residents in Whalley and Guildford (a rate similar to that for the City of Surrey as a whole), but that a slightly higher proportion of Whalley's children were below age 10.⁹

Cultural Diversity

Surrey's cultural diversity reflects the historical pattern of immigration to Greater Vancouver. Greater Vancouver is the location for nearly 85% of all immigrants to the province. Large numbers of recent immigrants (arriving between 1991 and 1996) settled in Surrey because of its already established ethnic communities, as well as its affordable housing and supporting services. Entrepreneur immigrants have brought investment and job creation to the province over the past decade. Nevertheless, the newcomers tend to be younger, with much higher unemployment and poverty rates than both non-immigrants and earlier immigrants (pre-1981).

Nearly 30% of Surrey's population is made up of immigrants. Recent immigrants represent 8% of Surrey's total population and a little over one quarter of all the immigrants to Surrey.¹⁰

The proportion of recent immigrants in Surrey (8%) is less than that in Greater Vancouver as a whole (10.5%), as well as in Richmond (20.6%), Vancouver (13.4%), and Burnaby (14.9%). They make up 10.8% of the population in Surrey Northwest, compared with 13.9% in Vancouver Eastside.¹¹

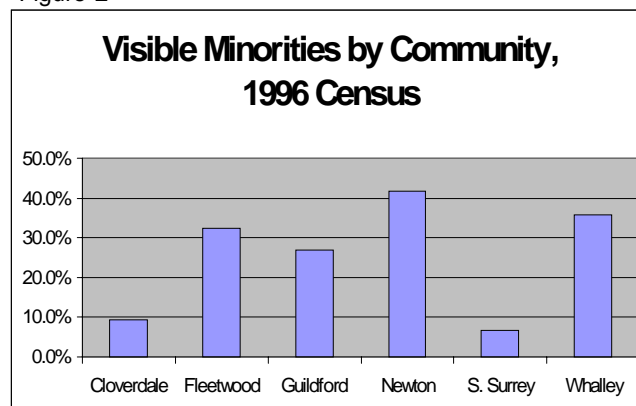
Of the immigrants to Surrey over this period, the largest groups were from India (9,070), Taiwan (2,320), Fiji (1,615) and South Korea (1,050).¹² Guildford is also home to recent immigrants

from Poland, Korea, Latin America, Somalia and Kosovo.

Visible minority ethnic groups now make up approximately 28.8% of the City's population. Of this visible minority population, the two largest groups are South Asian (primarily Indo-Canadian, at 57%) and Chinese (at 15%).¹³

As Figure 2 illustrates, Whalley has the second largest proportion of visible minorities in its population (or 35.7%), after Newton, with 41.8%. Guildford is home to the fourth largest concentration (26.9%) after Fleetwood, with 32.5%.

Figure 2



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

As Table 4 shows, Indo-Canadians make up the great majority of Whalley's visible minorities, a reflection of the fact that Surrey is home to one of the largest Sikh populations in the country. Guildford has a more varied population, led by Chinese, South Asians and Filipinos.

Table 4

Visible Minorities by Ethnicity						
	Whalley		Guildford		Surrey, C	
Black	820	3.1%	590	4.9%	2670	3.1%
South Asian	16575	62.4%	2675	22.4%	49805	57.1%
Chinese	2475	9.3%	3705	31.0%	12815	14.7%
Korean	345	1.3%	1150	9.6%	2550	2.9%
Japanese	480	1.8%	255	2.1%	1475	1.7%
Southeast Asian	1320	5.0%	580	4.9%	3375	3.9%
Filipino	1950	7.3%	1465	12.3%	6830	7.8%
Arab/West Asian	335	1.3%	630	5.3%	1790	2.1%
Latin American	880	3.3%	360	3.0%	2135	2.4%
Visible Minority n.i.e.	940	3.5%	210	1.8%	2065	2.4%
Multiple Visible Minority	425	1.6%	315	2.6%	1630	1.9%
Total - Visible Minority	26560	35.7%	11935	26.9%	87150	28.8%
All Others	47880		32420		215600	
Total - Visible Minority Status	74445		44355		302750	

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

1.3 Neighbourhoods at Risk

While most of the neighbourhoods in Whalley and Guildford are stable family-oriented communities with a mixture of income levels, the kind of urban poverty identified above is evident in pockets within these communities. Pawn shops are clustered at the northern end of the King George Highway. Street people and youth 'hang out' in the vicinity of the SkyTrain, which some refer to as "a Pharmasave" or "the drug corridor". To the north and west of the King George Highway in Whalley can be found impoverished areas with substandard housing located next door to newer developments. Inner City areas have been designated by

the School District from the King George Highway towards 152nd Street, along and to the north of 104th Avenue.

Some of the residents and workers consulted for this report who live or work in Whalley and Guildford say that the conditions are less prevalent or obvious in poor districts here than in the worst parts of Vancouver's Downtown East Side (DTES). Surrey doesn't have the high concentration of 'in your face' destitution in a single small area or the tourist history which has left rundown Single Residency Occupancy (SRO) hotels in its wake.

Other individuals consulted for this report regard certain areas here as "a kind of DTES" with respect to drug dealing and prostitution, or as neighbourhoods with worsening symptoms and the definite potential to be the next DTES unless concerted interventions take place. ("If it happens sooner rather than later, it can have an impact.") Numerous interviewees cited incidences of other social issues related to poverty—more single moms who used to live in Vancouver coming to where the housing is cheaper, street kids having babies, prostitution in the vicinity of the main streets and in some cases near elementary schools. Health workers noted the growing trend of premature and low birth weight babies who have been exposed to drugs and alcohol.

In parts of Bridgeview and Brownsville, the older sections of Whalley near the Fraser River, poor people and those engaged in the drug and sex trade find rental homes and trailer park accommodation among the auto wrecking establishments. In some instances run-down properties are held for investment by absentee landlords speculating on the prospect of better prices as redevelopment occurs, but may be shut down by police when criminal activity is detected on the premises.

Signs of potential urban decay can be found in areas of concentrated low cost housing, high crime rates, a high proportion of income-assisted residents and people with disabilities facing enormous challenges, children in care, teen mothers—individuals with a high need for services who are interacting with caring but stressed social service workers whose ranks are subject to high levels of turnover.

Surrey has grown so rapidly that the service infrastructure, in spite of the many services available here, appears to have been unable to keep up with it. In the rush to develop housing, schools and hospitals, for example, it has been challenging to focus as well on social issues. In impoverished areas in Whalley and Guildford, the lack of available services can leave low-income residents and service workers with the feeling that things may not really get any better. At the same time, City planners also face the concern of local residents that a concentration of services geared to drug and alcohol use and other social issues may act as a magnet resulting in further deterioration in the community environment.

A third view is beginning to emerge from middle income families whose children have become ensnared in street life or the drug trade. More of these consumers are demanding that services be made available in their home communities to assist with the recovery and rehabilitation process. This view would see the dispersal of social services beyond the concentration in the Downtown East Side and beyond a concentration in Whalley into the various town centres and regions of the Fraser Valley.

1.4 Development and planning

For a time it was thought that the Whalley-Guildford corridor along 104th Avenue could be the main city centre. The absence of development industry enthusiasm, the recognition that the area was too large even for an ambitious plan, and other factors including the arrival of SkyTrain in 1994, caused the focus to shift to downtown Whalley. The 'Surrey City Centre' zone straddling the King George Highway between 96th Avenue and 112th Avenue became the hoped-for regional downtown centre ("the Lower Mainland's Downtown for the Fraser Valley") outlined in the 1976 GVRD Livable Region Plan.¹³ Even with Surrey Place Mall, the North Surrey Recreation Centre and the new Gateway Tower, however, it was not until the year 2000, when the Technical University of BC announced a planned \$100 million campus along with owner-developer ICBC within Surrey Place Mall, that some tangible hope for development and revitalization in Whalley began to revive. Long term plans for Surrey City Centre include a new central library, performing arts centre and recreation centre. In the meantime, the Guildford shopping mall and rapid population and commercial growth in Newton continue to present rival claims to be important regional centres within the borders of Surrey.

In the early 1990s, when rapid redevelopment seemed imminent along with the real possibility of dislocation of existing low-income residents, draft plans for Whalley recognized the importance of providing social amenities and services. The *Surrey City Centre Social Strategy* acknowledged that in the face of anticipated redevelopment, failure to address social planning concerns could result in "ghettoes, crime, isolation, fear and apathy." A Housing Program was recommended to address such issues as quality affordable, temporary, and special needs housing.¹⁴

The pace of redevelopment in Whalley stalled for much of the 1990s, with some of the commercial and residential momentum shifting to Guildford and other town centres. City Development efforts were directed towards managing frenetic population growth and the challenges of attracting business in a poor economic climate.

There is no neighbourhood or community plan for Whalley or Guildford as exists for newer areas such as Cloverdale, Rosemary Heights, and other areas. The City's Social Planning Committee, which has been in existence since 1991, is a committee of Council with one Councillor and Council-appointed community representatives. With its very limited resources, the Surrey Social Planning Committee has established a program of social planning awards, and both facilitates and supports other community initiatives.

2. Poverty

Those who work with impoverished people are astonished at the rapidity with which a person's life can deteriorate to a point where they are without hope. The poverty is an invisible barrier that isolates individuals from what we think of as mainstream society. Poor people are unable to count on having food throughout the month, or being able to get on a bus or take part in normal leisure and recreation activities. Poverty eliminates the choices that others assume in their lives. It leaves seniors and single parents barricading themselves in substandard housing, fearful of neighbourhood violence. Low levels of education, labour force participation, affordable housing and health are key contributing factors to urban poverty.

2.1 Factors Contributing to Poverty

Education

Education has an enormous well-documented impact on both employment and income. Local counsellors of victims of family violence and other issues related to poverty see lack of education as a major factor. Where the family head has a university degree, the average income is more than double those families whose head has a high school (or less) educational level.¹⁵ There are clear links as well between education (or literacy) and both health and socio-economic wellbeing.

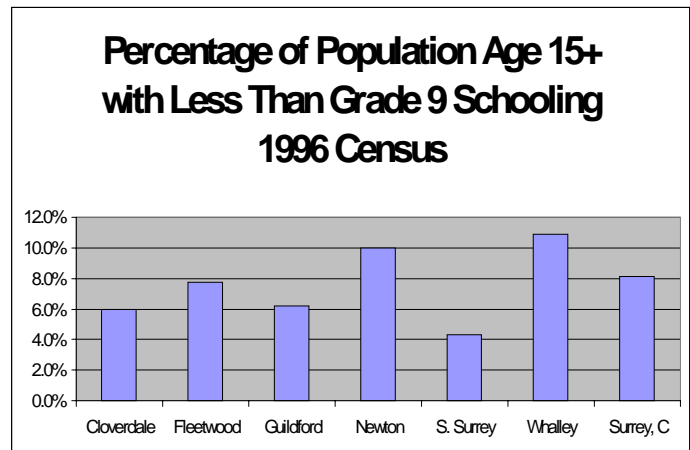
Literacy relates directly to one's ability to get and maintain work, and thus to pay for the necessities of life. Even literate students who fail to graduate, however, will likely have limited job opportunities and uncertain income prospects.¹⁶

In 1996, 8.1% of Surrey's population age 15 and up had less than a Grade 9 education. Although lower than that for Vancouver, this rate was higher than that in Richmond (6.6%), Burnaby (7.7) and Greater Vancouver as a whole (7.2%). Within Surrey, Whalley and Newton both had higher than the City's average proportion in this category, while Guildford and the other town centres had a lower than average proportion.

Youth aged 15-19 with less than Grade 9 education had an unemployment rate of 33% in Surrey in 1996. Those without a secondary school certificate fared only slightly better, with unemployment rates of between 27% and 16%.¹⁷

Table 5 shows the educational levels of Whalley and Guildford's labour force (a combination of employed and unemployed) compared with those for the City of Surrey in 1996. Whalley is consistently above the City average with respect to the proportion of its residents who had less than high school completion, while Guildford is slightly above average.

Figure 3



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

Table 5

Labour Force by Educational Level, 1996						
	Guildford		Whalley		City of Surrey	
	# in L.F.	% in L.F.	# in L.F.	% in L.F.	# in L.F.	% in L.F.
Less than grade 9	675	3%	2180	6%	6360	4%
Grades 9-10 without secondary certificate	1590	7%	4080	10%	13115	8%
Grades 11-13 without secondary certificate	2840	12%	5640	14%	19770	12%
Grade 9-13 with secondary certificate	3610	15%	5985	15%	24330	15%
Trades certificate or diploma	765	3%	1430	4%	5655	4%
Some University or Other Non-university Without Certificate or Diploma	3705	16%	5480	14%	23225	15%
University or Non-University With Certificate or Diploma	7360	31%	11240	29%	47390	30%
University with University Degree	2875	12%	3220	8%	19185	12%
Total - Highest level of schooling	23430	100%	39260	100%	159025	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

Table 6 illustrates unemployment rates by level of education, demonstrating that individuals who were unemployed in Whalley, whatever their educational level, had higher unemployment rates than the Surrey average, while unemployment rates in Guildford were generally lower than the City average.

Table 6

Unemployed by Level of Schooling and Unemployment Rates, 1996						
	Guildford		Whalley		City of Surrey	
	# Unemp.	Un. Rate	# Unemp.	Un. Rate	# Unemp.	Un. Rate
Less than grade 9	120	18%	615	28%	1715	27%
Grades 9-10 without secondary certificate	290	18%	840	21%	2445	19%
Grades 11-13 without secondary certificate	330	12%	990	18%	2480	13%
Grade 9-13 with secondary certificate	240	7%	670	11%	2170	9%
Trades certificate or diploma	40	5%	205	14%	505	9%
Some Univ. or Other Non-univ. Without Certificate or Diploma	295	8%	810	15%	2510	11%
University or Non-University With Certif. or Diploma	650	9%	1065	9%	3590	8%
University with University Degree	245	9%	255	8%	1130	6%
Total - Highest level of schooling	2220	9%	5445	14%	16555	10%

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

The Surrey School District is one of the fastest growing in the Lower Mainland and the largest in the province, with 93 elementary schools, 19 secondary schools, and 23 independent schools in 1999. New schools are planned and built every year. In spite of the challenges facing the Surrey School District (including the rapid population growth and the large number of students who have English as a Second Language), the percentage of eligible Grade 12 students graduating in 1998/99 was approximately equal to the provincial rate (92%) and higher than that for Vancouver.

In 1999-2000, 92.5% of Surrey School District students enrolled in Grade 12 went on to graduate, compared with a provincial rate of 91.8%. The Surrey rate represented a slight increase over the previous year. The rate of university eligibility for local graduates in 1998/99 was 37.2%, lower than the provincial rate of 39.6%.

In recent years the percentage of eligible Grade 12 students who did not graduate has been around 8%. Some of these students will rewrite exams or continue their education at a later date. Even though GED education is currently free in BC, youth who drop out of school without completing Grade 12 may require small group outreach educational services in order to overcome issues related to failure in high school, fear of returning to school after a lengthy absence, and even intimidation by the large institutional environment. An interesting development and possible model is the offering of a Humanities 101 course by the University

of British Columbia, and, more recently, in the Portland Hotel in Vancouver’s Downtown East Side by some former students of the course.

Schools are crucial for children and youth in preventing or ameliorating such social issues as alcohol and drug misuse, street or criminal activity, and other mental health conditions including depression and suicidality. A recent document points to a “long standing systemic crisis” with respect to providing appropriate school placements for those in care or at risk of coming into care, including long waitlists and inadequate alternate school options for at risk or multi-barriered youth.¹⁸

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Education has been a priority for the provincial government, which has built many new schools and renovated others, has funded the expansion of Kwantlen University College, and supported the development of TechBC in Surrey City Centre.
- Adult Basic Education programs in the college system are currently tuition-free, and post-secondary tuition fees have been frozen for a number of years.
- Whalley-based Nisha Family and Children’s Services Society (Nisha), in partnership with Kwantlen University College, offers an outreach educational upgrading program to support youth aged 19 to 24 in completing their GED and entering further post-secondary education.
- The fee-based Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), which helps individuals earn credit for skills and knowledge they already possess, is available through Kwantlen University College.
- OPTIONS: Services to Communities Society (OPTIONS) operates Lee School, an alternate program for Grades 8 to10 funded by the Ministry for Children and Family and the Surrey School District.
- TREES, an alternate school operated by Nisha in partnership with the Surrey School District, offers special education, counselling, recreational and cultural activities at Bear Creek in Newton.

Labour Force Participation

Surrey’s unemployment rate is one of the highest in the GVRD, according to 1996 Census data. At that time it was 10.4%, having decreased slightly from 10.6% in 1991. It was higher, for example, than that in Burnaby (9%), Vancouver (9.8%) and the GVRD as a whole (8.6%).¹⁹

As the charts below illustrate, Whalley had the lowest proportion of its population employed in 1996, compared with other Surrey communities, followed by Newton and Guildford. Accordingly, these were also the communities with the highest unemployment rates, led by Whalley.

Figure 4

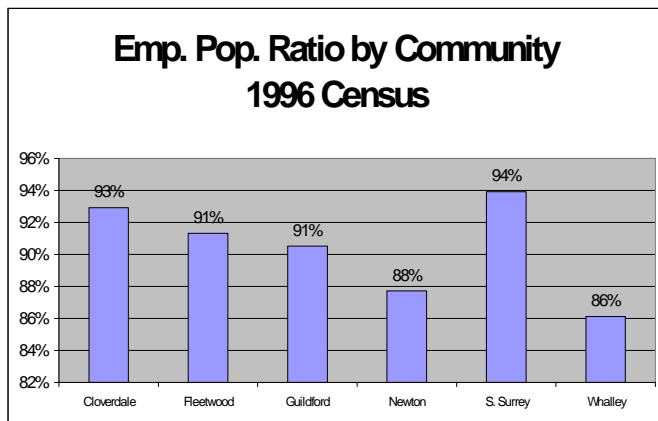
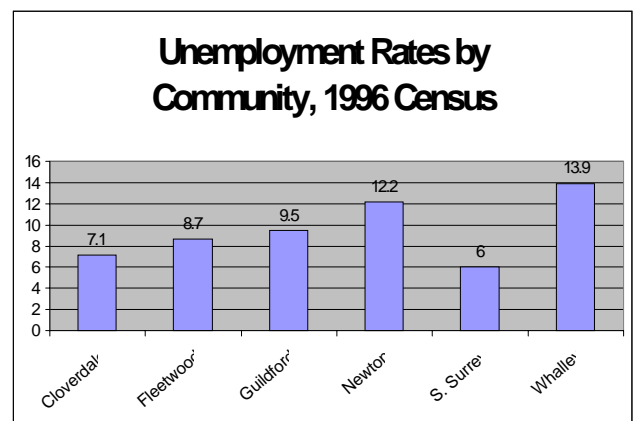


Figure 5



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

Unemployment is a dominant social issue. Like homelessness, it is a major causal factor, as well as the presenting face and sum of, a complex range of barriers and health and social issues. First and foremost is the strong association with poor health. "One Canadian study found that the unemployed have significantly more activity limitations, anxiety, depressive symptoms, disability days, health problems, hospitalization, physician visits and psychological distress than the employed."²⁰

Poor physical and mental health as well as lack of education are key factors resulting in unemployment or underemployment. Many of those who access the 24-hour drop-in Front Room in Whalley, for example, are labourers who find casual work through a temporary work agency in Whalley, for which they are paid in cash. The factors that keep them from getting better jobs include lack of education and social skills, chronic health or addiction problems and mental health issues. Literacy presents a major barrier to employment in today's knowledge-based economy.

Another key factor in unemployment or underemployment is race. A recent study (Canadian Race Relations Foundation, News Release, 10 January 2001) confirms that 'hidden discrimination' and 'polite racism' bar Aboriginal people and visible minorities from equal access to work. (See the further sections on these groups below.)

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The federal government's recent Speech from the Throne announced a national strategy to boost adult literacy levels.
- HRDC has increased the number of community and designated group employment centres and employment-related programs in the area over the past few years, providing greater access to job search, career planning and labour market information.
- The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security provides a number of employment-related programs to BC Benefits participants in Surrey, including Workplace Based Training (on-the-job experience and training for one year) and the Jobs Partnership Program.

2.2 Cost of Living and Low Income

The Greater Vancouver area is one of the most expensive in the country, mainly due to the extremely high cost of accommodation. Although the cost of housing in the Surrey Human Resource Centre of Canada (HRCC) area falls between that in Vancouver/Burnaby/Richmond (at the top end) and the lower priced areas further up the Fraser Valley, the median price of homes in Surrey in March 2001 was \$230,000.

Average family income in real terms (minus inflation) dropped steeply in Greater Vancouver in the first half of the 1990s, falling by nearly 10% between 1990 and 1995. Over this period both the poorest and the richest families were on the increase. The largest increase in poor families (those earning below \$10,000 per year) was in urban centres like Vancouver (up by nearly 22%) and Surrey (a rise of 18%). By 1995 Surrey was one of a number of municipalities in Greater Vancouver with below average family incomes.²¹

Table 7

Family Income by Number of Families, 1995				
Municipality	Under \$10,000 Family Income	% of Total Families	\$10,000-\$19,999 Family Income	% of Total Families
Burnaby	3,815	8.3%	4,625	10.0%
New Westminister	655	5.4%	1,075	8.8%
Surrey	4,990	5.9%	8,940	10.6%
Vancouver	9,820	8.2%	14,450	12.1%

Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada, cited in GVRD Strategic Planning Department Demographic Bulletin (June 1998)

The higher than average unemployment rate for Surrey is reflected in the lower than average family income. For Surrey residents the average family income in 1995 was \$54,905—below that for the Province (\$56,527), Vancouver (\$57,620) and the GVRD (\$60,438). It was, however, higher than that in Burnaby (\$53,842). With respect to those families with incomes below \$20,000 per year, however, Table 7 shows that Surrey has a lower proportion than Vancouver does.

