

**Winnipeg Committee for Safety
Summary
September, 2005**

The primary goal of the Winnipeg Committee for Safety (WCFS) is to support, assist, stimulate and mobilize the community on safety concerns. The WCFS was created by City Council in 1999 to connect the community with City Council, Civic Administration and the community itself. The WCFS reports to the Executive Policy Committee.

Since 2003, the WCFS has defined its priorities through hiring Lindberg Consulting in January of 2003, and Sequus, Inc. Consulting in April, 2003.

Lindberg Consulting conducted an evaluation of the WCFS which included surveys, focus groups, interviews and past reports.

Recommendations of the evaluation included:

- regular evaluations of the Winnipeg Committee for Safety (WCFS)
- offer advice and facilitation to community groups
- create a marketing strategy to raise the profile of the WCFS
- create strategies to engage the community
- develop community connectedness and action and a process for forwarding community audits within the government structure
- provide the community with a template for Community Conversations
- partner with organizations for problem solving
- build websites
- create a facilitated forum for community members to come together annually to share, problem solve and network

It was further recommended that a database be created, facilitate communication between schools and communities for better use of resources and build ongoing relationships with Family Services, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, Manitoba Safety Council, Medical Officers of Health for Winnipeg Region.

From this evaluation, it was decided by the WCFS during a Strategic Planning Session facilitated by Sequus, Inc. to focus on seven general areas:

(1) Annual Community Forum (2) Capacity Building in Community (3) Focus on Youth (4) Focus assistance to high need communities (5) ongoing evaluation and strategic planning (6) Marketing to City councilors, community policing, school boards and others (7) CPTED - determine what role the Committee should play.

Since the above focus areas were identified in 2003, the WCFS has held two community/neighbourhood forums with workshops identified over time through our interaction with neighbourhood residents and groups. These workshop topic areas included: Conflict Resolution, Bullying, Domestic Violence, Gangs and Drugs; Non-Violent Crisis Intervention; Home Safety; Senior's Safety; Youth Justice; and Violence Against Men.

Prior to these neighbourhood forums, the WCFS was involved in a forum on Domestic Violence, Youth Criminal Justice Act, and Exploitation in the Sex Trade. Reports from all of these forums have been distributed to the general public.

During the past two years, mainly through our neighbourhood connecting, a database of approximately 1,000 residents, government and non-government agencies, and community groups has been created and maintained by our database and resource clerk.

Numerous booths have been set up at neighbourhood and government events which display and distribute the WCFS resources and documents.

In addition, many presentations were conducted on the value of becoming involved in your neighbourhood, and WCFS resources, to Spence, north end, St. Boniface, St. Vital, St. James, Seven Oaks, Elmwood, East Kildonan, Transcona, Maples, Middle Church, and Selkirk, MB. Presentations were also conducted with Manitoba Housing, Property Management Association and other agencies.

Two separate Conflict Resolution workshops were provided to the general public.

In the spring of 2003, our Youth Committee conducted a Youth Survey in conjunction with a priority identified at our Strategic Planning Session of 2003, facilitated by Sequus, Inc.:

- To work with youth to develop safety tools and identify resources to support youth safety initiatives.

Initially, the Youth Survey focused on developing an address book of resources for youth who identified the five top areas youth wanted information on:

Youth employment and job training, Youth Drop In Centres, Alcohol/Drug/Solvent Abuse, Youth Education, Aboriginal Services and Bullying.

From this, a youth website was created: www.communityyouthconnections.ca which outlines youth resources. A Youth Poster Contest was also held to advertise the website. The Poster Contest was organized through Winnipeg Junior and Senior High Schools. Approximately 70 posters were submitted by youth. Four poster winners were presented with awards and prizes at our annual neighbourhood forum.

These materials have been distributed to our extensive database, community centres, schools, youth agencies and outlets.

Other ideas from the Youth Survey to provide youth with important safety information are School Newspapers, Youth Safety Councils, Inserts in Student Agendas, and Posters for lockers.

Of the youth who were surveyed, 68% were 16 or older, with the 13 to 15 age category accounting for 23%. Eight percent (8%) were in the 10 to 12 year category, and 1% under 10 years of age.

The WCFS also maintains its own website which links to safety research and best practices, and community development. All of the WCFS resources can be obtained from the website: www.winnipegcommitteeofsafety.org.

In 2004, the WCFS also reviewed the PUFSS report of Community Centres and recommended that we fully support Community Centres.

This decision was made because research has revealed that actively engaging youth in recreational, and employment activities, has the potential to greatly reduce youth crime which just evolves into adult crime. Supporting these activities are viewed as stopping crime in its path.....

Prior to 2003, the WCFS developed the Safety Tool Box, which includes a Safety Audit Manual, General Site Checklist, Parking Facility Checklist, Who Do I Call Pamphlet, Crime Prevention Manual, A Conflict Resolution Manual and a Community Conversation Manual. Community Conversations were held in major areas of Winnipeg. A Youth Forum was also held in conjunction with Winnipeg High Schools.

Over the years, the WCFC has created sub-committees on: Safety Tool Box and other resources, Conflict Resolution, Neighbourhood Forum; and Youth Committee.

Submitted by:
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