

# Tired of Reading About Youth Crime?



The rate of youth incarceration in Canada is twice that of the United States.  
-National Crime Prevention Council-

It costs \$100,000 a year to lock up a young offender.  
-News Canada-

We spend \$46 billion a year on police, courts, prosecutors and jails.  
-News Canada-

9 out of 10 adults have been guilty of a crime, that if caught would have been punishable in the court of law.  
-Stats Canada, Crime Reporting Survey-

## Shouldn't the Justice System be our Last Resort?

Research shows communities CAN make a difference. We believe in a "strength-based" or "asset-building" approach of community action to complement effective policing and help reduce crime. A strength-based approach asks - "What do young people need to navigate successfully through infancy, childhood and adolescence?" It looks at the essential building blocks that all young people need. The more strengths or assets young people acquire, the stronger they become and the more likely they are to live productive, happy adult lives.

### How Would You Rate?...



#### As an individual...

- Do you know the names of the kids on your street?
- Do you volunteer as a tutor or mentor for a youth outside your family?
- Do you ask for help when you need it?
- Do you set an example by interacting in caring ways with young people?

#### As a community...

- Do you develop opportunities for youth to contribute to their community by helping others?
- Do youth feel valued by the community?
- Do youth have opportunities to develop leadership skills in non-sport programs?
- Do you model desired behaviours?

*"Since my election as mayor, I have had the opportunity of meeting with many of the young people in our community - in their schools and at many local events. I am continually impressed by their talents and enthusiasm and look forward to continuing to work with them to better our community for all of us. After all, they are our future."*

Mayor Robert A. Grossi, Town of Georgina

## Stronger Communities Can Reduce Crime

The community and the people in it have a responsibility that cannot be shifted to others. It is also a very difficult responsibility, especially with the increasing demands made on our time. Today's world has us fragmented into different communities: communities of people we work with; perhaps another community of people we play with and a third community where we sleep. The last one is where we often spend the least of our waking hours, especially our energized hours, but it is also the one in which our children must grow up.

If we really want our children to have the best chance of becoming responsible adults, WE have to do our share to make it happen. We have to provide the circumstances that allow that to happen.

*"In my experience as a lawyer, I found if my young offender clients had not had some weakness at home, school or otherwise they would not have been before the court."*

Mayor Margaret Black, King

## So What is a First Resort Community?

A First Resort community accepts its unique opportunity and responsibility to develop the strengths of its youth. It is a community that is as committed to prevention as it is to prosecution, a community that is committed to using its time and resources to achieve that balance. It is a community that thinks...

**"ALL KIDS ARE OUR KIDS"**  
not  
**"SOME KIDS ARE OUR KIDS"!**

For more information call:  
**York Region Neighbourhood Services Inc.**  
(905) 764-9722 EXT. 31

*"In my mind it is essential to involve our youth in a meaningful and ongoing process to insure their concerns form a part of our evolving structure and activities. The thoughts and actions of our youth form our future society, therefore we must listen to them and involve them."*

Mayor Tom Taylor, Newmarket

### It Works:

Research has shown that positive community action can reduce:

- ☛ Drug use
- ☛ Violence
- ☛ Alcohol use
- ☛ Failure in school



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