Table 8

Average Annual Household Income 1996	
Cloverdale	\$54,128
Fleetwood	\$57,855
Guildford	\$47,388
Newton	\$51,202
South Surrey	\$59,658
Whalley	\$42,462
City of Surrey	\$54,470

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census cited in City of Surrey Planning & Development Information Report

Within Surrey, Whalley and Newton had the lowest average household income of all Surrey communities in 1991. Five years later (Table 8), Guildford had replaced Newton in the second lowest spot.²²

Statistics Canada's low income cut off (LICO) provides a way of identifying those individuals and families who are 'relatively worse off than the average'. That is, they generally spend over 55% of their income on food, shelter and clothing.²³ The incidence of low income increased across the country between 1990 and 1995, but has likely declined since 1998. It is still the case, nevertheless, that "social assistance incomes for all family types in

all provinces are well below the LICO lines—even including child and other benefits paid on top of basic benefits."²⁴

In 1995 nearly one in five (or 18.8%) of families and two in five (41.9%) of unattached individuals in Surrey were living below the low income cut-off levels which are generally regarded as an approximation of poverty. In this respect Surrey's incidence of low income was almost identical to that for the GVRD (18.7% and 43.0% respectively). It was lower than the incidence in Vancouver (24.6% and 47.0% respectively).²⁵

Research has established the strong connection between income and health. Children raised in low income homes, for example, "are over two-and-a-half times more likely to have a problem with one or more basic abilities such as hearing, mobility, speech and vision."²⁶

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The provincial government has a broad range of income and medical assistance programs to address poverty. It reduced taxes for low income residents in 1999 and returns some cash to low-income residents through the BC Sales Tax Credit.
- The provincial Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers supports community efforts to build and maintain healthy, self-reliant communities. Its Community Solutions Program funds community-based non-profit organizations to assess and address the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups and to develop support for multi-barriered low-income residents to participate in their communities, obtain employment and enhance their quality of life.
- Provincial programs supporting the transition from welfare to work include
 - Payments of up to \$150 per month for additional child care costs for parents who leave income assistance for employment and some other costs (clothing, transportation, tools; extended Medical Services Plan premiums)
 - A flat rate earnings exemption allows single people to keep up to \$100 of their employment earnings each month (\$200 for couples or families).
- Since July 1998, under the National Child Benefit program, the BC Family Bonus is issued along with the Canada Child Tax Benefit, to assist low and modest income families with the costs of raising children. The amount of the benefit to each family is adjusted according to the information provided on the previous year's income tax return. The Child Tax Benefit was raised by around \$250 per child in July 2000 and the supplement for low-income families will increase by \$300 per child in July 2001.

- OPTIONS operates Sunset Grove, a 25 unit townhouse complex funded by BC Housing Management Commission for families on a low to moderate income.

Hunger: Food Bank Usage

The most obvious indication of poverty in our community is food bank usage. Not having enough money to buy food is a grim reality for almost 2% of the population in BC who had to resort to food banks in 1999. The Surrey Food Bank at 10732 135st in Whalley recently reported on the number of people assisted per month in 1999 and 2000. Over these two years there were approximately 3,800 household visits on average per month to the Food Bank. A household can vary from one to 11 individuals. Over this same period the number of individual visits (adults, teens, children and babies) averaged 9,600 per month. In addition to these individuals, the Food Bank distributes food to approximately 18 agencies that have food programs in the city. It has been estimated that 40% of Canadian food bank users are under the age of 18.²⁷

In 2000 Health Canada valued the average cost of a nutritious food basket for a family of four at \$592 per month.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- **Food for Kidz**, a coalition of groups involved in projects related to hunger, will complete an assessment of the extent of child hunger in Guildford and Langley City by June 2001. The project, which involves working with families and youth experiencing hunger and interviewing key informants, is funded by the United Way, Royal Bank, and South Fraser Health Region, with Aldergrove Neighbourhood Services as the host agency.
- In addition to the Surrey Food Bank, the Salvation Army's Soup Kitchen in Whalley serves free sandwiches to those in need from 11:30 to 1 p.m. Monday to Fridays and the South Fraser Community Service's Bread for Life program offers free dinners for clients.
- There are a range of school and summer lunch programs for children in Surrey.

BC Benefits Recipients

Nearly one-third of residents in BC have collected welfare for at least one month out of the past eight years, a reminder that "personal financial crisis, often because of job loss, marital break-up, illness, accident or sometimes simply a stretch of bad luck" can strike across a broad spectrum of the population. In 1996 Surrey had approximately 18,000 people on income assistance, or 11% of the population aged 16 to 64. This was the third highest rate in the Lower Mainland after Vancouver (12%) and New Westminster (12%).

In 1996 the province revised its welfare programs under the BC Benefits Act. Between that date and 2000, the number of people on income assistance in BC declined dramatically by more than 28%. The rapid drop is the result of a number of factors, including the out-migration of people to the better performing economies of Alberta and Ontario in search of work, the gradually improving economy here towards the end of the decade, and legislative changes to the income assistance program which generally had the effect of containing costs in the wake of federal transfer payment cutbacks. The BC Benefits Act (1996) was a double-edged sword, being both a "proactive approach aimed at getting employable people the training, education and skills they need to enter the labour market" as well as making it more difficult for some individuals to be eligible for benefits.²⁸ According to one service provider, those who become recipients are the ones who have "stuck it out" through the program barriers "because they really do need [the income assistance]."

HRDC data on BC Benefits recipients in the broader Surrey, White Rock and North Delta area (Table 9 below) show a drop of over one-third between 1994 and 1999, which was greater than the provincial decline in recipients. The decline in temporarily unemployable recipients over this period (nearly 60%) was much greater than that for employable recipients.²⁹ (Note: the unemployable category in this database excludes mothers with children under age 7).

Table 9

Surrey, White Rock, North Delta BC Benefits Recipients (All Ages) Annual Averages, 1994-1999					
	Total	Employable	% of Total	Unemployable	% of Total
1994	19108	15547	81.4%	3562	18.6%
1995	20235	16643	82.2%	3592	17.8%
1996	17824	14253	80.0%	3572	20.0%
1997	15543	12739	82.0%	2805	18.0%
1998	14560	12690	87.2%	1870	12.8%
1999	12686	11242	88.6%	1444	11.4%
	-33.60%	-27.70%		-59.50%	

Source: HRDC BC/Yukon Summary Information Database

Table 10 shows the number and regional proportion of cases as of March 2000 and the smaller degree of percentage decline within the South Fraser Region than in other Lower Mainland areas between November 1999 and November 2000.

Table 10

BC Benefits Recipients by Region, November 2000			
	No. of Cases	% of Total Regional Cases	% Change from Nov. '99
Vancouver	29,394	19.1%	-5.1%
Rainbow (Richmond, Burnaby, North Shore, Sunshine Coast)	12,830	8.4%	-5.3%
Fraser North/Upper Valley (Port Moody to Hope)	18,986	12.4%	-2.7%
Fraser South (Surrey, Delta, White Rock, Langley)	17,628	11.5%	-2.1%
Total – British Columbia	153,529	100.0%	-1.6%

Source: BC Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, Key Facts and BC Benefits Caseload Statistics

The Income Assistance program is now geared to provide short term support and shelter income for employable, temporarily excused or disabled persons. In order to receive benefits, recipients must participate in employment-related programs or be actively looking for work. Temporary exceptions include those on Disability Level 1 (with medical conditions lasting up to six months), single parents with a child under 7 or with a physical or mental impairment; those in special care facilities, private hospitals or hospitals for extended care; those with medical conditions that prevent employability such as drug or alcohol or mental health conditions; and those recently separated from an abusive spouse. Disability Level 2 is for those aged 18 and older with severe long-term mental or physical impairments.

Similar legislative changes under the federal Employment Insurance Act in the 1990s also resulted in dramatic decreases in the numbers in receipt of EI benefits, particularly women, youth and those employed in seasonal work.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- When families leave welfare for work, they retain the federal National Child Benefit Supplement, which was increased in July 2000.

The ‘Hidden’ Population

One result of these changes to Income Assistance and Employment Insurance, according to a number of individuals consulted for this report, is a greater number of people falling through the cracks and even pushed into dire emergency situations because of tightened eligibility requirements. The reality is that no one really knows what happens to these people, whether they are living on the streets or resorting to crime in order to survive. One service provider cites women returning to abusive homes and people who are disabled being housed and supported by family members, suggesting that “we don’t have less poor; we have more.”

Another result is the growing numbers of ‘multibarriered’ clients who are chronic recipients of income assistance, often those with severe mental health or learning disabilities. These clients are invisible in another sense, in that they have disabilities that are not always obvious yet which keep them from either getting or keeping employment. They are the clients who must first deal with illiteracy, anger management, abuse, addiction and self-esteem issues, who are least able to cope with government bureaucracies, are not ready to attend job clubs and yet who face difficulties receiving the counselling needed. Some people interviewed for this report indicated that the issues of self-esteem are “huge”. Those who lacked appropriate role models in their upbringing need basic life skills related to social behaviours such as being on time and wearing clean clothes. The challenge is that these are the issues that do not tend to change overnight and that can require enormous resources of patience and caring from service providers.

Table 11

Disability Benefits Recipients (Level 1 and 2) - British Columbia	
Date	Total Recipients
December 1995	23,083
November 1999	35,250
October 2000	39,086
November 2000	39,675

Source: MSDES

Recent changes to disability benefits criteria have resulted in increases in the number of total recipients of provincial Disability (Levels 1 and 2 benefits--see Table 11).

A third impact is on government and service provider staff, who report overwhelming workloads, more staff on stress leave, and increasing difficulty recruiting social workers.

A single employable person currently receives \$325 per month for shelter. A one-parent family with one child receives \$520 per month in shelter allowance.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- In addition to the BC Benefits program of support for low-income residents, the provincial government also funds a variety of employment-related programs for those on income assistance.
- The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security continues to incorporate life skills into modules of various programs for income recipients.
- Job Action Workshops (JAWS) are funded by HRDC and offered by SRS Vocational Services Society. They provide assessment, counselling and referrals for BC Benefits participants. The service identifies pre-employment and employment barriers, and assists with accessing other community resources and developing action plans to address barriers.

Transportation

In the land of the suburbs, the car is king. Nowhere is this more true than for Surrey, where, as one resident noted, "If you don't have a car, you're dead." SkyTrain provides quick and easy access to other parts of Greater Vancouver, but getting around one of the largest cities in North America in terms of land size still presents enormous challenges for those dependent on public transportation. One observer noted that "if you're not on a bus route, you are talking about an hour or an hour and a half to get anywhere." The situation is particularly stressful for single parents and recent immigrants who must travel to appointments where no child care is available. Service providers note that the poverty and inability to access transportation exacerbates the isolation of poverty, creating a feeling of being trapped. IA recipients receive an allowance for transportation only in certain instances, such as visits with training consultants or vocational rehabilitation staff.

2.3 Groups Vulnerable to Long-term Poverty

Poverty is key to various social issues because of its enormous impact on the development prospects of children and adults. *The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty* states that poverty has been increasing among young families and children in lone-parent families. Moreover, "some of the highest rates of poverty are found among Aboriginal peoples, members of visible minority groups and persons with disabilities." While "too many" seniors are poor, their poverty rate has been declining between 1981 and 1997. A particular concern is the fact that in 1997 nearly half of all unattached elderly females in Canada lived in poverty.³⁰

Single Parent Families Headed by Women

Single parent families led by women are among the poorest in our society. Lone parents are the second largest group (after individuals) of Surrey HRC area's BC Benefits Recipients. In the first quarter of 1999 they represented 32.2% all of income assistance recipients in the Surrey/North Delta/White Rock area, after single recipients at 47.1%.³¹

This is also one of Canada's fastest growing social groups. Between 1991 and 1996 the numbers grew at a faster rate than that for married and common-law couples combined.

Within the GVRD, Vancouver/Burnaby/New Westminster has the greatest proportion of lone parents, but the Surrey/Delta/Langley/White Rock area has seen the greatest increase between 1991 and 1996, as can be seen in Table 12 below.

Table 12

Regional Share of Lone-Parent Families, 1996		
Region	Lone-Parent Families as % of Total GVRD Population, 1996	% Growth 1991-1996
Burrard Peninsula (Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster)	43.1%	19.0%
South Fraser (Surrey, Delta, Langley, White Rock)	27.7%	38.9%
North East (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody)	9.7%	38.4%
North Shore (North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Lions Bay)	8.5%	16.6%
Ridge Meadows (Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows)	3.6%	33.8%

Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada, cited in GVRD Strategic Planning Department Demographic Bulletin (March 1998)

There were 11,585 lone parent families in Surrey in 1996. They made up 13.8% of all families in the City, similar to the proportion in BC and slightly less than that in Vancouver (16.4%) and Burnaby (14.7%).

In the Surrey HRC service area females represent around 83% of the heads of all lone-parent families, and an even larger proportion (93%) of local lone parents in receipt of BC Benefits Recipients.³²

Lone parents in the City of Surrey live mainly in the northern communities where the most affordable housing is located. Almost one-half of all lone-parent families in Surrey live in the Whalley-Guildford area.³³ As Table 13 indicates, Whalley is home to over one-third (36%) and Guildford to 17% of all lone-parent families in Surrey.

Table 13

Lone Parents by Gender and Town Centre, 1996				
	Whalley		Guildford	
	Total	% of City Total	Total	% of City Total
Female Lone Parent Families	3085	32.1%	1500	15.6%
Total Lone Parent Families	3680	35.5%	1755	16.9%

Income levels for female lone parents are starkly lower than average. In Surrey the average family income is \$54,905 for all families, \$49,057 for husband-and-wife families, and \$25,876 for female lone-parent families. The highest risk of poverty is faced by lone parent mothers under age 25.

Source: Surrey HRCC, Lone Parents Profile (1999)

A single mom in her late twenties with one child currently receives \$377 per month support allowance and \$520 per month (maximum) in shelter allowance; a single mom with three children receives \$379 in support allowance and \$650 in shelter allowance. The federal government’s National Child Benefit now partially subsidizes the provincial BC Family Bonus, bringing an additional \$106 per child per month to single moms on welfare. This amount, however, may be deducted off an individual’s welfare cheque under certain circumstances.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Seniors with low incomes and people with disabilities may apply to TransLink for an annual subsidized bus pass.

While lone parents in Surrey generally have similar education levels to the population as a whole, Whalley has a higher number of lone parents with less than high school education. Many single parents in Whalley and Guildford work in lower paid retail, clerical and restaurant jobs, with part-time shifts and few benefits. These parents are dependent on the availability of reasonably priced good quality child care, and their low incomes keep them on a fragile tightrope between destitution and a level where they can just cope.³⁴

The isolation of poor lone parents who lack the exterior supports of family and friends is a serious concern, exacerbated as it is by the difficulties of getting around Surrey without a car. There are reportedly not enough subsidized housing units for women with young families in Surrey or programs that assist them with stabilizing their lives and with life skills such as budgeting.

A recent report cites the “continuing high number of women [in Surrey] living in poverty and requiring additional community resources and support (e.g. advocacy with ministries, particularly around child custody issues), especially single mothers.”³⁵ Other support workers suggest exploring the possibility of expanding the Family Place model in other communities in Surrey to help this group, which has particular difficulty accessing services using public transportation.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The federal government's recent throne speech announced a nation-wide program of income supplements to encourage single parents on welfare to get work. This will be modelled on BC's pilot "self-sufficiency project", in which over a third of participants found full-time jobs. Under this program, single parents who get full-time work are eligible to receive an annual income supplement of up to \$12,000 for three years, offsetting the loss of welfare benefits.
- The joint MSDES-HRDC planning process in the Surrey-North Delta-White Rock service area in 2000/2001 identified a number of initiatives that would assist lone parents to become employable.³⁶
- Surrey Family Place in Guildford, run by OPTIONS with federal, United Way and other funding, helps single moms to counter the problem of isolation and also to develop parenting skills and is a drop-in centre with support and educational programs. This is the only centre of its kind in Surrey at present.
- The Ministry for Children and Families funds the Support for Parents of Young Children, a specific six-week group workshop for those with pre-school at risk children.
- Surrey Community Services delivers an in-home family support outreach program and parenting after separation workshops.
- OPTIONS is considering developing a proposal for a Ministry of Health Parents and Children Together (PACT) program which helps poor lone parents to stabilize their lives and learn such life skills as budgeting.

Visible Minorities and Recent Immigrants

The arrival of large numbers of immigrants in recent years requires services to respond to the particular needs resulting from their language and cultural adjustments.

Immigrants and Income

Although it is a myth that immigrants to Canada are and remain impoverished, there is substantial evidence of the poverty and hardship faced by many recent immigrants. The average total income for recent immigrants is less than half that for non-immigrants, as Table 14 shows, and in every category the residents of Surrey Northwest have incomes less than that for the City as a whole.

Table 14

1995 Average Total Income by Age						
	Total Pop. 15+		Ages 25-44		Ages 45-64	
	Surrey	Surrey Northwest	Surrey	Surrey Northwest	Surrey	Surrey Northwest
Non Immigrants	\$27,843	\$24,724	\$31,063	\$27,986	\$36,598	\$30,864
All Immigrants	\$22,405	\$19,767	\$23,612	\$21,819	\$26,729	\$22,473
Recent Immigrants	\$13,688	\$13,292	\$16,726	\$15,937	\$12,056	\$12,059

Source: Martin Spigelman, *Looking Ahead* (1999)

Local agencies providing services to new immigrants face funding uncertainties with regard to a number of their programs and services, related in part to the transfer of responsibility from the federal Citizenship and Immigration Canada to the provincial Ministry for Multiculturalism and Immigration in 1998.

The low income levels shown above reflect the major barriers that continue to be faced by recent immigrants—inadequate English language skills, systemic discrimination, underemployment in relation to their educational levels, and isolation. The joint federal/provincial (LMDA) plan for Surrey in 2000/2001 identifies, among other items, the need for services for multi-barriered clients, funds for training and upgrad-

ing newcomers, and improving access to appropriate vocational and personal counselling services for immigrants, especially women.³⁷

A small number of refugees relocate to Surrey upon arrival at the Vancouver Airport, and most find low rental accommodation in the Whalley-Guildford corridor area or near the Whalley-Newton border. Since the Asian crisis in the mid 1990s, there has been a decrease in immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan and an increase in those arriving with lower socio-economic backgrounds from mainland China. In addition to the barriers cited above, refugee claimants face employment barriers such as restrictions imposed under temporary work permits and the ability of employers to identify their status by SIN numbers, from which they assume the applicant is only here temporarily.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The Ministry for Children and Families funds various programs at Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society (SDISS), including the Multicultural Women's Program (providing service to six ethno-specific groups—Vietnamese, Polish, Spanish, Korean, Chinese and South Asian), and the Somali Women and Children's Program.
- Health Canada funds the SDISS Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) to support immigrant families with young children to overcome isolation and to enhance parenting skills.
- The Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration funds Settlement information and referral programs for recent immigrants and refugees at SUCCESS in Guildford and SDISS in Newton; the latter currently has a Kosovar refugee settlement counsellor on staff as well.
- The United Way supports the newly formed Surrey Delta Refugee Service Network, which brings together government and community agency staff as well as schools, churches and private sponsors.
- SDISS has been selected as the first immigrant servicing society in BC to serve as a pilot agency with the Ministry for Children and Families. It offers various clinical services (counselling and outreach) but its annual report (1999-2000) cites inadequate counselling hours, a lack of funding resources for the development of an effective support system, the need for more language specific and culturally appropriate counselling programs in Surrey to which clients can be referred, and the need to provide child care for infants and toddlers.
- OPTIONS has delivered
 - A Multicultural Services Program, funded by the Ministry of Multiculturalism, United Way, CAPC, and Ministry of Attorney General, which laid off some staff recently due to lack of funding, and
 - Nobody's Perfect Parenting sessions funded by MCF and Ministry of Health and continues to deliver
 - Not in Our Town, a collaborative community development initiative to overcome racism and celebrate diversity, which organizes group discussion on the video by this title
 - A South Asian and multilingual line to provide settlement information and referrals.

English Literacy

The recent rapid influx of Asian and South Asian immigrants to Surrey continues to impact the existing educational and language support services. English As A Second Language (ESL) enrolments are high, as Table 15 shows. Both Whalley and Guildford have above-average ESL enrolments for elementary children, and Guildford has above-average enrolments for secondary school youth.

Wait lists are common for many adult language classes. In November 2000, 32% of the students enrolled at the Invergarry Continuing Education Centre were English As a Second Language pupils.³⁸ Low English literacy levels are frequently cited as a barrier to employment in the Lower Mainland. This is an obvious prerequisite to entering training programs or a competitive labour market. Although there are a variety of existing services in Surrey, they appear to be overwhelmed by the demand. Long waiting lists to access

English language training and upgrading are cited by a number of agencies. There are wait lists for all classes offered at SUCCESS in Guildford, for example, and especially for those which provide childminding for immigrants with children under the age of three. Another local English Language instructor noted that students who wish to attend Kwantlen University College's English Language Training programs experience difficulty in accessing English language upgrading.

Table 15

School District #36 (Surrey) Enrolment, November 2000					
School Level	Whalley		Guildford		Total School District
	Total ESL Enrolment	ESL Enrolment as % of School Enrolment	Total ESL Enrolment	ESL Enrolment as % of School Enrolment	ESL Enrolment as % of School Enrolment
Elementary	1,725	29.0%	3,340	26.9%	24.8%
Secondary	320	8.7%	861	11.9%	9.6%

Source: School District #36 (Surrey)

In addition to English language literacy, there are concerns with regard to those immigrants who are illiterate in their own mother tongue.

Job Action Workshops (JAWS) recently identified the following resource gaps:

- Lack of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals who have English as a second language
- Lack of available seats for provincially funded English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) classes (Levels 2, 3, and 4 English language classes)
- A limited number of evening English language classes for working parents
- Need for more basic literacy programs, especially for clients who are illiterate in their first language

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- ESL programs for adults include School District Continuing Education classes, provincial Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration-funded English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) classes at SDISS and SUCCESS, Kwantlen University College and private classes, and the HRDC-funded 16-week job search and training program for immigrants at Prosoft in Whalley.

Employment Barriers

Surrey's recent immigrants tend to be younger than non-immigrants and earlier immigrants, with a lower participation rate in the labour force, much higher unemployment rates and dramatically lower income levels. A recent study confirms that in spite of higher levels of education, visible minorities end up with lower employment and income levels. While lack of Canadian work experience is a major barrier to employment here, the study notes that 'hidden discrimination' and 'polite racism' can prevent recent immigrants from gaining equal access to jobs.³⁹ Differing cultural values play a part as well. One local immigrant service worker cited the case of a graduate client who was laid off from an accounting position. By concentrating solely on her computer work, which would make her an ideal worker in her country of origin, she was seen as not being the 'team player' that is so highly valued in a North American setting.

It is still difficult for foreign-born residents to have their educational and professional credentials recognized here. Although there is a province-wide organization providing accreditation services (the International Credit Evaluation Services, or ICES), the fees are often more than recent immigrants can pay.

As Table 16 shows, Surrey has the highest unemployment rate for older recent immigrants in Greater Vancouver, and one of the widest gaps in unemployment rates between non-immigrants and recent immigrants.

The unemployment rate for recent South Asian immigrants is double that of East Asians both in Surrey and in Greater Vancouver. The unemployment rates for recent immigrants are even higher for residents of northwest Surrey. The highest unemployment rates are for Southern Asians and West Central Asians/Middle Easterners.⁴⁰

Table 16

Recent Immigrant and Non-Immigrant Unemployment Rates (%) by Age				
	Non-immigrant		Recent Immigrants	
	25-44	45-64	25-44	45-64
Burnaby	7.3	6.1	16.8	17.2
New Westminster	8.6	7.3	18.1	31.9
Surrey	7.9	5.5	16.8	33.5
Vancouver	7.8	7.4	14.7	18.2
Greater Vancouver	6.8	5.3	14.7	19.6

Source: Martin Spigelman, *Looking Ahead* (1999)

Recent immigrants who are employed tend to be overrepresented in the manufacturing, agriculture and accommodation, food and beverage service industries compared with non-immigrants, and underrepresented in government, educational, health and social service industries. This is true for recent immigrants in both Surrey Northwest and in the City as a whole.⁴¹ Community agencies serving immigrants report that a number of social issues such as stress, anger and alcohol misuse result from the underemployment of individuals who have professional credentials from their country of origin but find their skills not recognized here. Programs to assist in placing them in the area in which they were working are scarce.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The Surrey Immigrant and Visible Minority Labour Market Advisory Group focuses on job-ready clients. It has prepared an employability assessment tool to assist clients to assess their employability in a culturally sensitive manner. This volunteer group is also acting on two recommendations from the recent *Looking Ahead* action plan – organizing community forums and focus groups and developing a Surrey-based information kit on labour market and community integration.
- The Surrey Delta Intercultural Consortium is a network which focuses on pre-employment issues.
- HRDC funds a 3-week job club for immigrants at Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS) with ethnic newspapers and resource materials in Punjabi; a 4-week job club for visible minorities and immigrants at the SUCCESS office in Guildford; a 3-week career planning session for immigrants and a 4-week job club for immigrants in professional and general occupations at Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society in Newton.
- The federal government announced in its recent Throne Speech that it will work in co-operation with the provinces and territories to secure better recognition of the foreign credentials of new Canadians and their rapid integration into Canadian society.
- MSDES, in addition to a number of general programs for Income Assistance recipients, also funds an employment program at SDISS for immigrants on Income Assistance, a 16-week program on workplace readiness for immigrants at Prosoft in Whalley, two Workplace-Based Training programs (BC Works and Destinations), and a 15-week continuous intake youth job readiness program delivered jointly by Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society and Nisha.
- The Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration funds the SDISS Job Focus program for immigrants who have arrived within the previous three years. OPTIONS has a South Asian Information and Crisis

Line and a Multilingual Help Line.

- The UBC Medical Faculty is proposing an examination process for foreign doctors who have received their training and experience outside Canada, the successful completion of which would result in the granting of a licence to practise in BC.

Visible Minority Youth

Immigrant youth, like their Canadian-born peers, are at a crucial stage of self-identification, but with the added family environment of parents who may also be struggling to integrate into Canadian society. Language barriers, family stress or a lack of cultural understanding by other youth or teachers can sometimes make for a difficult transition to adulthood. One local youth worker who has worked with youth detention centres was surprised at the number of Indo-Canadian boys in Burnaby detention institutions. Another serious risk resulting from social isolation is depression or even suicide. A local columnist recently noted that "there is very little culturally competent support available for teens and their families in terms of mediation, counselling, parenting groups and anger management. The bulk of support is done by immigrant serving organizations, which don't get a fair share of dollars from the ministries of education or children and families to carry out such work."⁴² Surrey does not at present have a South Asian or visible minority youth crisis line. Multicultural service workers note that services may not be required for specific ethnic groups in every instance, but that there must be an open door policy in the sense of cultural sensitivity, which would include having a worker available that can speak the appropriate language.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

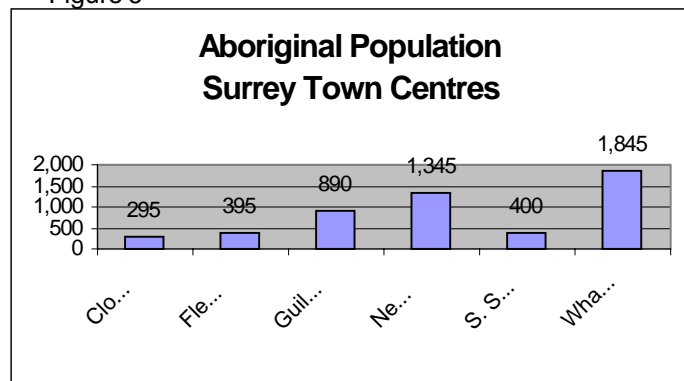
- Surrey School District has a number of multicultural workers assigned to certain schools to help teachers or counsellors contact families, and do interpretative work as well as some group activities.
- Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS) has hired a youth worker.
- The South Fraser Health Region funds the South Asian Inter-Cultural Family Project delivered by OPTIONS. This is a parenting group for parents dealing with conflict and/or issues related to teens belonging to two cultures.

Aboriginal Persons

As Figure 6 shows, Whalley has the highest number of Aboriginal residents within the City of Surrey, and Guildford the third highest. Whalley also has a high Metis non-status population, and is the location for the Metis Provincial Council of BC and Metis Family Services.

The United Nations' human-development index, which compares countries in terms of income, education and life expectancy, has rated Canada the best country in which to live for six years in a row.

Figure 6



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

In the case of Aboriginal people as a group, however, all the social issues appear to converge in a desperate scenario which varies drastically from the overall Canadian population and which belies the UN portrait of Canada. They have "higher high-school dropout rates, more health problems, more cases of sexual abuse, higher levels of unemployment, less income and lower life expectancy than any

other group in Canada.” The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples stated that family violence was identified as a problem in their communities by 25% of Aboriginals, while suicide was identified by 25%, sexual abuse by 25%, and rape by 15%. These factors, along with other social and government policies, contribute to the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children who run away from home to work in the sex trade or who end up in prison.⁴³

A CBC newscast item on 18 December 2000 noted that one-third of Vancouver’s homeless people are Aboriginal. The waiting list for aboriginal apartments ranges from six months to three years.

A recent study confirms the “polite” racism still faced by Aboriginals who are looking for work and the “subtle discrimination” faced by those who are employed.⁴⁴

While alcoholism, which tends to mask the underlying condition of depression, is a major cause of death or injury among native communities, the Royal Commission notes that “while heavy drinking may be more prevalent among natives than it is in the mainstream, the proportion of people who drink on a daily basis is seven times higher among non-natives than among Aboriginals.”⁴⁵

Significant progress is being made in a number of areas. Aboriginal organizations and regional health councils are working diligently to address health and social issues. Educational levels are rising, with a doubling of college and university graduates between 1986 and 1996, and successful private sector businesses operated by Aboriginals are increasing.

Aboriginals (mainly North American Indian, but including Metis or Inuit) make up around 1.7% of Surrey’s and the Greater Vancouver region’s population. In 1996 Surrey had the second largest number of Aboriginals in the area (5,070), after Vancouver with 10,965. The City is also adjacent to two Indian Reserves—the Semiahmoo at the U.S. border, with 195 Aboriginals, and the Katzie First Nation on Barnston Island in the Fraser River, with 175 in 1996.

The majority (61%) of Surrey’s Aboriginals are First Nations people, with Metis accounting for another 35%. The vast majority (80%) of Aboriginals in Surrey live in the Northwest communities. Whalley houses over one-third of the City’s Aboriginals, (or 1,845), with another one-quarter (or 1,345) in Newton and 890 (18%) in Guildford.⁴⁶

A 1998 report noted that a “staggering 79% of native children who live in Vancouver are growing up in families that fall below the poverty line.” This is a major cause for concern in light of the fact that Aboriginal youth are a large and rapidly expanding part of the Aboriginal population, both locally and across Canada. In the Surrey HRC area, those aged 0 to 14 actually outnumber the Baby Boomers (aged 30-49).⁴⁷

Although data on aboriginal lone parents in Surrey’s communities are not available, we know that across the province Aboriginals have a much higher representation among lone parents than non-Aboriginals. In BC in 1996 one-third of all Aboriginal families were lone-parents, compared with only seven per cent in non-Aboriginal families. Nearly half of all Aboriginal children in large urban centres live with only one parent. Greater Vancouver has the third highest percentage of Aboriginal children in lone parent families. Across the province around 35% of children in provincial care are aboriginal, although Aboriginals make up only approximately 3% of the population.⁴⁸

Dramatically high unemployment levels of Aboriginals are also prevalent in our community. The unemployment rate was nearly 19% on average within the City of Surrey in 1996, rising to a peak of 24.4% in Whalley, followed by 20.3% in Guildford. This is in comparison to an unemployment rate of 9.9% for non-Aboriginals. Aboriginal youth aged 15-29 have an unemployment rate nearly seven per cent higher than the rate for all Surrey HRC residents in this age group. The gap rises to 11% for those aged 30 to 44.⁴⁹

The proportion of Aboriginals who have not completed secondary school is much higher than in the non-Aboriginal community in Surrey. The proportion without a university degree is lower, although there is only a slightly smaller proportion holding a post secondary certificate or diploma than among non-Aboriginals. Aboriginal females appear to be opting for education at a greater rate, with more males having only some secondary schooling, and more females holding postsecondary qualifications. The lack of schooling is a major factor in the wage gap of nearly \$7000 between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in our area.⁵⁰

An interesting early childhood initiative is currently being delivered in the interior of BC. The Little Shuswap Indian Band has an early intervention program, delivered by the University of Victoria's School of Child and Youth Care. The First Nations Partnership program incorporates aboriginal beliefs into the childhood education program, thus giving Aboriginal children a greater chance of growing up with a strong sense of self-worth and hope.

Across Canada the incidence of low income for Aboriginals reaches a peak of almost 60% for children under age 6, falling to a still high 30% for those in their early 40s.⁵¹

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- There are 14 Aboriginal organizations in Surrey which provide training and education as well as housing and child services.
 - The provincial Skills Now program encourages participation by Aboriginal people in post-secondary education.
 - Aboriginal organizations, with assistance from HRDC, are increasingly taking control of their own human resource development through Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements.
 - The federal government in its recent throne speech committed to helping Aboriginal people with respect to jobs, health, education, housing and infrastructure. It will take new measures to significantly reduce the incidence of fetal alcohol syndrome and expand an existing program that prepares native children for school.
 - The HRDC Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) replaces the Pathways to Success Initiative and provides Aboriginal organizations (First Nations, Metis and Urban First Nations) that possess the capacity to deliver programming with the ability to plan and implement local services to address employment and training needs for aboriginal people in the Surrey area.
 - Funded by Sto:lo Nation Human Resource Development under the AHRDA initiative, Kwantlen College and Sto:lo Nation HRD have partnered to provide employment and training services for all Aboriginal people in the Surrey area.
 - \$3.7million has been allocated for temporary housing for Aboriginals over a three year period as part of the \$751 million Supporting Community Partnership Initiatives (SCPI) program of the federal homelessness initiative.
 - The Surrey School District has an Aboriginal Advisory Committee and employs Aboriginal support workers in a number of schools in Whalley and Guildford.
 - The Surrey Aboriginal Cultural Society at 85th Avenue and 128th Street, is raising funds to establish a Native Cultural centre in Surrey near the Kekinow Native Housing project in Newton. This would enable members of the Aboriginal community—particularly youths—to rediscover cultural roots, and will provide language training and skill development.
 - The Surrey Aboriginal Cultural Society's new Family Violence Program employs an outreach worker and is planning workshops on preventing violence.
 - The federal early intervention Aboriginal Head Start Program provides pre-schooling in Whalley.
 - Metis Family Services (MFS) in Whalley is in partnership with several Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations in the South Fraser Region to provide culturally relevant services. MFS will soon be delivering guardianship services to Metis children.
-

People with Disabilities

Over half of all families headed by a disabled person live in poverty. The proportion of those aged 15 and up with disabilities in Canada is expected to grow from 8.11% to 9.2% by 2006, due in part to the ageing population.⁵²

Employment levels for those with disabilities in general have remained static in spite of a decade of employment equity initiatives. Factors cited by employers include a lack of resources for training, hiring and maintaining such employees, the high cost of adaptive equipment, a lack of awareness about this group and concern that the employee's condition may deteriorate.

Very little detailed local data on people with disabilities is readily available, however. Statistics Canada defines disability as an activity limitation due to a long-term physical condition, mental condition or health problem. In 1996 long-term disability or handicaps were reported by around one out of five (20%) of British Columbians over the age of 12. The most frequent causes were back problems and nervous system problems such as vision or hearing impairments.⁵³

In the same year nearly 10% of the population (27,400 individuals) in Surrey self-identified themselves as having such an activity limitation. Of the HRC service area population with disabilities, 54% were female and 46% were male. The largest proportion by community were in Whalley (28.4%), Newton (22.4%) and Guildford (14%), as Figure 7 indicates.

Adults with disabilities face high rates of unemployment—16.3% on average in the Surrey area, nearly 7% higher than the population as a whole. Unemployment rates are higher for females in our area—17.1%, compared with an unemployment rate of 15.6% for males. Of those with disabilities, the unemployment rates are highest in Whalley and Guildford (20.5% and 18.5% respectively), and lowest in South Surrey and Cloverdale.⁵⁴

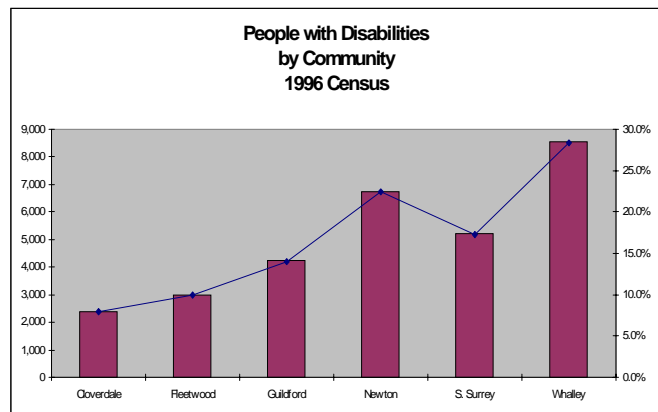
In the Surrey, White Rock, North Delta area, 15.7% of Aboriginal people reported an activity limitation or long-term disability in 1996—a rate almost 7% higher than for non-Aboriginals.⁵⁵

For a discussion of mental illness, see below.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, through the Disability Benefits Program Act of 1996, funds a broad range of benefits for people with disabilities, including training and support programs for adults with developmental disabilities. The ConnecTra program, for example, teams people with disabilities with mentors who provide training experience and local networking contacts. The Ministry of Health supports adults with developmental disabilities and/or communication disorders through rehabilitation, medical and home-based services. The Ministry recently announced expanded funding for home care for those with disabilities, as well as for seniors and people with chronic and terminal illness.
- Park Place, at #130 – 13749 72nd Avenue, is the MSDES Employment Benefits Centre in Newton

Figure 7



Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

- MSDES funds Steps to Independence (employment placement services) at the Surrey Association for the Mentally Handicapped, and Employment Connections, a career planning and employment placement service for persons with permanent disabilities at the Surrey Rehabilitation Society in north Surrey.
- HRDC funds the ACCESS career planning and job search program for people with developmental or learning disabilities.
- The federal government announced in its recent Throne Speech that it will increase support for the development of new technologies to assist Canadians with disabilities and will work with the provinces and territories and other partners towards a comprehensive labour market strategy for persons with disabilities.
- OPTIONS delivers two MCF-funded programs:
 - Adventurers (a community integration program delivered by OPTIONS for children with a developmental disability)
 - Services for Special Children, for children aged 5-8 who have autism and children who have a developmental disability.
- TransLink and the City of Surrey fund the handyDART service, which provides rides for people who, for reasons of physical or mental health, cannot use the conventional transit system.

3. Children and Youth Issues

“Poverty strikes hardest at children, the most vulnerable members of society and the least able to defend themselves.” In 1995, 27% of Surrey’s children below the age of 15 were in families living below the low income cut-offs established by Statistics Canada.⁵⁶ Local youth workers are concerned that, in spite of their dedication and caring, they are failing many of these kids due to a serious lack of resources or inherent system faults. Some of the despair around what appears to them to be a losing battle comes from the knowledge that children need somebody to be attached to when they are younger. If this goes awry within the home, the consequences are reflected in learning disabilities, anger and even violence. It is impossible to detach the welfare of children from the level of parenting skills, according to one education professional.

3.1 Children

The social and health stresses created by poverty are reflected in part in the caseload of children in care with the Ministry for Children and Families. As Table 17 shows, their numbers are increasing in the South Fraser Region, which includes Surrey, Langley and Delta. In December 2000 the Surrey caseload represented 8.3% of the provincial total (Table 18 below).

Currently children living away from home under age 19 are eligible for income assistance only after reasonable efforts have been made to have the parent/guardian support the child.

Those under 17 years of age are referred to a Ministry for Children and Family social worker. Applicants under age 19 who are living in a relative’s home may apply for assistance when placed there by a parent who is unable to pay the costs.

One local service provider proposed the implementation of special education programs (similar to the American Fast Track program) that identify kindergarten and primary grade children

Table 17

Children in Care South Fraser Region	
Fiscal Year	Annual Average
1997-1998	883
1998-1999	1,027
1999-2000	1,077
April – Dec. 2000	1,117 (YTD only)

Table 18

Children in Care South Fraser Region December 2000		
Area	# in Care	% of BC Total
City of Surrey	804	8.3%
South Fraser	1,156	11.9%
Burnaby/ Simon Fraser	820	8.4%
Vancouver/ Richmond	1,434	14.7%
BC Total	9,725	100.0%

Source: MCF Data Analysis Branch

with high at-risk conduct and learning disabilities to help them academically and provide them with the social skills to deal with conflict without using threats or force.

The importance of neighbourhood in pre-schoolers' preparedness for kindergarten is starkly illustrated in a recent project in Vancouver. Assessments of kindergarten students done by their teachers were then mapped by neighbourhood. The study affirmed the strong connection between the socio-economic status of the neighbourhood and the readiness of the children to learn at school. The implications for social policy are dramatic: a mixture of economic backgrounds heightens general school readiness; social housing concentrated in low-income areas can exacerbate risks to children; access to universal day care, support services for young families, and health department screening of all children for conditions that affect their ability to learn, are needed. "If these things are not done," reported Professor Clyde Hertzman, the UBC epidemiologist who conducted the study, "one-quarter of the children now entering elementary school will end up not able to cope as adults in society."⁵⁷

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The BC Family Bonus is a program under BC Benefits that helps address the issue of child poverty. Introduced in mid 1996 for lower income families with children, it has reportedly reduced the poverty gap by an estimated 19% for all working poor families and by 25.5% for single parent families among the working poor. As of October 1999, 33% fewer families were on welfare. The BC Family Bonus makes it easier for families with children to leave and remain off welfare because they can continue to receive the bonus for their children while working or going to school. The Bonus provides up to \$105 per month per child under the age of 18, based on the previous year's income tax return. Since July 1998 this Bonus has been combined with the federal Child Tax Benefit into one payment called the National Child Benefit (NCB). Also included in this payment are the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) and the BC Earned Income Benefit (BCEIB). The latter is an employment incentive program that provides extra help for families who earned more than \$3,750 in the previous year.
 - The federal government in its recent Throne Speech made a commitment to helping poor children and has arrived at a federal/provincial agreement on early childhood development. Increased federal funding will promote healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; improve parenting and family supports; strengthen early childhood development, learning and care; and strengthen community supports. It also has a Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) addressing the health and social development needs of at risk children from birth to age 6 in low income families.
 - The Healthy Kids program under BC Benefits provides basic dental and vision care to children age 18 and under in low-income families and to some children ineligible for enhanced MSDES-sponsored coverage.
 - The Ministry of Education provides special funding for Inner City Schools, including extra funding for primary literacy programs, and as a result the Surrey School District is seeing some indication of a reduced transiency rate in the Holly and Hjorth school area. The District provides subsidized hot lunches at most of the Inner City schools.
 - The local Child, Youth and Family Committee has representation from youth, probation, alcohol and drug services and some elements of mental health, and community agencies, and is trying to take a more integrated case management approach. It acts as an informal sounding board for the Ministry for Children and Families, operating with some assistance from the United Way.
 - The Ministry of Health provides pregnancy support services with the Healthiest Babies Possible program in Guildford.
 - The City Parks, Recreation and Culture Department provides community recreation programs for pre-school and young children and are trying to expand their after-school program for children and youth in Whalley.
-

- The Ministry for Children and Families funds
 - the STARR family service program at Surrey Community Services, 98th Avenue and 140th Street. This includes an after-school and in-school recreation program at three inner city schools (Forsythe and KB Woodward in Whalley, and Holly Elementary in Guildford).
 - Support for Parents of Young Children, delivered by OPTIONS;
- and partially funds
- Surrey Family Place, a drop-in program in Guildford run by OPTIONS for parents, caregivers and their pre-school aged children.
 - In 2000 OPTIONS' CAP-C (Community Action Program for Children) conducted a community needs assessment related to the needs of at risk 0 – 6 year olds. The CAP-C coalition will be developing a web site and a brochure for parents of at risk 0 - 6 year olds.
 - There is a Surrey and White Rock Supported Child Care (SCC) Committee and a Ministry for Children and Families (MCF) Special Needs Team.

Children and Youth with Mental Illness

Below age 19, children with urgent social needs are generally under the care of the Ministry for Children and Families. Those over age 19 currently come under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (MSDES), which administers the BC Benefits program. At least one local professional service worker has concluded that “we practise third world medicine when it comes to mental health services for children and youth,” and laments the fact that existing mental health services don't provide long term counselling. Another local counsellor with a crisis program estimates that probably 80% of the clients are youth aged 18 and under. He sees a “great need for youth services, especially suicide prevention.”

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)

Babies exposed to serious drug consumption are generally exposed to alcohol as well, and it is the latter which is particularly toxic to the developing brain of the fetus. Although data are not available, counsellors and service providers in the Whalley-Guildford area are seeing more children who were born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) or partial FAS (pFAS). Of all the youth served in the Street Youth Services at South Fraser Community Services in Whalley, approximately 25% are diagnosed with this syndrome.

The effects on behaviour from brain injury related particularly to alcohol are devastating. FAS or partial FAS children lack the capacity for normal social patterns, can't learn from mistakes, don't show up for appointments, and are vulnerable to abuse or to committing offences on others. In many cases the babies are born prematurely and with low birth weight to mothers who are not getting or seeking pregnancy care. Many of these children are Aboriginal and are in foster care or are wards of the court or adopted, as parents are unable to look after them. Many end up on the streets. “One point where breakdown is especially likely is at the end of elementary school. Unless children can be diverted into appropriate alternate programs, they are likely to drop out and drift into trouble. 95% of FAS/pFAS children drop out of school by age 15.”⁵⁸ While there may be special help while they are in school, there appears to be little available when school ends. They require a very structured environment that gradually moves them to independence. They are apparently unable to get disability income. A high proportion end up in the prison system. One Surrey therapist notes that “we don't seem to have any assistance to families with these children; there is no support there.”

Prevention “remains the only real solution,” a solution made all the more challenging because “substance misusers are a hard-to-reach population.” A secondary requirement is early diagnosis. Diagnosis is a challenge even at birth. If not done then, however, it eventually presents an even greater dilemma as untrained government, educational and service staff may be unable to identify certain barriers or to work effectively

with these individuals.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The federal government has a Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE) initiative.
- South Fraser Child Development Centre and Surrey Association for Early Childhood Education (SAECE) serve late development children, including those with FAS and NAS.
- Mary Jane Shannon School in Whalley has an on-site SAECE program for at risk low income children.
- Surrey Memorial Hospital has an Adolescent Crisis Responsibility Program (ACRP) and recently opened an adolescent psychiatry unit
- Surrey Community Services has a Suicide Prevention Education and Counselling program which visited Grade 9 classes last year. It also operates a suicide and mental health crisis line.

Child Care

The issue around child care relates to the lack of availability of affordable quality licensed pre-school daycare, particularly for those children with special needs. Service providers speak of frustrating waiting lists, an added burden for transient families. A number of people interviewed for this report and one local study have highlighted the fact that the cost of child care is a “huge” issue for low income single moms and recent immigrants who wish to attend work or school. One local service worker expressed a commonly identified need for on-site day care, as well as before- and after-school care available at local elementary schools.⁵⁹

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The provincial government provides support for licensed child care centres and providers, and the Child Care Subsidy Program assists low- and moderate-income families with child care costs.
- In January 2001 the provincial government launched its new Child Care BC plan by putting a \$7 cap on the daily fees of before and after school care for children from Grade 1 to the age of 12 at licensed day care facilities. A fee of \$14 per day will be charged for kindergarten children and for other children during school vacations at winter and spring break, and during professional development days.
- MSDES funds the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) program delivered by OPTIONS. The program offers support and referral services to parents and child providers.

3.2 Youth

Local youth workers say that the youth population in the Downtown East Side includes a large contingency of former Surrey residents. This is unverifiable at the present time, but the socio-economic factors related to north Surrey suggest that there are challenges to be met here in our own community. As noted above, Surrey is a young city in terms of its population.

Table 19

Youth Aged 15 – 29 in Whalley and Guildford				
Age Group	Whalley	% of Total Whalley Population	Guildford	% of Total Guildford Population
15 – 19	4,630	6%	3,010	7%
20 – 24	5,900	8%	3,120	7%
25 – 29	7,285	10%	3,430	8%
Youth 15 – 29 Years	17,815	24%	9,560	22%
Total – All Age Groups	74,445	100%	44,360	100%

Source: 1996 Census

One in five residents are between the ages of 15 and 29. As illustrated in Table 19 above, Whalley has the highest proportion of youth in this age group (24%), and Guildford the third highest (22% youth, just slightly below Newton with 23%).

The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security in Surrey located its Youth Works program (for 19 to 24-year-olds on income assistance) in Whalley because of the higher numbers of multi-barriered youth in this area. “Kids don’t come with a single problem,” noted one youth worker. “ It doesn’t matter which is the first problem. If it’s drugs and/or alcohol, they will have school problems, will be on the streets using these substances, and will potentially have mental health issues (a lot do)—in other words, chronic entrenched problems not easily resolved.”

Many children and youth enter the care system because of an emergency, and need to move from an emergency response environment to an appropriate level of care. This requires effective assessment, and, where the needs are greatest, not necessarily an automatic routing into the least intensive level of assistance available, or a disjointed process through a series of different service providers. Some issues such as mental health, addictions, or chronic criminal activity require an initially high level of support, which may be followed by a transition to a less intensive environment. From this reasoning has emerged a proposed integrated model of service delivery, both for government-eligible clients and also for ‘walk-in’ clients; both in the form of specialized residential resources for youth, and a non-residential resource centre.⁶⁰

Table 20

Profile of Children and Youth In Sample Local Residential Programs*	
School Problems	over 90%
History of abuse	over 85%
FAS/pFAS, ADHD (severe)	over 75%
Anger Management Issues	over 50%
Criminal Involvement	over 25%
Alcohol and Drug Problems	over 20%
Significant Mental Health Problems	over 15%

* Nisha Family and Children’s Services Society, Reflections on Residential Services, October 2000, p. 3.

Youth on Income Assistance

Table 21 shows the marked decline in youth BC Benefits recipients (below age 25) on average per annum, similar to the decline for the total recipient caseload, between 1994 and 1999. As in the case of total recipients, the drop in unemployable (Disability Level 1) recipients is much steeper than that for employable recipients. While some of the previous youth recipients may have moved to other provinces or found work here, there are many youth unaccounted for and at risk of homelessness and criminal or drug-related activity.

Table 21

Surrey, White Rock, North Delta BC Benefits Recipients, Annual Averages, 1994-1999 Youth Below Age 25					
Date	Total	Employable	% of Total	Unemployable	% of Total
1994	4845	4300	88.8%	545	11.2%
1995	4771	4294	90.0%	478	10.0%
1996	3516	3098	88.1%	418	11.9%
1997	2790	2524	90.5%	266	9.5%
1998	2578	2466	95.7%	112	4.3%
1999	2138	2061	96.4%	77	3.6%
	-55.9%	-52.1%		-85.9%	

Source: HRDC Summary Information Database

Youth workers are particularly concerned about local youth between the ages of 16 and 18 who are ineligible for supports provided by the Ministry for Children and Families but due to poor home situations are referred to the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security. They currently receive income assistance but without support services, and many are at risk of, or are ending up on, the streets.

The lack of resources for young people under the age of 30 is a major concern of many consulted for this report, and was noted as an issue at a meeting of the South Fraser Community Network in September 2000. There are some excellent resources such as Reachout and Reconnect, but these and other programs all have waiting lists. Referrals can take “months and months”.

After-school programs would benefit youth in each community. A number of service providers are looking for greater dialogue between the federal and provincial government to develop programs that will benefit youth.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security's
 - Youth Works program currently provides a living allowance (rather than welfare) to youth aged 19 to 24 who are not at school or working and who participate in job search and work preparation programs, with certain exceptions to the mandatory program participation for reasons of health or family responsibilities.
- The Ministry for Children and Families funds Next Step, an independent living support service for teens.
- The Guildford Recreation Centre will open in the Spring of 2001 and will include recreation and leisure programs for youth, and there is an attempt to build another youth park on or near 154th Avenue in Guildford.
- HRDC funds Summer Night Hoops, a youth basketball program in all Surrey communities, which also trains coaches in life skills such as conflict management.

Street Youth

The Surrey Street Youth Services in Whalley opened over 200 files in 1999, with average youth worker caseloads of approximately 70 per month. Casual street contacts totalled over 3,000 in that year, of which approximately 800 were first time contacts. Local staff indicate that a disproportionate number of those on the streets are youngsters with poor home environments, including youth and Aboriginal youth with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

According to one youth worker, the challenge around housing for youth (as for others), is that "short term isn't the answer. They come in, clean up, and are well fed for seven days—a quick fix. But if there's nowhere for them to move to that's safe, it's just a bandaid." (See below, p. 51, on addicted youth.)

Services are required that recognize the various levels of need, some short-term and some longer term—those who have the potential to reintegrate; those from supportive homes who have drifted into street life; and those who are heavily street-entrenched, of whom the largest number suffer from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and serious mental health issues, and thus require ongoing long-term support.

There is no place in Surrey at present for youth aged 17 and 18 who are out of the home and on Income Assistance but who are not in the criminal justice system or do not have diagnosed psychiatric issues. The housing allowance of \$325 per month restricts them to substandard accommodation in the poorest neighbourhoods, often in the vicinity of drug activity. Some of the housing difficulties faced by this group appear to relate to the lack of a transition process between children in care under the Ministry for Children and Families and those on Income Assistance under the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security.

Nisha is proposing a one-stop model of services, both residential and non-residential, arguing that kids usually arrive with multiple problems—drugs, school difficulties, living on the streets, potential mental health issues, and sometimes chronically entrenched problems that are not easily resolved. They propose creating integrated teams in Surrey communities that would serve both 'gated' and walk-in youth in youth centres that would provide a continuum of on-site services. (See details under Local Initiatives, below.)

Media coverage of local youth crises and street life is giving rise to a new mindset. A broader spectrum of the public is beginning to recognize that many of the kids who drift into the Downtown East Side or get hooked

on heroin in high school are from local family neighbourhoods. This is generating an expectation quite different from the conventional Not In My Backyard syndrome—an expectation that the local community should provide services for local youth.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Nisha, based in Whalley, and the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS) are developing a proposal under stage 2 of the Greater Vancouver Regional Homelessness initiative for two new youth residential programs, one in South Vancouver and one in Whalley, to prevent local youth from drifting to the Downtown East Side street life or to repatriate youth originally from these areas who have done so. The proposal includes supervised apartment residence with main floor resource centre and services including teen parenting, mental health, probation staff (on a satellite basis) addiction counselling, vocational and life skills training, a public health clinic, GED program and free clothing. The proposal will go to the City of Vancouver, BC Housing Corp. and other ministries including HRDC to provide support services. This is modelled on the existing Broadway Resource Centre in Vancouver, with an added residential component, including 24-hour support staff. This would enable Surrey youth to remain in the community and also draw those from the DTES back to their home community.
- The Ministry for Children and Families contracts with The South Fraser Community Services (SFCS) in Whalley to deliver services to youth age 16 and under. The Surrey Reconnect Program includes a resource centre and an outreach service for street youth. Homeless youth can spend the night sitting up at The Front Room at the SFCS.
- Nisha, based in Whalley, has a range of counselling and supportive programs for disadvantaged and at risk youth, including the MSDES-funded Surrey Community Outreach Program for Employment (SCOPE) which helps to stabilize multi-barriered youth aged 19-24 who have recently been on income assistance; a resource centre; literacy and learning disability assessments; and a community volunteer program for youth. SCOPE and the Foundation (Youth Job Readiness Program) together serve 400 of Surrey's most barriered youth, principally in the Whalley area. The organization is currently presenting a proposal to HRDC and the Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers to be the host agency for BladeRunners, a provincial apprenticeship program which gives at risk street-involved youth aged 19 to 28 training and employment opportunities in construction and building trades.
- In Whalley the Tom Binnie Community Centre serves as a youth drop-in centre in the evenings and on Saturdays, and offers some prevention programs for street-entrenched youth. The latter include kids who have homes and parents but may have run away, who spend a lot of time on the streets, are missing school, 'hanging out', and doing drugs and/or petty crime.

Teen Moms

In 1999 the Surrey Local Health Area (which includes White Rock) had the highest number of births to teenage mothers in Greater Vancouver (189 compared with 129 in Vancouver). This represented 3.9% of all births in Surrey/White Rock in that year, lower than in New Westminister (5.13%) and in the Downtown East Side (4.3%) but higher than for the City of Vancouver (2.3%). Moreover, this figure likely represents only 20% of all local teen pregnancies, according to a health professional.⁶¹

Possible factors contributing to the high rate of teenage birth, according to local professionals, include the affordable housing here for teenage moms, whether from Surrey, the interior or Vancouver, birth control policies (the South Fraser Health Region is the only one in Lower Mainland which does not fund birth control for adolescents), and the School District's policy of not teaching sex education. For some young women, the infant is a means to income support, one that at the same time brings enormous lifelong challenges to both mother and children. Health care workers see teens of mothers who were themselves teenage mothers—a continuing cycle suggesting that greater efforts are required to intervene and provide every possible assistance to young women and lone parents.

Another health professional wonders why we aren't more effective at breaking the cycle before young women who are homeless and in the sex trade have their babies.

"Teenage mothers are far less likely to complete Grade 12, have greater difficulty obtaining and holding employment (due to limited education and child care requirements), and face far greater stress than females their own age who have not given birth and remain in school. [Their babies] are far more likely to be born with low birth weight and suffer birth defects, disabilities and other health problems." ⁶¹

In 1999, 5.6% (or 268) of live births in the Surrey Local Health Area were classified as low birth weight (less than 2,500 grams). Although this was a decline from 6.2% in the previous year, it nevertheless ranked with Burnaby and New Westminster, and was slightly higher than in the Vancouver Downtown East Side and in the City of Vancouver (whose low birth infants totalled 305), all of which were higher than in the province as a whole (4.7%). Smoking and a high consumption of alcohol during pregnancy are factors which contribute to low birth weight. These babies are more prone to birth defects, disabilities, sickness and death.⁶²

(See also the sections on youth and crime, teenage prostitution, and violence and family violence below.)

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The Surrey School District has a Teen Mothers/Parents Program.
- Surrey Memorial Hospital operates a Youth Clinic which includes services for teen mothers.
- A proposal by Nisha to bridge single moms with only one child into employment in the community social services sector has been unsuccessful in obtaining funding. The proposal was based on the assumption that the young moms' experience with Income Assistance, abusive relationships and drug and alcohol could be deployed in preventive work with other female teenagers.
- The Ministries for Children and Families and MSDES co-fund the Growing Together Daycare program to enable teen mothers to return to school and complete Grade 12.

High-risk youth include sexually exploited, drug or alcohol-addicted youth, as well as those living on the street or having a mental health problem. See sections on these topics below.

Visible Minority Youth (Age 15 to 29)

One out of every three youths in Surrey represents a visible minority. The majority of these youth are South Asians, except in Guildford and South Surrey where Chinese youth predominate (Table 22).⁶³ Visible minority youth are under serviced, according to a number of local service providers consulted for this report. Language and cultural barriers to participation in the mainstream of Canadian life, particularly among poor recent immigrants, give rise to various social issues.

Table 22

Visible Minority Youth in Whalley and Guildford, 1996					
Visible Minority Group	Whalley		Visible Minority Group	Guildford	
	# of Visible Minority Youth	% of Whalley Visible Minority Groups		# of Visible Minority Youth	% of Guildford Visible Minority Groups
South Asian	4,265	63%	Chinese	755	26%
Chinese	560	8%	South Asian	515	18%
Filipino	475	7%	Filipino	320	11%
South East Asian	370	5%	Korean	270	9%
Latin American	240	4%	Arab/West Asian	170	6%
All Others	905	13%	All Others	845	29%
Total Visible Minority	6,815	100%	Total Visible Minority	100%	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

Youth Labour Force Participation

We face significant challenges with respect to the participation of youth in the Surrey labour force, that is, youth who are either working or actively looking for work. Firstly, the youth (age 15-24) participation rate in the labour force is lower in Surrey (at 65.6%) than in the GVRD (at 71.8%). Secondly, while the youth population of Surrey grew by 12.5% between 1991 and 1996, its share of the labour force decreased by 2%.⁶⁴ A high labour force participation rate usually reflects growing optimism that work is available and that an active job search will result in employment.

Youth Unemployment Rate

As the very large group of children in this area move into the age 15-24 category, the situation for unemployed youngsters has not improved greatly since 1996. In the year 2000, according to Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey, the local area produced the largest cohort of unemployed youth of all provincial HRCs (5,500). Although the youth unemployment rate here was lower at 13.8% than the provincial average of 14.6%, it nevertheless represented the second highest unemployment rate in the Lower Mainland/Southwest BC area (after Abbotsford HRC).

In 1995 the provincial government replaced welfare for youth between 19 and 24 with the Youth Works program of independent job search, for which it funds a living allowance, and work preparation services.

In 1997 Nisha conducted a survey of youth to identify barriers to employment and suggestions for improving the delivery of job training and preparation. Of the 168 youth surveyed, 40% were from Whalley and 14% from Guildford. The majority had been unemployed for less than six months and their primary source of income was income assistance. The results provide an overview of the factors both causing unemployment and hindering employment for these youth. Two years later the Surrey Youth Employment Network Task Force published the results of an in-depth exploration of current program delivery and issues whose recommendations included the creation of an inventory of all youth employment services in Surrey and an expansion of the role of the Youth Employment Network.⁶⁵

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- HRDC's Youth Employment Strategy, in partnership with businesses, non-governmental organizations, communities and other levels of government, helps youth to enter the workplace. The recent Throne Speech announced that the federal government will work with partners to support youth at risk who need help staying in school or getting their first job.
 - The Surrey HRC contracts with the Youth Employment Opportunities Centre in Newton and with Peace Arch Community Services in White Rock to deliver programs for youth.
 - The provincial government funds a number of employment programs for youth under its Youth OPTIONS BC program. Job Start, for example, offsets training costs of employers who provide permanent full-time jobs for youth aged 17 to 24 with little job experience. The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security funds Nisha's Surrey Community Outreach Program for Employment (SCOPE) and Foundation Youth Job Readiness Program (in partnership with SDISS) for employable multi-barriered youth aged 19 to 24 in Whalley.
 - Nisha, with Youth Services Canada funding, offers an Intercultural Youth Community Development Program of career exploration, volunteer placements, and an introduction to social service careers for young adults.
-

- Under the Youth Community Action Program (YCAP, funded by MAETT), Nisha and the Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society (SDISS) provide youth aged 15-24 with community work experience and credit for post-secondary tuition fees.
- South Fraser Community Services Society in Whalley offers
 - The Pathways program, pre-employment (life and employment skills) for unemployed and out of school 15-18 year olds, funded by the Ministry for Children and Families
 - The Creative Difference Co-operative, business venture program for youth aged 16-18, providing an opportunity to create employment through a jointly-owned enterprise.

4. Homelessness

Housing is “an essential starting point and a first step to creating stability.”⁶⁶ Homelessness was identified as the number one priority issue with respect to poverty by service providers in Surrey in 1999 and as a key social issue at two subsequent workshops. The homeless are a diverse group. The visible (or absolute) homeless are people living on the streets with no physical shelter, and include women, street youth and those with addictions or mental illness. The relative homeless are those at risk of homelessness, who may be subsisting in rundown accommodation which fails to meet basic health and safety standards, yet for which they must forgo other basic necessities, or are in temporary live-in situations with friends or relatives. Among these less visible homeless are women and children without access to emergency or affordable accommodation.

The homelessness that has been entrenched in Vancouver’s Downtown East Side for decades was by the early 1990s becoming visible in New Westminister and Surrey’s northern communities.⁶⁷ Although the precise number of homeless people in Whalley and Guildford is not known, 500 people with no fixed address were released from Surrey Memorial Hospital in 1999. Local shelter administrators estimate there are between 400 and 500 homeless in Surrey today.⁶⁸ The Front Room Resource Centre in Whalley, which serves as a temporary daytime and overnight place (sitting up) for those without homes or on low incomes, was visited by clients over 5,000 times per month on average in 1999.

The causes of homelessness are well known. Some of the more obvious factors include

- poverty, which may be triggered by unemployment, marital breakdown, illness and/or government allowances which are inadequate in a high cost of living area
- lack of affordable housing options resulting in part from reduced government funding for social housing
- inadequate family or social supports to assist those burdened by family abuse and breakdown, child development problems, physical or mental illness, the removal of mentally ill patients from institutions, domestic violence, addictions, and inadequate foster care.

Mental illness is a frequent partner to homelessness. About 30% of the individuals in the Surrey men’s shelters are diagnosed with or suspected of suffering from some form of mental illness.

Although our social safety net provides a basic support level, life expectancy for the homeless is reduced through the greater incidence of chronic illness, substance abuse, mental health problems and suicide. As this suggests, homelessness tends to impact on other systems such as police, social services and health services.

The Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness was formed in March 2000 to oversee the development of a regional plan to address homelessness and to investigate urgent need projects that could be implemented under the federal Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI). Its draft plan testifies to the broad range of unmet needs in this area for housing and the related supports of health and mental health services, outreach, employment assistance, transition houses for women fleeing from abuse, detox centres, and prevention. (See Appendix B for the draft plan’s inventory of social housing in South Fraser/Surrey.)⁶⁹ Of these needs, the most acute is for emergency shelter.

4.1 Emergency Shelters

These are “single or shared bedrooms, or dorm type sleeping arrangements with accommodation for up to one month,” some with additional support services. They are places of last resort which attempt to keep individuals, whether on income assistance or ineligible for such assistance, from falling through the cracks. The maximum length of stay in emergency shelters is thirty days.⁷⁰

The Regional Homelessness Draft Plan notes the growing number of clients with serious mental health, addictions and/or serious social and behavioural concerns who are taken in by emergency shelters because other services such as detox facilities or supportive housing are not available. One recent survey identified the strong need for permanent shelter capacity for those with significant social and behavioural concerns outside the Down town core.

There are 23 emergency shelters with 528 permanent shelter beds in Greater Vancouver at the present time. The City of Vancouver accounts for 85% of regional permanent beds; South Fraser municipalities account for 8%.⁷¹ Surrey, the second largest city in terms of population, currently has two shelters with 30 permanent shelter beds—20 at the two Surrey Men’s Shelters operated by OPTIONS in Whalley and another 10 at Sheena’s Place for single women with mental health issues. These are funded by MSDES and are available to BC Benefits recipients only.

Gateway in Whalley is a 36-bed temporary shelter operated by South Fraser Community Services over the winter from November to March. It also receives MSDES funding but can be accessed by those who are not eligible for BC Benefits. Twenty-eight of the beds are for males and eight for females. When this temporary service is unavailable, individuals can stay overnight in the Front Room, a drop-in centre at the same location for homeless and street people. It provides access to showers, laundry facilities, telephones, storage, TV, videos, a library, newspapers, mail services, information and referrals. Under the Bread for Life program, community volunteers prepare free dinners for clients. Between December 1999 and March 2000, the South Fraser Community Services Society’s Gateway Shelter helped 2,900 homeless people. Its 24-hour Front Room resource centre had 61,600 visits over the course of 1999-2000.

The demand for these facilities is so great that they are constantly forced to turn away people seeking shelter.

- OPTIONS’ Surrey Men’s Shelter turned away 230 individuals in 1999-2000. Most of these people were not eligible for income assistance, were on income assistance but could not find accommodation, or were on EI and waiting for income assistance. Fifty were categorized as ‘hard to house’.
- Sheena’s Place turned away 1,245 women and children in 2000.⁷²
- Gateway Shelter, available to the homeless during the cold and wet weather period from November to March, registered 402 clients and turned away 360 people between December and the end of March 2000.

The GVRD Regional Homelessness Draft Plan noted that ‘most emergency shelters are adult male oriented’.⁷³ There is a shortage of shelter facilities for the following groups, which by sex or other factors are not suited to these existing shelters -

- youth (currently all youth facilities are located in Vancouver, and youth under age 19 are not permitted by law to stay in adult shelters)
 - women with children, who tend to be placed in general emergency shelters, motels or ‘hostels’
 - single women and ex-prostitutes
 - seniors
 - Aboriginals
 - refugee claimants
-

Service providers in Surrey advocate increasing the stock of shelter beds by 100 in the near future. Current initiatives under SCPI and the GVRD Homelessness Plan are noted below.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The federal government recently announced over \$8 million in funding under its Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) to support 24 projects in Greater Vancouver, including
 - \$1 million for OPTIONS to reach the building permit stage for a 35 bed minimal barrier shelter, with 15 additional cold/wet weather spaces and 25 transitional/second stage housing units. OPTIONS proposes purchasing property under the SkyTrain tracks on the King George Highway in Whalley for the shelter, which will accommodate male and female single people in suites or one-bedroom apartments.
 - \$49,500 for South Fraser Community Services Society to renovate and upgrade the client facilities at the Front Room/Gateway shelter and to hire Community Support Workers
- The BC Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (MSDES) funds emergency accommodation for people without other resources, hostels for homeless single persons and emergency shelters for families in Surrey, including the three shelters cited above.
- HOMES BC has a new initiative combining emergency shelter, second stage housing and expandable capacity for cold-wet weather. It has a Homeless at Risk component which develops housing, generally through co-ordination of services and support funding with other ministries.
- The GVRD Regional Homelessness Plan aims to conduct sub-regional studies to determine the number of people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness, as well as their characteristics and needs.⁷⁴
- Lower Mainland Aboriginal groups are preparing a plan to address Aboriginal homelessness.
- The Lower Mainland Cold Wet Weather Strategy Group is working to increase winter emergency shelter capacity and Shelter Net BC is now coordinating provincial shelter providers.
- A CMHC program was launched recently to track local shelter users.

4.2 Transition and Second Stage Housing for Women and Children

These offer temporary accommodation (from approximately three days in transition houses to one month or longer for second stage housing) for women and children fleeing violent relationships. All are overwhelmed by demand. One local house, Virginia Sam, was granted an extra \$10,000 from the Ministry for Women's Equality in 2000 because it is one of the four busiest transition houses in the province. Women may be turned away because of drug and alcohol issues, or because there may not be sufficient beds available to house the woman and her children at that particular time.

Table 23

Transition and Second Stage Housing in Surrey Area				
	Location	# Units	Residents	# Turned Away
Evergreen Transition House	Guildford	10 units	Women and children	145 women 121 children Jan.-Dec. 2000
Virginia Sam Transition House	Newton	10 units	Women and children	278 women 248 children Jan.-Dec. 2000
Shimai Specialized Transition House	Whalley	10 units	Women escaping violence and who have addictions	729 women 138 children
Atira Transition House	South Surrey	10 units	Women and children	741 women 396 children Apr 99-Mar 2000
Koomseh Second Stage House	Newton	11 units	Women survivors of long-term abuse leaving transition houses	59 women 134 children Apr 99-Mar 2000

The number of refusals taking place at each of the existing residences listed in Table 23 is stark evidence of the unmet need in this area.⁷⁵

Local service providers advocate providing more permanent homeless shelter beds for women and women with children, and developing a planned and co-ordinated continuum of supportive housing options and support to maintain people in permanent housing.

4.3 Supported Housing

Assisted living involves health-care services offered on site in a regulated care facility. Supportive (or supported) housing provides a supportive, but not a health-care, environment in which residents generally take care of their own affairs in housing, which reduces day-to-day demands on residents. Nursing or other health-related services are delivered by the local health authority through special arrangements. In Whalley OPTIONS operates two supported apartments and a number of Independent Living Program (SILP) units for the mentally ill. (For supported accommodation in the South Fraser region, see Appendix B.)

Supported housing for the mentally ill and the frail elderly is “a definite gap”. Particularly suited to individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, it may include assistance with housekeeping, meals, banking, skills, training and other services. Vancouver currently provides 74% of Greater Vancouver’s supported housing units. The South Fraser area (Delta to Langley) provides 9%. Most of South Fraser’s proportion consists of 134 Supported Independent Living Program (SILP) apartment units in the private market, with another 36 apartments including satellite apartments. There are only 20 Homeless At Risk Housing (HARH) supportive and second stage units for single persons in South Fraser, compared with 455 in Vancouver.

The draft Regional Plan for Homelessness identified 150 mental health clients on waiting lists for mental health accommodation in the South Fraser Region. Not included in this tally are the large numbers of those with serious mental health issues who are on waiting lists for shelter accommodation. There are also a number of individuals living in boarding homes waiting to come into supported living accommodation.

There is only one project in the South Fraser area at present for the frail elderly. South Surrey House operated by the John Howard Society has space for two to three individuals. Although data are not available, a local housing expert believes the need may be substantial.

The draft Regional Homelessness Plan identified as urgent the need to increase the number of supported housing units, particularly in South Fraser as well as in Vancouver, for seniors with mental illness, Aboriginal people, low income urban singles and people with special needs. Also identified for the South Fraser area were more second stage housing for youth (longer than 30 days) and people with special needs.⁷⁶

Supported housing needs for children range from emergency/receiving homes to foster homes, specialized ‘professional’ foster care, live-in group care (particularly for teens who by ‘normal’ developmental standards are moving away from the stronger connectedness to family, or substitute family, more typical of younger children, and who have had some of their most traumatic experiences in family contexts), and staffed group care (particularly for youth whose behaviour is too challenging for any reasonable caregiver to live with on a live-in basis). The system needs to include a capacity for short term intervention (i.e., residential “treatment”, for lack of a better term) particularly as short or medium term resources within the youth addictions and youth corrections continuums. As well, specialized long term resources are needed to serve the long term needs of youth with mental health needs, and youth with FAS/pFAS who cannot live at home. Intensive professional assessment resources are needed in planning for the hardest to serve youth.⁷⁷

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- In 2000 the South Fraser Housing Coalition was established as a forum to provide affordable housing for consumers of mental health services, consumers of continuing care services, and other adults with special needs; to conduct research and raise awareness on housing needs; carry out planning; develop partnerships and secure funding.
- The provincial government conducted a review of supportive housing for seniors for the purpose of developing a policy and legislative framework to encourage the development of market and non-market supportive housing for seniors in BC. In July 1999 HOMES BC, the provincial housing program, provided funding assistance for 200 supportive housing units. BC Housing has a demonstration project at Sunset Towers, a subsidized senior housing development in Vancouver. It provides outreach to frail and isolated seniors and seeks to improve the overall co-ordination of services in the building. Rent assistance is provided to seniors through the provincial Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program.
- BC Housing is currently developing 170 multi-service housing units combining second stage and short term housing to assist individuals in making the transition from homelessness to second stage and permanent housing.
- Nisha Family & Children's Services Society has proposed a Supported Group Homes Program for youth, involving a home environment "without the messages about a short-term stay, lead[ing] to youth "buy in", settling and stabilization" and live-in houseparents for relationship building, consistency and communication.⁷⁸

5. Affordable Housing

Within the sky-high housing cost environment of Greater Vancouver, north Surrey is a haven for those with low incomes—single parents, elderly single women, low income individuals living alone, and youth under age 25. According to the *Community Impact Profile*, those with "the most severe affordability problems are female headed households (both single parents and elderly single women), low income individuals who live alone and young people under age 25."⁷⁹

The Community Impact Profile Forum Report (September 2000) noted that "building shelters will never be enough. Supportive housing and affordable housing are needed." The report also found "positive examples of affordable housing initiatives in the community [which] can be built upon, expanded and modified to address the growing affordable housing problem in Surrey/White Rock."⁸⁰

Affordable housing is generally defined as being affordable to low and moderate income households, with costs that do not exceed 30% of a householder's gross income. It consists of non-market or subsidized housing units (including co-op housing) for lower and moderate income groups, and market housing—rental or owned homes in which the units are provided by the private sector and are available to those with low incomes.

At the very time that Surrey's population was increasing dramatically, the phase-out of federal government funding for new social (non-market) housing in 1994 removed two-thirds of the former funding base. BC Housing continued to build new non-market housing in partnership with community sponsors and municipal governments, adding 600 units per year. In 1999 and 2000 this expanded HOMES BC program "created the potential for a broader array of housing initiatives to be put into place such as the development of supportive seniors housing in partnership with local health authorities, the initiation of multi-service housing which combines second-stage and emergency housing, and an increase in the number of units available to low income singles."⁸¹ Demand for these units continues to vastly outweigh supply.

Vancouver now houses nearly half (48%) of the region's permanent social (subsidized) housing; the South Fraser area, 14% (or 5,514 units). The waiting list for social housing in the Lower Mainland in August 2000 was over 9,000, with an average waiting time of three years. Vancouver's Social Planning Department has taken a lead in this area, with its Housing Centre and five staff persons. The City through its Vancouver Land Corp. owns land assets which it can lease in partnership with BC Housing or non-profit organizations to build housing.

Surrey has a limited supply of affordable housing. In addition to maintaining the existing supply, there is a need to develop new affordable housing. The City has attempted to boost the stock of housing here through facilitating small lot development. Density bonusing has not had a significant impact in Surrey in encouraging the development of new affordable housing. The City of Surrey replaced its Affordable Housing Special Reserve Fund with a pilot Home Ownership Assistance Program designed to assist approximately 17 families whose annual household incomes fall 10% or more below the median household income (that is, are below \$42,500). Applicants may be eligible for an interest free loan of up to \$15,000 to purchase their first home. An unknown number of people cannot afford home ownership or lack the steady employment income to be eligible for this program. To date in 2001, one person has been approved under the program. (See Appendix A for City of Surrey housing planning initiatives.)

A number of organizations consulted for this report, along with the provincial government, would like to see the federal government return to funding social housing, noting that Canada is one of the few countries that does not have a national housing policy.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- BC Housing and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation fund affordable home programs. BC Housing assists people with low incomes, including families, seniors and people with mental or physical disabilities. People eligible for assistance pay about 30% of their gross household income for rent.
- The BC Non Profit Housing Association, the Cooperative Housing Federation of BC and BC Housing are working to establish a co-ordinated social housing waiting list for the Lower Mainland.⁸²
- The Tenants Rights Action Coalition has proposed that the interest from the City of Surrey's Affordable Housing Statutory Reserve Fund go toward developing subsidized rental housing units.⁸³
- The Community Impact Profile Forum Report (September 2000) recommended the following:
 - Loans for subsidizing shares in Co-op housing; and expand on student loan concept for Co-op loans
 - Increase public education around zoning for affordable housing to reduce the "Not In My Backyard" syndrome
 - Encourage more mixed income housing
 - Revive rental controls after evaluating actual housing availability
 - Reinstitute federal government funding for affordable housing.

5.1 Cost and Supply of Housing

The South Fraser communities of Surrey, Delta, Langley and White Rock have significantly increased their share of private dwellings over the past decade, and by 1996 accounted for slightly over one quarter of all GVRD households. Surrey has a high level of home ownership and, within the expensive environment of Greater Vancouver, is a relatively affordable place to live. Nevertheless, around one-quarter of owners and one-half of renters in Surrey spent 30% or more of their gross household income on housing in 1996.⁸⁴

Since 1994 Surrey has built far fewer non-market housing units than Vancouver and Burnaby. The "lack of recent affordable housing starts" was noted at the Community Impact Profile Forum in September 2000. Today only 5.5% of Surrey's rental housing takes the form of non-market units managed by government or non-profit societies. Last year nearly 1,000 Surrey households were on the BC Housing waitlist.⁸⁵

5.2 Rental Supply and Cost

As Table 24 shows, Surrey had a lower percentage of rental units among its private dwelling stock than other neighbouring municipalities in 1996.

Renting is often the only option for those with low income, yet affordable rental units in Surrey are hard to come by. In 1999 a one-bedroom apartment in Surrey cost on average \$576 per month, and a two-bedroom \$715 per month. One local service provider estimates that 43% of Whalley's accommodation is rental housing, of which a great number consist of hotels, duplexes and substandard housing. Even residential facilities without proper resources (door-knobs, toilets) can cost \$425 per month.

Table 24

Occupied Private Dwellings by Structure Type - GVRD, 1996		
	Apartment buildings and Duplexes	% of Total Occupied Private Dwellings
Burnaby	34,965	50.9
New Westminster	16,890	71.8
Surrey	46,285	45.9
Vancouver	142,380	65.2

Source: Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada, cited in GVRD Strategic Planning Department Demographic Bulletin (June 1998)

Surrey has a higher percentage of renters paying 30% or more of their gross household income on rent than any other municipality in the GVRD. Another 27% of renter households in Surrey pay 50% or more of their income towards rent, leaving little for food, clothing and other basic necessities. This proportion is slightly higher than the approximately 25% of families across the province who pay this amount of income on rent. Within Surrey, more than half of all renter households in Guildford, Whalley and Fleetwood communities paid 30% or more of their gross household income on rent in 1996.

With respect to supply, only 131 for profit rental housing units (townhouses or apartments) were built in Surrey between 1991 and 1999. Of the existing occupied private dwellings in Surrey in 1996, nearly 30% were rental. Whalley and Guildford had the highest percentage of private rental dwellings (43 and 35% respectively). The City of Surrey endeavours to maintain the existing stock of rental accommodation by disallowing conversion from rental to strata units if the vacancy rate falls below 4%.⁸⁶ The tendency to build condominiums here works against renters, as condo associations frequently pass by-laws disallowing rentals other than by the first owner.

What Surrey does have in abundance is ground floor secondary suites, which take the form of multiple suites in large homes and old duplexes. Although the City has identified approximately 12,000 of these suites, other estimates suggest that there may be up to 24,000 unauthorized suites. These suites are not necessarily the answer to low-income residents, however, as they can cost up to \$700 per month. In addition, many are vulnerable to closure, as only 5% of the City is zoned to permit secondary suites.⁸⁷

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Rent assistance is provided to eligible households in private rental housing through the shelter assistance component of BC Benefits and through targeted rent assistance programs administered by BC Housing such as SAFER (Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters) and SILP (Supported Independent Living Program).
- MSDES funds a Community Housing Registry at OPTIONS which maintains a list of rental suites and affordable shared accommodation for people on income assistance.

6. Individuals at Risk from Health-Related issues

6.1 Mental Illness

Mental illness presents serious challenges in our community today, and is frequently mentioned with respect to those who 'fall between the cracks'. We are just beginning to understand how physical and mental health are interrelated, and how large and significant mental health is in relation to other key social issues such as poverty, homelessness and substance abuse. Mental illness and mood disorders are frequently associated with drug and alcohol misuse, common forms of self-medication that both mask and add to the underlying disease. The resulting behaviours (including lack of self-esteem, low motivation, and poor social skills and personal hygiene) are not conducive to good interactions with people and bureaucratic systems.⁸⁸

The numbers involved are larger than is commonly thought. Around one in five individuals will suffer from mental illness during a given year, the most common forms being depression, anxiety and substance abuse disorders. "Of every 100 people with a mental illness, 30 will suffer from depression, 20 from anxiety, and 16 will have disorders related to alcohol or drug use. A smaller number—about three to five per cent of the population—have a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or severe forms of depression."⁸⁹

Table 25

Table 25 shows the increase in mental health clients in the South Fraser Valley Health Region over the past five years. These likely underrepresent the issue due to a reluctance by individuals or families to report cases or to obtain treatment, in part because of the social stigma that still surrounds mental illness. Of the 6,529 clients served in 1999/2000, 2,344 were new clients.

Further evidence of the local dimensions is suggested by the following statements from service providers:

- The New Westminster/Whalley area has among the highest caseloads for mental health cases.
- Over 90% of the children apprehended by the Ministry of Children and Families in Surrey North and Central have mental illnesses or undiagnosed mental health situations.
- Of those discharged from Nisha's SCOPE program in 1998, 20% had mental health issues.

Mental Health Clients South Fraser Valley Health Region				
Fiscal Year	Age Group			Total
	0-18	19-64	65+	
1995/96	1,206	2,828	973	5,007
1996/97	1,243	3,377	1,021	5,641
1997/98	1,067	3,530	1,064	5,661
1998/99	1,016	3,778	1,112	5,906
1999/00	964	4,415	1,150	6,529

Source: Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors

In the early 1990's the BC government began to implement a "fundamental shift" in the provision of mental health services, away from institutional care (such as that provided at Riverview Hospital) to a decentralized series of smaller regional and community facilities. Additional funds were allocated to provide for improvements in community services. One aim of the shift was to provide "more responsive services for individuals with multiple problems, who historically have been poorly served by existing services (e.g. people with a mental illness and substance misuse issue and/or who have been in conflict with the law)".

Funding for community mental health resources has increased since 1987, including enhanced clinical and emergency services, and rehabilitation program spaces. Nevertheless, by 1996 the system was under growing pressure, facing an increasing number of individuals turning up at hospital emergency units or taking up acute care beds for longer periods, and a steady influx of individuals seeking mental health services in the Lower Mainland. Some local service providers believe mental health has been chronically underfunded in relation to the population here.⁹⁰

Currently adults with serious mental health illnesses are served through South Fraser Health Region centres, and children and youth under age 19 through the Ministry for Children and Families office in Whalley. The South Fraser Health Region operates three mental health centres, including one on East Whalley Ring Road and another on the King George Highway in Newton. There are wait lists at the North Surrey Mental Health Centre, which serves people with long term serious and persistent mental illnesses who need supported live-in care. Surrey Memorial Hospital operates a psychiatric unit, and treatment is also available at Willow Clinic (Woodlands) in New Westminster.

There is a need for a pre-employment program for individuals with persistent mental health issues, to help them to bridge the gap between the social and the employment issues and to stabilize and contain crises in their lives. Such pre-employment programming as part of a continuum of rehabilitation programs for those with mental health issues is said to be "a huge gap". Related programs that are part of this continuum include life skills, supported employment and supported education. A pre-employment program is offered at Douglas College but is not currently available at Kwantlen University College. There is a significant preventive value of efforts in this regard in terms of the many people who could be employed, given assistance in obtaining skills and workplace support. This area is currently under review by the Ministry of Health, and a proposal based on a local needs assessment will be presented to the South Fraser Health Region in the Spring of 2001.

As with other social issues, the recent immigrant population here is not immune to mental illness, and indeed faces additional pressures related to poverty and the stress of cultural adjustment. This group, which because of cultural patterns may be even less likely to disclose mental illness situations, requires culturally sensitive and language-specific mental health programs. SDISS, for example, employs a part-time mental health worker but is unable to meet increased service requests from the Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese communities.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, in addition to benefits under the Disability Benefits Program Act (1996), provides rent assistance for people with mental illness, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and other programs for those with disabilities. The Ministry of Health also serves this group through its Mental Health Services division.
 - Through a funding partnership with the Ministry of Health, the BC Housing Health Services Program seeks to improve access to social housing for those who have been diagnosed with a mental illness.
 - OPTIONS delivers the Ministry of Health-funded
 - Roost, a psychosocial rehabilitation program for people living with a persistent mental illness
 - Whale House, a psychosocial rehabilitation program for adults with a mental illness
 - Supported Living Program, a life skills support program with a subsidized housing component. Its Congregate Housing Program consists of three 5-bedroom houses, one of which is located in North Surrey. OPTIONS also operates four independent subsidized apartments as well as an 8 unit four-plex (Sandell House).
 - The ARC Program, operated by South Fraser Community Services in Whalley, employs a staff person who distributes Income Assistance and handicapped pensions to chronically mentally ill clients of the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Services with severe behavioural problems.
 - SRS Vocational Services Society's Employment Connection program, located in North Surrey, provides career planning and job placement for people with a permanent disability, including those with mental health barriers or learning disabilities.
 - The Ministry of Health recognizes the value of culturally sensitive service delivery and will conduct a needs study in this area. Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society has Ministry funding for a mental health worker on staff until March 2001.
 - The South Fraser Mental Health Consumer Advisory Network and Development Organization Society (CANDO) sponsors activities to enhance the quality of life of those with mental illness.
-

Catch 22: Dual Diagnosis

A particular challenge involves clients with dual diagnoses, that is clients with both mental illness and an addiction. Surrey-based Phoenix Drug & Alcohol Centre reports that approximately 35% of its clients are dually diagnosed, with such related issues as depression, post-traumatic stress disorders and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, (ADHD). These clients must deal with two separate service delivery operations--Mental Health Centres and Drug and Alcohol centres. Clients whose primary diagnosis is not a mental health issue may be advised to deal first with the other issue (such as addiction), after which they can then return to receive services for the related issue. Lacking the skills to advocate for themselves and prone to relapse into self-medication with addictive substances, such clients are poorly equipped to deal with lengthy wait lists or other barriers to the provision of services. Health authorities point to the additional complication of clients who are treatment resistant and who may not want to seek out the voluntary services that exist. While Peace Arch Community Services provides a Dual Diagnosis operation in White Rock, service providers in north Surrey advocate the provision of this service closer to where the main problems exist to eliminate barriers experienced by those on low income who must travel for appointments by bus.

Youth and Mental Illness

There is widespread concern that very little is being done about youth caught up in the deadly triad of mental illness, substance abuse and crime, and who in many cases try to survive in a family environment of poverty, mental illness and/or substance abuse. The Ministry for Children and Families has a Child and Youth Mental Health Division in Whalley which works with youngsters up to age 18 with serious emotional and behavioural problems and their families. Youngsters who are aggressive and disruptive or depressed and suicidal are referred here by local agencies struggling to cope with such situations under tight budgets. While the government staff do their best to prioritize the cases, resources cannot meet the demand. The provision of teen-parent conflict sessions, for example, had to be abandoned because of more urgent demands on staff time.

Lengthy waiting lists for community counselling services mean they can “take forever to get into,” according to one youth worker. Youth with both mental health and substance misuse issues face the same dilemma cited above with respect to adults. They may not be able to access services by Mental Health systems if they are using drugs, or by the Ministry for Children and Family’s Drug and Alcohol clinics if they present mental health problems.

Another concern cited by youth workers is the lack of coordination resulting from the division of government services between MCF (which serves youth with mental health issues up to the age of 18), and the Ministry of Health which serves youth with mental health issues between the ages of 19 to 24; and MSDES as a related Ministry serving those aged 19 to 24.

One local youth professional would like to see more resources put into the schools. “When kids don’t do well in school because they are going to school hungry, or are severely learning disabled and schools are unable to serve them, school is not a fun place for them. They can’t keep up with other kids, think they’re dumb, and this affects all areas of their life. They act out, the situation snowballs.” Identifying at an early age the “tough kids, the families struggling or at high risk, children with addicted parents and those with severe learning difficulties, could give them the opportunity to learn and be successful in school.” A possible American model is the comprehensive Fast Track program in which family and schools work together in elementary schools in suburban inner cities.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The Ministry for Children and Families funds short-term residential accommodation in Surrey for very high risk and/or suicidal youth in order to assess and stabilize their situation, and identify possible psychiatric issues. In Surrey Nisha delivers the Quick Response Program, a residential resource and 6-week stabilization program.
- Surrey Memorial Hospital has opened a psychiatric ward for youth.

6.2 Substance-related Disorders

Drug and Alcohol Addiction

Individuals may be dependent on various substances or behaviours such as caffeine. Tobacco and alcohol addictions, partly because of their widespread occurrence, cause the most serious and costly long term health issues. Dependence on hard drugs such as heroin or cocaine, however, while smaller in proportion, is likely to be massively and immediately harmful to the individual. Withdrawal brings severe and even life-threatening symptoms; a dependence on the euphoric state results in dramatically high relapse rates; and while under the influence of the drugs one's social skills are impaired. The extreme compulsion to take such drugs, when combined with the high cost involved, often leads to crime and prostitution.

Vancouver, particularly in the Downtown East Side, has one of the highest concentrations of drug users in the country and accordingly has the highest concentration of services. The 194 deaths from illicit drug use in Vancouver in 1998 accounted for nearly half of all drug-related deaths in the province in that year. In the same year Surrey recorded 29 deaths from illicit drug use, or 18% of the provincial total. A number of residents and service providers are concerned about an apparent increase in drug use in Surrey.

Table 26

Illicit Drug Use Deaths, Selected Regions, 1992-1998							
Area	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992
City of Surrey	29	23	17	13	16	17	15
New West. Region	73	67	62	43	63	49	45
City of Vancouver	194	138	151	116	161	200	110
Vancouver Region	203	147	163	123	168	203	116
BC	404	311	312	224	317	361	206

Source: Office of Chief Coroner

The SkyTrain has imported drugs as well as passengers to north Surrey. The latter is also the area where poor and homeless people arrive from the Interior of the province before 'drifting' to Vancouver's Downtown East Side. As the DTES gentrifies, there is an expectation that there may be an even greater migration of addicts to north Surrey as individuals seek low cost housing with access to the SkyTrain.

Currently alcohol and drug treatment services are administered primarily through the Ministry for Children and Families and the Ministry of Health. Treatment includes a number of options and phases—assessment, outpatient treatment, withdrawal management (detoxification), non-residential day treatment, residential treatment, and supportive recovery services.

Local service workers report long wait lists for existing alcohol and drug counselling programs, which are presently administered to both youths and adults through the Ministry for Children and Families. One local health professional cited the case of a mother from a home in which both parents were professionals. She had become a drug addict but when she decided she didn't want to live like this any more, she was put on a wait list for drug and alcohol counselling "for years" and in the meantime became pregnant again. After a period without drugs, a family trauma resulted in a relapse and the birth of a premature baby. The baby will soon be three years old and, even though various services are suggested for her, the mother is still awaiting the service that she feels she needs—detox in a residential setting. The health care professional citing this example wonders whether we are wasting resources in providing inappropriate services.

The Ministry will be reporting out on the future direction of its alcohol and drug services in the Spring of 2001. One of the challenges they face is the chronic shortage of and high turnover amongst social workers.

Given the entrapping nature of drug addiction and the syndrome of frequent relapse for those attempting to get off drugs, it is urgent that detox beds and treatment facilities be available to those who make the decision to quit. The reality appears to be that if a person in the South Fraser area wants to get off drugs, there is no place to send them. At the present time there is a severe lack of detox beds across the whole of the South Fraser Valley from Delta to Abbotsford. There are none at present in Surrey. The nearest is Maple Cottage Detoxification Centre on Columbia Street in New Westminster (the old Woodlands site), with 22 beds (three for youth) where patients can stay for a maximum of six days to ensure that they are medically safe. They are then referred to the community Alcohol and Drug Program in Newton. There are then two further challenges facing discharged clients. Those with no place to live, but who need a short term residential stay of about a month to get their life back into shape and find work, face the possibility of a revolving door situation; and those with both an addiction and a mental health problem run into the catch 22 situation described above.

For current residential treatment and supportive accommodation in Surrey, see Appendix B.

Whalley, Guildford and Surrey in general do not have a supply of Single Residency Occupancy hotels as does the Downtown East Side. Instead, recovery homes provide accommodation for those (mainly adults) who are overcoming addiction. These are larger homes, usually with three to four tenants. They are not necessarily suitable for everyone and may present problems where they are unregulated and unlicensed. Licensing is a provincial responsibility. In 2000 Surrey received licensing for six recovery beds in a north Surrey home under the Ministry for Children and Families. All others are run privately without designated standards. A service worker reported a pattern in Surrey where someone who is off drugs rents a house, takes monthly welfare cheques from up to a dozen renters, relapses back onto drugs, evicts the renters and finally closes down. After a number of such closures, Surrey currently has only three licensed recovery houses. A number of similar homes have been identified as requiring licensing or zoning and some are coming forward to seek zoning. The general area of recovery homes is a complicated one that appears to be in transition in terms of ministerial responsibilities, municipal zoning and building inspections, and upgrading costs.

The City of Vancouver's recent four-pillar plan to address local drug problems (A Framework for Action) has received a surprising degree of public support. It calls for a co-ordinated and comprehensive response which includes preventive, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction measures.⁹¹ It has garnered "a broad consensus about the wisdom of preventing drug use through education and awareness programs, treating addicts through a mixture of detox centres, outpatient counselling and residential treatment facilities, and enforcing the law in the Downtown East-side."

A poll taken shortly after the announcement indicated that 71% of respondents supported the establishment of a task force to consider developing safe drug consumption facilities and 79% were for providing short-term shelter and housing options for drug users living on the street. A lesser but still significant proportion of people (38%) strongly supported the more controversial proposal to set up a task force to consider developing safe injection sites, and 68% supported the proposal to expand and decentralize needle-exchange services. The poll also recorded “considerable support for using heroin for drug treatment”, indicating that public opinion appears to be moving toward recognizing the health-related nature of drug addiction. Support for increasing enforcement (including mandatory treatment for repeated criminals who are addicts, and setting up drug courts) is even higher. The greatest support (90%) was in response to creation of a drug strategy by the city and a partnership role by the provincial and federal governments.⁹²

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- MCF’s Surrey Drug and Alcohol Outpatient Clinic in Newton provides free services for clients. Services at the Alcohol and Drug Program office, also in Newton, are available in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and Spanish. MCF also operates a 4-week day treatment program (The TEAM Program) and a 5-week Women’s Empowerment for Learning and Living (WELL) program in Whalley
- The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security provides assistance to eligible persons in approved residential alcohol or drug treatment programs. Applicants/recipients who are residents of Ministry for Children and Families (MCF)-funded alcohol and drug residential treatment facilities may be eligible for the standard user fee of \$36 per day; and/or a comforts allowance of \$82 per month. Those residing in facilities not funded by MCF receive income assistance, youth allowance or disability allowance.
- Phoenix Drug & Alcohol Recovery & Education Society operates a Drug & Alcohol Centre, a Half-way House & Hostel for Federal Offenders (Federal Solicitor General - Correctional Service of Canada), and a Senior Mens Residential Program.
- MSDES’ Community Services Fund assists clients with such multiple barriers as a diagnosed mental illness, a substance abuse problem, a literacy problem and homeless people.
- Community agencies along with MSDES in Surrey have launched a Drug and Alcohol Task Force.
- The BC Ministry of Health funds harm reduction services, including the Street Health Outreach Clinic, with an on-site needle exchange service, at the South Fraser Community Services in Whalley.
- For a list of MCF-related addiction services in Surrey, see the Directory of Addiction Services in Surrey, BC 1999 on the web at <http://www2.vpl.vancouver.bc.ca/dbs/kaiser/home.html>
- Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society in Newton has an Alcohol and Drug Counselling Program geared to immigrants.

Youth with Addictions

“It’s easier for teens to get pot or ecstasy than beer,” according to a local youth worker. Others agree that “the drug problem is real” and “a big issue” in Surrey.” A 1999 report on local youth heroin and crack/cocaine use found that 25% of 215 youth surveyed had seen crack/cocaine in the previous month and 25% had used or had a best friend who used it over the same period. If they had the money, 79% of youth said they could obtain cocaine and 67% could get heroin within 24 hours.⁹³ Addiction, whether in the home or in the street, is ‘in one’s face’ in parts of the city, even on a school ground in the Whalley-Guildford area where staff have removed needles and taken them to the Needle Exchange.

Local youth workers say the kids they see with addictions are getting younger; the age of ‘first use’ is dropping to around 12 years today from around age 18 three decades ago. “We have a time bomb,” says one worker. Those 17- and 18-year-olds who are not in severe family crisis but not living at home appear to be referred to the under-age component of BC Benefits delivered by MSDES. This provides a baseline income but not other supports.

What is not easy to obtain for local youth is residential addiction treatment. For street youth there are no safe houses other than the two that currently exist in Vancouver and Burnaby. There are currently no detox (four to five-day) or longer term (30 days to six months) residential treatment beds available in Surrey for youth. They are referred to facilities in New Westminster, Vancouver or Langley, often with lengthy wait lists. A large proportion of youth at the Maple Cottage detox centre in New Westminster are reportedly detoxifying from marijuana and cannabis. Those detoxifying from long term heroin use require greater medical supervision to deal with the withdrawal from physical dependence and the related bio-chemical illness.

There is some evidence that where a youth has a supportive and clean environment with parents, relatives or foster parents, good day/evening/weekend attendance programs will have the same results as a residential program.

A number of local service providers emphasize the importance of a continuum of services from prevention to post detox to getting individuals stabilized and contributing to society. These service providers say there is a definite need for on site mental health and drug and alcohol counselling for 19 to 24-year-olds, and that there is a role for service agencies and church groups to become more involved to complement government assistance.

There is some interest in re-establishing a youth network to promote greater coordination and integration of services to youth in Surrey. Nisha in Whalley has proposed a network of five youth resource centres based in five communities in Surrey offering an array of youth services on a continuum model.

Apprenticeship type programs are also seen as desirable for youth who may be interested in mechanics or other areas than university-oriented academic subjects.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The mandate and service framework for the provincial Child and Youth Mental Health Services is currently under review as part of a recently announced strategy to develop a Provincial Child and Youth Mental Health Plan.
- Nisha offers a youth addiction prevention/peer counselling program for 15- to 19-year-olds in Surrey, Langley and Delta, and an outreach counselling program (Astra) from its Bear Creek location in Newton. The Astra program has one bed available for clients.
- HRDC funds the Phoenix Empowerment Program for Youth at Risk, located in Newton, which offers training in employability and computer skills.
- A day attendance program in New Westminster serves youth throughout the South Fraser region including Surrey.

HIV/AIDS

Physicians report fewer cases of full-blown AIDS in the South Fraser Health Region than in the Vancouver Health Region. In 1999, for example, there were 8 cases in South Fraser compared with 56 in Vancouver. The figures underrepresent actual cases, however, as residents travel to Vancouver for testing or move there to receive treatment.⁹⁴

According to the *Community Impact Profile (2000)*, "persons with AIDS are most likely to be men who have sex with other men (42.5%) or injection drug users (39.6%). Combined, these two risk categories accounted for over 82% of all new reported cases of AIDS in the Province in 1998." Of the cumulative total of 195 persons who tested positive for HIV in the South Fraser Health Region between 1995 and 1999, 146 were male and 49 were female; 96 (or 37%) were intravenous drug users.

A related life-threatening complication from sharing dirty needles is Hepatitis C, which can so damage the liver that life expectancy from the onset of the disease is shortened to around two years. Approximately 25% of Surrey - based Phoenix Drug & Alcohol's clients have serious health issues such as Hepatitis C and HIV. As a preventive measure the South Fraser Community Services in Whalley operates a needle exchange. The vast majority (90%) of their clients are local.

Currently there are no HIV beds available in the South Fraser Region, or indeed anywhere outside of Vancouver. One local service provider suggests there is an urgent need for housing for AIDS victims both prior to admission and upon discharge from Surrey Memorial Hospital (for those in the final stages of AIDS). Clients now live in "rat-infested flop houses" or rent a hotel room at \$500 per month, when vacancies are available. A related need is for an AIDS hospice/home with five to six rooms. Currently local residents with AIDS must apply to the Vancouver hospice, which reportedly has a waiting list of 1,000.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- South Fraser Community Services in Whalley has an HIV/AIDS Support Network which provides counselling, advocacy and referrals and which hired an AIDS worker in April, 1999.
- SFCS also has a free medical clinic in Whalley that provides testing and counselling for sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, hepatitis and HIV/AIDS.

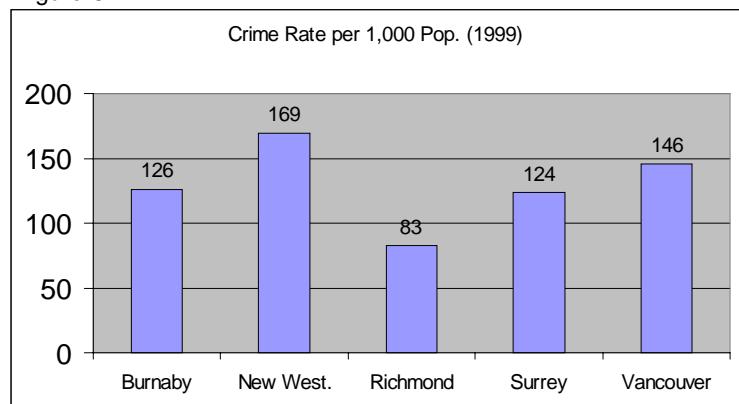
7. Crime and Safety Issues

"A lot of crime in Whalley is basically stealing cars and drug deals," says a local service provider. The correlation between drug use and crime is well known. Yet the image of Surrey as an area with a high crime rate belies the reality that Surrey actually has a lower rate of crime per capita than its neighbours.

7.1 Crime Rate

The crime rate (based on reported incidents) is one way to measure the relative degree of criminality between municipalities with differing populations. As the accompanying chart shows, Surrey had a lower crime rate in 1999 than other SkyTrain communities—Vancouver, New Westminster and Burnaby. In spite of media impressions to the contrary, the crime rate for Surrey actually fell by nearly 20% between 1991 and 1998, mirroring a similar decline across BC and Canada since 1991. Between 1996 and 1998 the South Fraser Health Region had a lower serious violent crime rate than Vancouver, Burnaby and the Simon Fraser Health Regions, and a lower rate of break and enters than Vancouver, Burnaby, and the Fraser Valley.⁹⁵

Figure 8



Source: BC Ministry of Attorney General

Table 27 shows the incidence of selected offences in 1999 for Surrey, as well as for RCMP District 1 detachment area (which roughly represents the community of Whalley) and for RCMP District 2 (which approximates Guildford and Fleetwood combined).

Table 27

Selected Actual Offences in Surrey (1999)						
Town Centre	Total Est'd Pop. (1999)	Murder/ Manslaughter	All Criminal Code Persons Offences	Property Offences	Procurina/ Prostitution	Heroin/Cocaine Poss'n/Traff'g
Whalley	76,300	6	1,763	9,029	197	148
Guildford/ Fleetwood	86,300	1	1,148	6,985	18	39
City of Surrey	335,000	9	4,757	27,242	232	265

Source: Surrey RCMP Detachment, Research Department

As Table 28 shows, the rate of reported offences in Whalley far exceeds its resident population as a proportion of the City of Surrey.⁹⁶

These data confirm the correlation between low income and crime, as Whalley and Guildford communities also reported the lowest household income of the City's communities in 1996.⁹⁷

Table 28

% of Total Actual Offences in Surrey (1999)						
Town Centre	% of Total Est'd Pop. (1999)	Murder/ Manslaughter	All Criminal Code Persons Offences	Property Offences	Procurina/ Prostitution	Heroin/Cocaine Poss./Traff.
Whalley	22.8	66.7	37.1	33.1	84.9	55.8
Guildford/ Fleetwood	25.8	11.1	24.1	25.6	7.8	14.7

Source: Surrey RCMP Research and Planning Department

Two recent incidents in Surrey highlight local concerns with youth involvement in drug trafficking in Whalley. In February Surrey RCMP officers raided a crack house, as a result of which a 14-year-old boy was facing charges. This occurred just a week after two youths aged 14 and 12 were arrested and charged with drug trafficking. Surrey RCMP Corporal Janice Armstrong expressed concern "with the age of some of the suspects—and the creeping of the drug problem from Surrey's City Centre into outlying residential areas." A neighbour observed that the crack house "has been plagued with problems because it has an absentee landlord." (*Vancouver Sun*, 8 February 2001.)

7.2 Policing

With 382 uniformed officers, the Surrey RCMP detachment is the largest in Canada. Yet the rapid population growth here means that local police were stretched just to respond to the more than 125,000 calls in 1999. The detachment has strategically moved towards community-based policing, with satellite community police stations (district offices, as noted above) located in Whalley and Guildford.

Although both an enforcement and a preventive model in policing are required, the latter may prove more effective in the long run. Among the social factors that a preventive approach must take into account are

those understood to be conducive to criminal activity—“dropping out of school, exclusion from the labour force, family instability, overuse of alcohol and drugs, victimization, etc.”⁹⁸

The Surrey RCMP district offices now have integrated services teams working directly out of the office. The services include a by-law officer, probation worker and youth intervention counsellor (hired by the City) working out of the district office. These initiatives are seen as a tremendously positive development by local residents and businesses. There is a sense that the moral and physical climate is improving in these neighbourhoods, both from the role models that police and city workers provide and by their efforts to clean up properties where criminal activity might otherwise flourish.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Integrated Services Teams (ISTs) have been set up in RCMP Districts 1 and 2 (Whalley and Guildford/Fleetwood).
- The Whalley IST is expanding from an enforcement focus to making connections with business and developing community promotional events; Guildford/Fleetwood district office also has a district consultative committee, with representatives from area groups such as the residential association and block parents.
- The BC Ministry of Attorney General’s Community Mobilization Program funds local crime reduction and violence prevention initiatives.
- With Ministry of Attorney General funding, the Surrey Conflict Resolution Centre’s Community Mediation Training project is helping police and volunteers to improve their mediation and other skills to assist in the resolution of neighbourhood disputes and community issues.

7.3 Youth and Crime

Crimes are committed mainly by young men and nearly 60% of all crimes relate to property offences. Surrey (as noted above) is a youthful community. Not surprisingly, RCMP data on actual offences between 1996 and 1999 indicate that one of the few areas that shows steady increase over this period relates to motor vehicle thefts.

The strong link between youth crime and learning disabilities is well documented. Statistics indicate that “70-80% of all youth in custody centres are moderately to severely learning disabled.” A recently published police manual suggests that most interventions in youth crime “occur too late to have much impact on the developmental and social factors which contribute to persistent and violent offending by young people.” A comprehensive prevention strategy involving the police and community partners and a focus on those in pre-school and elementary school with behavioural and learning problems would likely be more cost effective over the long term.⁹⁹

RCMP staff who deal with young offenders see more impoverished youth, with parents who are on welfare, or involved in alcohol and drugs, in Surrey City Centre than in Guildford.

A disturbing trend for social service professionals involves kids becoming active in more ‘at risk’ activities at an earlier age, at 12 or 13 rather than at 15 or 16. Youngsters who lack a support network by this age may start to falter, struggling for identification, and become vulnerable to social factors at school or in the neighbourhood. Those who do not find a sense of belonging with other kids, may find it with those who are living on the edge, seemingly with a great lifestyle. Such youth can develop a laissez faire attitude, taking the lumps as they come, mistrustful of the services available.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The BC Ministry of Attorney General in 2000 continued to fund Nights Alive, a youth crime prevention program that provides youth with recreation and training through late-night activities and programs in community facilities (sports, dances, life skills, leadership, conflict resolution and mentoring programs).
- Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS) will hold four workshops this year for at risk youth. This initiative will also include a needs assessment in which youth can speak out on emerging crime issues and needs in their communities. PICS also sought funding in 2000 for an Indo-Canadian oriented youth drop-in centre at its present location in Newton.
- Surrey Crime Prevention Society received a City of Surrey grant to continue its programming, including sponsorship of the Spirit of Youth Mural Project, in which local young artists produce murals on such community themes as the environment, multiculturalism, heritage and the celebration of youth.
- South Fraser Community Services has received a grant from the City of Surrey to provide its Surrey Street Youth program.
- The federal Ministry of the Solicitor General Canada funded the "All Together Now!" community-based early intervention and crime prevention strategy for elementary school age youth at risk which began as a pilot program in Surrey and other communities in 1996-97 and was continued for a further two years. It had a special focus on immigrant and aboriginal youth. The evaluation noted that students, parents and teachers perceived the project as having contributed to a reduction in youth violence and crime.

Youth and Drug Dealing

Homeless or street youth are at particularly high risk for harming themselves because of poor health or the criminal behaviour that is often related to using or dealing in drugs. The SkyTrain in the drug language is the 'mule train' where under age youth distribute the products from the station into the community. Service workers report the successful recruiting of youth from multicultural backgrounds for this work, including Latin American youth. The danger for these youth is absorption into a network that comes to constitute a 'family', with a highly transient lifestyle and a detachment from positive social processes and role models.

There are no specialized services that address immigrant youth with addictions, and language and cultural barriers may prevent some youth from seeking out non-ethnic services.

This issue is related to the lack of shelters or safe houses in Surrey for youth who are experiencing social problems. The police may pick up youth on the streets but very few services are available after 5 p.m. in the evening. At the present time there appears to be no place to take them other than the few adult-oriented shelters. Interventions that involve waiting until the next day pose a serious issue and likelihood of the youth reoffending or harming themselves. Some youth workers see the need for safe houses for youth in every community, but particularly in Whalley and Newton.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- OPTIONS, South Fraser Community Services and Nisha provide programs for at risk youth.
- The Ministry for Children and Families has hired a Latin American youth worker at their Alcohol and Drug Program in Newton.

Youth Gangs

Although this is a Lower Mainland phenomenon, Surrey is not immune to the trend. "We have a big problem right now with gangs," says an educational counsellor, who cited a number of students who are unable to attend school because of their association with gangs.

Those who become involved carrying drugs for gangs are at high risk, especially if they attempt to disengage from the group. The shooting of a child last year near Johnston Heights illustrates the reality that, according to another youth worker, “the gang situation is alive and doing well.” Experts are seeing kids who become disenfranchised, who don’t belong anywhere and are thereby at risk to become gang-involved. There are reports of children being recruited into such gangs, often for the purpose of prostitution or carrying drugs.

There is a natural interest in group inclusion amongst youth and a danger that teens who can’t find a place in a peer sports or other recreational or social group will find a deviant subculture in which to find acceptance and the desired membership. This is a growing concern among residents and school and enforcement personnel.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Nisha, with funding from the City of Vancouver Social Planning Department, is planning to hire a Vietnamese youth worker out of the Broadway Youth Resource Centre in Vancouver, with the aim of preventing such youth from being recruited into gangs. It is also developing a proposal for a multipurpose residential and youth resource centre in South Vancouver and Surrey.

7.4 Violence and Family Violence

One interviewee expressed the view that this issue exists “big time” in Surrey. Counsellors at a local drop-in counselling centre often see victims of domestic violence, along with related issues including drug and alcohol and sexual abuse. Youth outreach workers are also seeing young women who identify physical violence as a major problem and who do not know what to expect from a normal relationship between couples or parents.

The isolation that abused people experience is a key challenge. Although women are predominantly the victims, there is a trend for men to identify themselves as victims and also for male abusers to seek counselling. A number of service providers point out the need to focus on men and boys, to get beyond anger management to identify feelings and take responsibility both for the feelings and the actions arising from them. This appears to be an area in which funding is difficult to come by and in which specialized training is essential.

Exposure by children to family violence is another factor which can result in “conduct disorder and physical aggressiveness, anxiety, depression, cognitive and/or developmental delays, difficulty with social and peer relations and juvenile criminal activity”.

According to Correctional Service Canada, over 56% of inmates indicated some form of violence occurring between their parents. Adolescents exposed in childhood to inter-parental abuse were more likely to engage in dating violence, alcohol and drug abuse, run away from home, demonstrate poor performance in school and disrespectful, stereotyped sex role attitudes. Chronic depression, poor social adjustment and post-traumatic and other stress disorders are also possible long-term effects of exposure to family violence (Sudermann & Jaffe, 1998).¹⁰¹

Women fleeing violence are often unable to find a safe place, and may have to stay with a relative if they lack the finances to manage on their own. (For turnaways from existing transitional housing for women, see section above on transition and second stage housing for women and children.)

There is increasing evidence of service needs in Surrey's large visible minority and new immigrant population, which may experience increased family stress where low income and cultural adjustments are factors. One multicultural agency cites an increased number of suicides by women who have been victims of violence. It advocates the development of culturally sensitive programs with language-specific service, including such issues as spousal assault and anger management, and spousal abuse programs for men.

The recent suicide of Surrey student Hamed Nastoh has increased public concern with the effects of bullying and with youth suicides. There is some programming within the school system around bullying, and greater efforts to deal with anger management between Grades 1 and 7. As one educational professional noted, however, "These deal with the symptoms. The root cause is what is happening in the home at an early age. That is why kids are angry. They have bad feelings inside for some reason and that is not dealt with." OPTIONS offers an anger management program called The Unloading Zone, which has a waiting list. It is now the only such program in Surrey since another similar program recently lost its funding. An American program called Fast Track has had a high level of success with its preventive program of identifying high risk kindergarten children with conduct problems. It works with them, their families and schools to bring about change "before the kids hit adolescence, by which time it is often too late."¹⁰²

Closely related to these are programs that build self-esteem. The new Ministry of Education curriculum (BC Performance Standards) includes optional goals and activities, including such topics as valuing diversity and other responses to social issues. These are an alternative or an adjunct to the Second Step program used in many District schools which trains individuals in social skills.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The Ministry of Attorney General's Victim's Service Division funds various programs in relation to violence against women.
 - The Ministry of Attorney General coordinates a local volunteer Community Co-ordinated Response Committee to Violence Against Women in Relationships, with representation from the Crown, police, victims' services, probation, Ministry for Children and Families, family court counsellors, and organizations that provide services to battered or sexually assaulted women or provide anger management courses. This monitors barriers to women, the police charging process, and does education on violence against women.
 - Surrey Women's Centre offers a Specialized Victims Assistance Program dealing with such personal violence issues as sexual assault, spousal assault and child abuse.
 - Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society's services include a family violence counsellor on staff, Battered Women's Services, Stopping the Violence Counselling Program for women, a Multicultural Women's Program which includes, for example a Vietnamese Women's Support Group, and Parent Project (CAPC) for mothers and caregivers of children 0 to 6.
 - The Ministry for Social Development and Economic Security and the Ministry of Women's Equality fund women's bridging programs for survivors of abuse. The latter funds the Children Who Witness Abuse (CWWA) program and Threshold: Women's Outreach Program delivered by OPTIONS.
 - Programs in Surrey elementary schools include: All Together Now (2 schools), Bullying prevention initiatives (49 schools), Bullying Resistance and Violence Education (BRAVE, 4 schools), positive behaviour reward systems (most schools) and social development programs (17) for at risk youth. The District employs 56 child care workers. Secondary Schools have the following programs (Youth Educational Support (YES, 3 schools), Alternate programs (8), Specialized programs (TREES, LEE, Adolescent Day Treatment and Visiting Teacher/Hospital Homebound Service, 4 schools). Student initiatives include violence prevention (10 schools), peer mediation (8), peer counselling (8), and multicultural/global issues (14). There are also School District staff training initiatives in progress on bullying prevention, non-violent crisis intervention, critical incident stress debriefing, suicide prevention/intervention, child abuse prevention, gang prevention, substance abuse and drug recognition.
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- Family Services of Greater Vancouver trains organizations to deliver 'The Unloading Zone,' a copyrighted personal development program which teaches skills on making effective decisions and using the skills to do so when one is angry. The author, Catherine Hobson, is constantly getting requests for this program in Surrey but at present there are few organizations delivering the program here.
- The Surrey Teachers' Association sponsored a Grade Seven Boys' Conference which focused on bullying and violence prevention and could serve as a model for other communities to address boys' socialization, behaviour and achievement.
- OPTIONS offers an anger management program for youth called 'The Unloading Zone' and has established a web site for 'bullying' information (<http://www.angelfire.com/bc2/bullying>) and is a participant in activities arising from the March 2000 Youth Forum in Surrey entitled "Diversity and Respect For all", such as a planned needs assessment of local youth and a further forum.
- OPTIONS and the Hamed Nastoh Islamic Youth Centre hosted an educational event on aggression and teen suicide at the Education Centre in March 2001.
- The Ministry for Children and Families funds
 - Project Parent Fraser South - in-home intensive parenting for families who have children below age 12 and where the children either have been or are in imminent risk of being removed
 - The Art Therapy program for children and Special Services to Children and Their Families, a preventive family support service delivered by OPTIONS.
 - The Ministry of Health funds the Women and Violence counselling program delivered by OPTIONS.

7.5 Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault

While there is a greater public awareness of sexual abuse and counselling services that now exist to assist victims, the administrators of local shelters are seeing more instances of sexual abuse and instances involving younger children. If children exposed to domestic violence have significant social issues which they and others in society must cope with, victims of sexual abuse are even more traumatised. Left untreated, they move into adulthood with serious mental health issues that can require long-term treatment.

Local social service workers report frequent disclosure by clients of sexual abuse and wonder where to refer these clients. Private counselling at \$60-\$70 an hour is beyond reach. Mental Health services have waiting lists and Victim's Assistance workers are also overworked, according to one expert.

As with so many key social issues, there is an associated disability, in this case involving offenders. One local therapist reports that about 60% of adult offenders have some kind of learning disability or developmental delay.

While homicide and robbery have declined over the past decade in Canada, assault and sexual assault have increased. Among the most serious costs of such crimes are long-term psychological distress and medical costs for the approximately 10% of victims who enter hospitals for treatment.¹⁰³

Sexual assaults are not limited to female victims, but the ratio of female to male victims is in the range of 90 to ten. The Sexual Assault Clinic at Surrey Memorial Hospital sees 100 to 140 patients on average per year. Nearly three-quarters of the patients are under age 19, and most know the perpetrator. Nearly half of all patients are from Surrey; the rest are from elsewhere in the Lower Mainland. Multiple sexual assaults related to drugs are not uncommon here. Nearly one-third of the hospital-related cases result from rapes which follow the ingestion of drugs or alcohol without the victim's knowledge. Such young women can be the victims of multiple perpetrators in a trick house. The experience is invariably brutal both physically and emotionally, and one that is not easy to repair. In many cases a sexual assault on a young person aged 13 to 16 can trigger a downward spiral that ends in entrapment in the sex trade.

Another more recent trend seen by a local health care worker is a ten to twenty per cent increase in sexual assaults in the age 35 to 45 group. Although the reasons for this are unknown, it could relate to divorce or separation, or children becoming old enough for their mother to socialize in pubs and bars where the incidence of assault is more frequent.

While a sexual assault service exists within the Hospital's Emergency Department, there are few resources for patient follow-up. This appears to be a service which doesn't fall into any particular government agency's mandate, although a modest temporary grant from the Ministry of Health funds a co-ordinator position. Volunteer advocates are also hard to come by.

The Surrey Women's Centre Society is facing an increasing demand for the limited services available to adult women survivors of violence, with the result that such women may be on a long waiting list. Its July-December 1999 report identifies, among others, the need in general for more women's health-related resources and services as well as

- accessible, free support groups for women who have experienced violence or abuse and who also face additional barriers such as racism, homophobia, etc."
- increased services on violence against women issues, particularly for a locally-operated 24-hour crisis line
- lesbian coming-out and support groups, particularly since the closing of the VLC
- more free/affordable legal support services, especially around issues of custody and access, separation/divorce, due to cutbacks in Legal Services funding.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Surrey Women's Centre Society is a non-profit group providing rape and assault supported services and operates a crisis counselling line at 489-8373. Its Specialized Victim Assistance Program, funded by the BC Ministry of Attorney General serves survivors of sexual assault, child sexual abuse and relationship violence who are involved with the criminal justice system and accompanies those women who choose to report to the police or go to the hospital. The Stopping The Violence Program provides long-term one-to-one counselling to adult women who have experienced sexual assault, violence in intimate relationships or childhood sexual abuse in their lives.
- SDISS is seeking interministerial funding to continue its program to recruit and train volunteer Child Abuse Prevention Leaders within the Punjabi, Chinese, Latino, Polish, Korean, Vietnamese and Filipino communities.

7.6 Prostitution

The number of prostitutes working in the Whalley-Guildford area is unknown. (One estimate has 2000 to 4000 prostitutes working in the BC sex trade, with over 600 in downtown Vancouver.) The number of sex trade workers is increasing southward along the King George Highway, however, after arriving in north Whalley along with the SkyTrain stations. Prostitutes are perhaps more in evidence in Whalley than in Guildford, but there is some evidence of prostitution on the main streets in Guildford as well. Local observers note the ongoing challenge of relocating the issue. Judicially ordered 'no go' zones along the King George Highway in Surrey City Centre have resulted in the relocation of prostitutes further west, unfortunately nearer to a local school and youth centre in that neighbourhood.

A 1995 report on the Downtown East Side identified sex trade workers as being age 26 on average, 70% Aboriginal, 71% mothers, and 64% from out of province. Other studies indicate that nearly all are victims of violence or sexual abuse in their childhood, have not completed high school, would opt to live in different places and conditions if circumstances permitted, and have a keen desire for training opportunities in the

areas of “lifeskills, self-esteem, caregiver/social services, on-the-job training, GED/upgrading, or specialized programs such as technical services and business programs.” Once in the trade, the risk of death from HIV, a drug overdose or physical violence is tragically high.¹⁰⁴

A number of people consulted for this report have indicated the need for rescue operations for prostitutes attempting to leave the sex trade, including safe supported housing. At present there are no such homes in the Lower Mainland. The few recovery homes for women that exist in Surrey do not provide specialized services to enable the former sex trade workers to move beyond their current lifestyle. There are two current initiatives directed towards providing specialized housing in Vancouver and Surrey. In Vancouver Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education (PACE) aims to establish twenty housing units over the next three years in the Mount Pleasant area, beginning with a home for youth. The project is assisted by Save the Children, Habitat for Humanity and volunteer tradespeople.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- START has attempted to get safe houses for prostitutes in Surrey.
- A community-based safe house for adolescent sex trade workers is currently being organized for a town centre in Surrey outside of the Whalley-Guildford area, modelled on existing homes in Kelowna. The project is supported by Soroptimists International, the donation of a 7-bedroom home, and the Surrey Firemen's charitable group, among others.
- Cedar Hills community in Whalley has organized a block watch and other activities arising from a concern with prostitution in the neighbourhood.

Teen Prostitution and Sexual Exploitation of Youth and Children

Teen prostitution is another trend that has reached the suburbs, whether it takes place there or youngsters from the suburbs end up in the trade in downtown Vancouver. Experts estimate that 80% of the youth working as prostitutes in Vancouver come from outside the city, from such areas as Surrey and the Tri-Cities. A local service worker reports seeing younger and younger prostitutes. Where they used to be in their 20's and '30s a decade ago, now they are 15- and 16-year-olds.¹⁰⁵ Surrey is regarded by some local service workers as the hub for the South Fraser region in getting youngsters into the sex trade. One organization knew of 60 to 75 local youth who are sexually exploited in the Whalley and Guildford areas.

Sexually exploited youth, according to the Ministry for Children & Families Youth Services, are youth under age 18 who are “manipulated or forced into prostitution through perceived affection and belonging, and in return receive drugs, narcotics, money, food and/or shelter.” Local police have also identified areas of sexual exploitation concentrated around Whalley, but the sex trade business is moving along 104th Avenue to 150th Street along with the concentration of low cost housing in that part of Guildford. A recent count of known and suspected sexual offenders (prostitutes, pimps, and recruiters) found a low incidence rate (less than one in 1,000 known and less than four in 1,000 suspected) but officials assume this underestimates the actual incidence, which is likely closer to five in 1,000.

In the view of one local service professional, the situation is not as entrenched in Surrey as it is in Vancouver's Downtown East Side, or not the same style. Young and impressionable 14 and 15-year-olds go to parties, and are bought jewellery and clothes, which are not seen by them as payment for service. Burnaby appears to be more of a draw for these girls than New Westminster. The link with drugs is a part of the lifestyle, and, as elsewhere, there is a trend towards older girls and former prostitutes recruiting younger girls. One former prostitute and recruiter noted in 1999 that “all kids are potentially at risk of being recruited into a life of prostitution.” Recruiters are in the high schools; it can occur over as little as one week. Once accustomed to a lavish lifestyle, the girls are lured into the trade by the bait of even higher income.

Another service worker believes that some areas in Surrey appear to be a major target area for pimps with well-developed recruitment strategies that prey on individuals in socially isolated situations and are targeting Aboriginal, Indo-Canadian, and Chinese women, both in and out of high school.

There is a similar pattern here to those youth who get involved in gang activities. A young girl is not doing well in school, gets distanced from the school group, experiments with drugs, in some cases gets kicked out of the home, and 'hangs out' on the street where the recruiters are scouting. Typically the youth spend time trading sex for room and board; once addicted on drugs, they are into the sex trade. More and more of these youngsters come from 'middle class' schools and are seen as 'normal' kids who are doing well in school but who drift into a lifestyle that they don't realize can be a trap. Some start in the sex trade as early as age 11. Later they move into pimping, recruiting other friends to work.

Separate facilities are regarded as a more effective preventive option for young women leaving the sex trade, who are dealing with childhood traumas and having existed on the street, rather than co-locating them in recovery houses with people in their mid-thirties.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The RCMP have established a local prostitution prevention team which aims to get young people out of the trade.
- The Child and Youth Sexual Exploitation/Prostitution (STOP) task force organized information nights and public meetings as well as school performances by the provincial drama group TCO2 in 2000, and has received United Way funding to hire a co-ordinator.
- A survey was conducted on the sexual exploitation of children and youth in the Surrey School District in the Spring of 1999, and the District is planning further educational programs such as a proposal for a Surrey youth drama group.
- MCF funds START, a Sexually Exploited Teen program to assist street involved, sexually exploited teens in escaping the streets. OPTIONS is setting up a youth drop-in location for support, guidance and referrals.
- The Children of the Street Society in Coquitlam has produced *It Can Happen to Anyone*, a video which provides a training and information tool for the general public, youth, caregivers and service providers with respect to the sexual exploitation of youth.
- A bid was made by OPTIONS and by Nisha to hire outreach workers to work with young women to remove them from the control of pimps but this initiative has not evolved.
- South Fraser Community Services is planning a safe house for at risk and homeless youth in the South Fraser Region

IV. Service Infrastructure Issues

1. Is there a Service Infrastructure Lag in Surrey?

There appears to be lot of social service infrastructure in Surrey today, including school programming, community agencies and government workers, and a number of initiatives are identified in this report. Yet frequently in consultation for this report professionals and residents cited waiting lists or the absence of particular services here. The services that do exist appear to be overwhelmed by the extraordinary population growth that has occurred. As one expert noted, social services always lag, especially in a period of dramatic population increase. "You don't prebuild [these services]. Facilities tend to follow the need, especially in times of austerity in BC. The number that was satisfactory a year ago may not be satisfactory today." Some workers wonder whether Surrey receives government funding in proportion to the actual size of the population

Others wonder whether the dynamics of urban poverty, with its accompanying issues of violence and drug misuse, require new planning approaches, ones which emphasise a continuum of services and a greater coordination of government and non-profit services and private companies.

2. Continuum of Service

The need for a continuum of service was raised particularly by youth workers, by those dealing with mental health issues and by those in emergency housing. They point to the likelihood of better end results when, for example, a high risk youth can access a smooth transition in a familiar setting which takes him or her from the street into employment and training programs. A number of interviewees expressed frustration with what appeared to be short-term bandaid solutions that do not provide the kind of follow-up or ongoing support that will prevent individuals from relapsing and recycling through the system. This calls for a recognition that there are issues that do not disappear following a short-term treatment or program, and that the individual is a holistic being who may require continuing assistance.

An effective continuum of supports goes hand in hand with co-ordinated support services.

3. Coordination of Services

Many government and organizational employees say that we are all doing the best we can with what we have, but we can do better. Key challenges cited by service providers are coordination and communication issues between agencies. It's becoming clear that there is less public tolerance nowadays for lack of government or non-profit agency coordination in addressing serious social issues. This growing mindset complements an increasing call for, and organization around, more effective community partnerships in order to overcome 'turf wars' and communication problems between service agencies. One service worker summed it up this way: "We have to be proactive and we have to work together."

Many government departments are attempting to develop a continuum of services or recognize the importance of a holistic approach. As evidence of the interest in sharing resources through partnerships, this report cites many initiatives which involve networks of government and community agencies working together around issues. In addition, more and more developments in the Greater Vancouver area are involving various levels of government. The Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness and the Vancouver Agreement are examples of effective collaborative approach. Other examples include the Surrey Interagency Network and the Collaboration Roundtable (co-chaired by Nisha) made up of multicultural and multiservice agencies, which recently produced a document called 'Community Agency Partnership Projects'.

4. Information on Local Programs and Services

As one local observer noted, "There are good services here but the only people who know about them are the people who are already in the know." There are two types of ongoing information needs.

(1) General knowledge of existing services and community resources. This issue has been raised in a number of public forums on social needs in Surrey. Calls are repeatedly made for more widely available inventories or a database of specific local service resources, whether related to youth, housing, drug and alcohol services, or other areas. Various pieces of the information pie exist, including *The Surrey Directory of Services* compiled by Surrey Community Services, and many government web sites, for example.

(2) Information presented in an understandable manner for those clients with language barriers, low rates of literacy, or who are impaired by mental illness or addiction, and documents that are very specifically geared

to the customer's needs. Whether in the form of written information or service provider interaction with clients, it recognizes the reality that the person may not know what questions to ask in order to receive the assistance they require, or may be incapable of advocating for themselves. This requires a remarkable sensitivity on the part of all government as well as non-profit staff who are delivering services to such clients.

A related need involves sensitivity in social service interactions. Poverty, mental illness and addictions damage one's sense of self-worth. Compounding this is what advocates for the poor call the perception problem. Initially people see such individuals as problems and only secondly as people with poor health. They don't see them as individuals, as people with value. People who believe they are worthless eventually have no coping skills. "One of the biggest needs," says a local service worker, "is for us to interact with these individuals on a human scale, rather than as 'those people'."

Many organizations are very aware of the above needs, which are mentioned here in order to build on the existing initiatives and role models.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- The City of Surrey's Social Planning Committee has taken the lead in exploring the potential for a Community Information Network and the development of comprehensive on-line information on community programs, services and events.
- Industry Canada funds the Community Access Program which provides computers to local organizations working in a partnership. The Progressive Intercultural Society (PICS), along with other entities including the City of Surrey and Surrey Public Library, has applied under this program for a South Fraser Access Network.

5. Community Cohesion

Some observers think there may be less of a sense of community in Surrey, as far as poor people are concerned, than in the DTES. With respect to the wider spectrum of residents of varying income levels, others note that "people identify with the communities rather than with the whole of Surrey." Any effective rejuvenation of the social environment, particularly in Whalley and Guildford, rests on dialogue between residents, business, government and social service providers. "We have to activate the communities to deal with the social issues, as they are trying to do in the Downtown East Side." Getting people to talk is a huge step in the right direction.

This interest in focussing local resources emerged as a suggestion at the recent Surrey Social Futures *Community Impact Profile* Workshop for a discussion group on the topic of "Community Cohesion." During the small group discussion on this topic it was noted that Richmond has "A Caring Place" where organizations are co-located with meeting rooms and shared resources. It was also suggested that the leaders of the six community groups in Surrey should get together on an annual basis.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

- Surrey Social Futures spearheaded the formation of two community associations in Whalley and Guildford—the Whalley Business and Residents Association and the Guildford Community Partners Society. These organizations promote local events that celebrate community pride such as the Halloween celebration at Bridgeview Community Hall or a possible fish derby. They see their area as "exciting communities with an awful lot of needs," and are motivated by the knowledge that investments today will make a huge difference in a few years.
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V. Conclusion

Parts of Whalley and Guildford pose significant challenges for a maturing city. The socio-economic indicators of low income, transiency, crime, low education levels and high unemployment confirm the visible signs of pockets of severe poverty and social deterioration. These issues are complex and the solutions elusive. “If we could resolve these issues locally in a responsible way,” says one long time Whalley resident, “then we could resolve them anywhere.”

The potential of the City is tremendous, given its size, location, diverse economic base and youthful and vibrant communities. A variety of resources are already in place for focussing on the social needs that have developed amid the rush of city-building that Surrey has experienced over the past few decades. As the Local Initiatives cited above indicate, there are many ongoing improvements in service. In addition, there is growing recognition that investments in people are as important in a knowledge-based economy as those in physical infrastructure; that the public expects greater government partnerships and coordination in meeting the challenges of growth; that non-profit staff and public servants make great efforts to make the best of limited resources; and that there is an energizing common desire to make our community a better place for our children. Finally, we can build upon the remarkable resourcefulness of those survivors of the most severe social environments and of people coping with their limitations, who remind those with more advantages that there is always a foundation on which to build a better future.

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Appendix A

City of Surrey Housing Planning Initiatives

Initiative	Yes	No
Housing and Planning Policies		
Definition of Social Housing	*	
Housing Task Force or Committee	*	
Community Workshops or Public Forums on Housing	*	
Housing Policies Included in Official Community Plan	*	
Housing Strategies	*	
Housing Planning Tools		
Density Bonusing	*	
Housing Agreements		*
Comprehensive Development Zoning	*	
Zoning for Houses Above Shops		*
Zoning for Manufactured Home Parks	*	
Strategies for Increasing Densities in New Neighbourhoods	*	
Strategies for Increasing Densities in Existing Neighbourhoods	*	
Resident Initiatives to Increase Density in Single Family Areas		*
Zoning for Secondary Suites	*	
Small Lot Zoning	*	
Partnerships for Housing Development	*	
Inclusionary Zoning (Requiring a Proportion of Units be for Affordable Housing)	*	
Leasing land at Market Value	*	
Leasing Land at Below Market Value	*	
Requested "Empowerment by Regulation"		*
Fast-Tracking Development Approvals for Affordable Housing	*	
Housing Reserve Funds	*	
Rental Housing Conversion Protection	*	
Standards of Maintenance Bylaws		*
1995 Building Code Standards for Secondary Suites	*	
Strategies for Dealing with NIMBY	*	
Land Inventory	*	
Residential Capacity Study	*	
Housing Stock Monitoring Program		*
Housing for Individuals with Special Needs		
Definition of Special Needs Housing	*	
Reports or Surveys Identifying Special Needs Populations in the Community		*
Special Needs or Disability Issues Committees or Task Groups		*

Source: Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, *Planning for Housing: An Overview of Local Government Initiatives in British Columbia* (October 2000), Appendix B, "Municipalities and Specific Housing Planning Initiatives". See the main document for definitions and discussion of the terms and concepts used here.

± NB. The City of Surrey does not have a stock of SRO Units because it did not experience the same early development of tourism and downtown hotels as did the City of Vancouver.

Appendix B

Inventory of Facilities and Services – Continuum of Housing and Support
September 29, 2000

	Name of Agency	Program/Services	#Units/ Beds	Target Group	Sub- Region	Municipality
Housing						
Permanent Social Housing		Non-profit and co-op housing, including units managed by BC Housing	5,514	Families, seniors and singles	South of Fraser	
Singles Housing		Non-profit and co-op housing for low income singles persons	0	Single persons	South of Fraser	
Homeless At Risk		Non-profit housing and co-op housing funded through BC Housing for singles in need of support	20	Single persons with support	South of Fraser	
Multi-Service Housing (see BC Housing)		Second stage and short stay housing for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness	0	Single persons with support	South of Fraser	
Youth Housing			0	Youth	South of Fraser	
Supported apartments		OPTIONS Services to Communities Society – Sandell House Hazel Villa	8 12	Mental health	South of Fraser	North Surrey
Supported Hotels			0	Low income and mental health	South of Fraser	
Supported Independent Living Program (SILP) Units		Housing assistance for those with mental illness	134	Mental health	South of Fraser	
SILP Units for Youth and Forensic Clients			0	Youth	South of Fraser	
Transition Houses	Evergreen Transition House (10), Virginia Sam Transition House (10), Shimai Specialized Transition House (10), Atira Transition House (10), Ishtar Transition House (12)		52	Women and children	South of Fraser	
Second Stage Housing for Women & Children	Atira Transition House Society – Koomseh Second Stage Program	For women and their children coming out of first-stage transition homes. Stay ranges from 3 to 18 months.	11	Women and children	South of Fraser	White Rock
Emergency Shelters	OPTIONS: Services to Communities Society – Surrey Men's Shelter	Length of stay 1-30 days	20	Adult males	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Sheena's Place	Length of stay 1-30 days	10	Women and children	South of Fraser	Surrey
Cold/Wet Weather Strategy Beds (Winter 1999-2000)	South Fraser Community Services – Gateway	November to March	36	Adult males (28) and adult females (8)	South of Fraser	Surrey

Support						
Residential treatment, supportive recovery & transitional living	Cwenengitel Aboriginal Society – Cwenengitel Aboriginal Support Centre		7	Aboriginal men	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Cornerstone Counselling Services Inc – Cornerstone Manor	Open-ended stay.	49	Adult males	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Path to Freedom Recovery Centre Ltd.	Program length generally a min. of 90 days	10	Adult males	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recovery Society – Phoenix Houses	Program length 90 days min. up to 8 months to 1 year	30	Adult males	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Renaissance House	Methadone treatment in comprehensive inpatient program for adults who are misusing heroin. Program length generally 1 year.	30	Adults – 15 males, 15 females	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Step by Step Recovery House	Length of stay 3 months to 1 year.	35	Adults – 21 males, 14 females	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Nisha Family and Children's Services Soc – Astra Youth Addiction Outreach Counselling	1 bed. Program length 28 days.	1	Youth age 13-19	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Pacific Legal Education Assoc. (PLEA) – Daughters and Sisters Program	Treatment program 4-6 months	7	Youth – females 12-18 years	South of Fraser	Surrey
Needle Exchange Program	South Fraser community Services Society – Street Health Outreach Program	Needle exchange program for injection drug users, sex trade workers, and street-involved youth and adults.		All	South of Fraser	Surrey
Detoxification			0		South of Fraser	
Dual Diagnosis Programs	Peace Arch Community Services – Dual Disorders Program	For clients referred from mental health centres or alcohol and drug clinics		Adults	South of Fraser	White Rock
Drop-In Centres	South Fraser Community Services Society – The Front room	24 hours a day, 7 days a week service. On-site showers, laundry, telephone and personal storage. Client referrals.		All	South of Fraser	Surrey
	South Fraser Community Services Society – Surrey Street Youth Services	Safe place for street youth. Shower and laundry facilities. Outreach workers available. Referrals, medical, drug and alcohol, parent-teen mediation and counselling services		Youth	South of Fraser	Surrey
Outreach Services	South Fraser Community Services – Reconnect Program, Surrey Street Youth	Storefront operation that offers a safe place for street youth. Outreach workers help youth move toward a healthier lifestyle and help prevent other young people from becoming street involved.		Youth	South of Fraser	Surrey
Employment Services	Aware Society	Career planning and job search for women		Women	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Nisha Family and Children's Services Soc – Foundation: Youth Job Readiness Program	Structured program to multi-barriered young people aged 19-24 on income assistance to help them overcome obstacles that limit access to employment and/or educational programs.		Youth	South of Fraser	Surrey
	South Fraser Community Services Society – Pathways	Pre-employment and lifeskills program for 15-18 year olds referred by MCF and MSDES.		Youth	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS)	Services include employment assistance, such as a resource centre, job finding club, counselling, and job search support.		Adults	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society	Assistance to newcomers, including employment training.		Immigrants	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Surrey Community Services Society – Supported Work and Therapeutic Volunteer Program	Provides opportunities for monitored volunteer placements in the community.		Mental health	South of Fraser	Surrey

Health Care (mental health)	Surrey Central Mental Health Centre				South of Fraser	Surrey
	Surrey North Mental Health Centre				South of Fraser	Surrey
Health Care (physical)	South Fraser Community Services – Street Health Outreach Program	Health clinic – Medical assessment and treatment services, including testing and counselling for STDs, pregnancy, hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, and referrals. Includes a needle exchange.		All	South of Fraser	Surrey
	South Fraser Community Services – Surrey HIV/AIDS Support Network	Prevention, education and support services. Direct services for those who are or may be HIV+, including counselling, advocacy, and referrals. Support groups meet regularly.		All	South of Fraser	Surrey
	Surrey Memorial Hospital – Youth Clinic	Free and confidential pregnancy testing, counselling, screening for STDs, and HIV testing		Youth	South of Fraser	Surrey 585-5999
Prevention Services						
Preventing Evictions	BC Benefits – MSDES	Crisis grants for families in receipt of income assistance to pay rent arrears if facing an eviction		Families in receipt of BC Benefits	BC	
	Legal Services Society	Branch clinics provide legal assistance to eligible households facing evictions		Low income	BC	Vancouver
Supporting Stable Tenancies	Residential Tenancy Office – Ministry of Attorney General	Information to landlords and tenants on their rights and responsibilities, and assistance with conflict resolution.		All	BC	Lower Mainland
	Tenants Rights Action Coalition (TRAC) – Tenants' Rights Hot Line	Information to tenants on their rights regarding evictions, repairs, security deposits, rent increases and arbitrations. Help tenants prepare for arbitrations and obtain legal representation. Goal is to help achieve security of tenure for tenants.		All	BC	
Housing Assistance and Referral Information	PovNet	Information and referral for advocates, people on welfare, community groups and individuals involved in anti-poverty work. Provides information about welfare and housing laws and resources in BC.		All	BC	
	Newton Advocacy Group – Mental Health Consumer Advocacy Program	Information on rights and responsibilities for mental health consumers dealing with BC Benefits and residential tenancy issues. Also offers information on housing OPTIONS.		Mental health	South of Fraser	Surrey
Advocacy	Housing and Homeless Network of BC	Endorsed the 1% solution which calls for all levels of government to increase spending on housing from 1% of total budgets to 2%		All	BC	
	Tenants Rights Action Coalition (TRAC)	Public information on the Residential Tenancy Act, advocacy for law reform on tenants' rights issues, support for tenants, research and advocacy		All	BC	
	End Legislated Poverty	Coalition of 40 BC groups working to reduce and end poverty in BC by providing referral, public education, campaigns and forums on poverty issues		All	BC	

Endnotes

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 - ⁸ 1996 Census, Statistics Canada.
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 - ¹⁰ Martin Spigelman, *Looking Ahead* (1999), p. 161.
 - ¹¹ Martin Spigelman, *Looking Ahead* (1999), p. 9. Surrey Northwest encompassed Whalley and Guildford Town Centres.
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 - ¹⁴ City of Surrey Planning and Development, *Surrey City Centre* (1991).
 - ¹⁵ City of Surrey Planning and Development, *Surrey City Centre Social Strategy* (1994).
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 - ¹⁸ Surrey Human Resource Centre of Canada, *Youth Profile* (1999), p. 24.
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 - ²¹ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp.32-3.
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 - ²⁷ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp. 26-7, 36-7.
 - ²⁸ British Columbia Ministry of health, *Provincial Health Officer's Annual Report* (1999), p. 30, Surrey Food Bank, "Number of People Assisted 1999 and 2000", and *Globe and Mail*, 30 December 2000.
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- ²⁹ British Columbia, Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, "Action Against Poverty in British Columbia" and "Smoothing the Path from Welfare to Work"; Surrey HRC, *Lone Parents Profile* (1999), p. 15, *Vancouver Sun*, 8 October 1996.
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- ³¹ David P. Ross, Katherine J. Scott and Peter J. Smith, *The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty*, Canadian Council on Social Development, 2000, pp. xx-xxi.
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- ³³ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp. 18-29, and Surrey Human Resource Centre of Canada, *Human Resource Analysis* (1999), p. 46, and Surrey HRCC *Lone Parents Profile for Surrey, White Rock and North Delta* (1999), pp. 4, 7.
- ³⁴ 1996 Census, Statistics Canada, and *ibid*.
- ³⁵ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp.18-19, 29 and Surrey HRC *Lone Parents Profile* (1999).
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- ³⁹ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp.50-53
- ⁴⁰ Martin Spigelman, *Looking Ahead* (1999), pp. 164, and Canadian Race Relations Foundation News Release, "'Hidden discrimination' and 'polite racism' prevents Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities from gaining equal access to jobs, study finds", 10 January 2001.
- ⁴¹ Martin Spigelman, *Looking Ahead* (1999), pp. 12, 172.
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- ⁴³ Manpreet Grewal, "Immigrant teens suffer discrimination, which too often goes unnoticed," *Vancouver Sun*, 29 January 2001.
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- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 9.
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- ⁵⁷ David P. Ross, Katherine J. Scott and Peter J. Smith, *The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty*, Canadian Council on Social Development (Ottawa, 2000), p. xxi; and *Community Impact Profile* (2000), pp. 36-7.
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- ⁶⁷ Nisha Family and Children's Services Society, SCOPE Peer Leadership Program, *Tell-A-Scope: Youth Employment Consumer Survey* (1997), and Youth Employment Network Task Force, *Surrey, North Delta and White Rock Youth Strategy* (November, 1999).
- ⁶⁸ BC Housing, Annual Report 1999/2000, p. 7.
- ⁶⁹ An article on "Safe, Affordable Housing" on the MSDES website notes that the "number of homeless people living on Vancouver's streets is estimated at 600 to 1,000 with increasing numbers in surrounding municipalities like Surrey and New Westminister." www.sdes.gov.bc.ca/publicat/action_safe.htm
- ⁷⁰ Draft Regional Homelessness Plan for Greater Vancouver: Stage One 2000/2001 (October, 2000), pp. 6, 9, 18.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16. The first stage of this Regional Homelessness Plan developed an inventory of existing services and facilities, identified evidence of need and gaps in services and facilities, and made recommendations on urgent needs and priorities for Fall 2000/Winter 2001. The second stage, to be completed by Spring 2001, will outline results from a needs assessment and profile of the regional homeless, and identify the continuum of housing and support to meet the needs of those who are homeless or at risk over the medium and longer term. SCPI was announced in the previous year by Minister Claudette Bradshaw, who made over \$700 million available for homelessness initiatives across the country.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 1 2.
- ⁷⁴ Refusals are due to lack of sufficient available beds at the time of request, or inappropriate referrals (mental illness, active substance abuse, families with men accompanying them or self-referred women who are refused by E.S. or district offices).
- ⁷⁵ Regional homelessness plan for Greater Vancouver: Stage One 2000/2001 (October, 2000), p. 15.
- ⁷⁶ Regional homelessness plan for Greater Vancouver: Stage One 2000/2001 (October, 2000), pp. 6, 9, 18.
- ⁷⁷ Individuals and families are turned away for a variety of reasons—no vacancy, insufficient room (only one bed may be vacant when a family calls), construction, and drug and alcohol issues, for example.
- ⁷⁸ Regional Homelessness Plan for Greater Vancouver: Stage One 2000/2001 (October, 2000), pp.19-20.
- ⁷⁹ Nisha Family & Children's Service Society, *Reflections on Residential Services*, October 2000.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid*
- ⁸¹ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp.60-61. Affordable housing is by definition affordable to low and moderate income households, that is, the cost does not exceed 30% of a householder's gross income.
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- ⁸² Ibid., and Report on the *Community Impact Profile* Forum (September 2000), p. 2.
- ⁸³ BC Housing Annual Report, 1999/2000, p. 6.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 26-7.
- ⁸⁵ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp.62-3.
- ⁸⁶ In 1996 residents owned about 70% of the City's occupied private dwellings, compared with just below 60% in the GVRD. *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000, p. 55.
- ⁸⁷ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp.62-3.
- ⁸⁸ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), pp. 58-9.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 59.
- ⁹⁰ Provincial Health Officer's *Annual Report* 1999, pp. 14-15. Studies indicate that between 50 and 60 per cent of those with schizophrenia or depression also have a substance misuse problem.
- ⁹¹ Ibid.
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- ⁹³ *Vancouver Sun* Supplement, 26 January 2001.
- ⁹⁴ *Vancouver Sun*, 31 January and 1 February 2001.
- ⁹⁵ Nisha Family and Children's Services Society, Advanced Peer Leadership Group, *Youth Heroin and Crack/Cocaine Use in the South Fraser Region 1999 and Ideas for Community Programming*.
- ⁹⁶ *Community Impact Profile* (2000), pp. 78-9, and BC Communicable Disease Control Office, "AIDS Data, Health Regions in the Lower Mainland, 1993-1999". The AIDS figures are dependent on physicians reporting cases to the BC CDC Office.
- ⁹⁷ *Community Impact Profile for Surrey/White Rock* (2000), p. 9; and Ministry of the Attorney-General, *Municipal Crime Rate Report, 1990 to 1999*, and BC Ministry of Health, *Provincial Health Officer's Annual Report* (1999), pp. 33, 36. Richmond and the North Shore had lower rates of both violent crime and breaking and entering than the South Fraser Region.
- ⁹⁸ City of Surrey Planning & Development Dept., "Population Estimates and Projections by Community," and Surrey RCMP Detachment, Research Department. Note: Committed crimes tend to outnumber the reported and recorded crimes documented here.
- ⁹⁹ See Cost of Living and Low Income section above, and *Vancouver Sun*, "Targeting aggressive children early can help," December 2000.
- ¹⁰⁰ South Fraser Health Region, *Health Profile* (1997), P. 1-20.
- ¹⁰¹ BC Institute Against Family Violence, *An Overview of Family Violence in British Columbia* (September 2000), p. 7.
- ¹⁰² Nearly one-third of those at high risk of long-term anti-social behaviour were problem free by the end of Grade 3. A psychology professor associated with the program notes that "it is rare to find teenagers in trouble with the law who weren't showing serious behavioural problems at ages six and seven." *Vancouver Sun*, December 2000.
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- ¹⁰⁴ Cited in Sarah Healy, Burnaby HRC, *The Downtown Eastside: A Community in Crisis* (May 2000), pp. 39-40; and CBC, The Company of Women, 15 December 1999, "Val Phillip: Teenage Prostitution".
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-