

Changing communities, changing goals and changing dreams: Youth perceptions of present  
and future possibilities in coastal British Columbia.

by

Kathy Lorraine Harrison  
B.A., University of Victoria, 1998

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Supervisor: Dr. Anne Marshall

#### ABSTRACT

In light of recent changes that have occurred in coastal communities of British Columbia related to restructuring, it is especially important that we gain an understanding of the life-career challenges and supports facing youth. As part of a larger research study entitled “Coasts Under Stress”, a survey was developed in part on earlier individual interviews about young people’s lives and future plans. The purpose of the survey was to provide youth a “voice” to describe their experiences. A total of 942 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth, aged 13 to 19 completed the survey. Major issues identified included substance use, lack of leisure activities, employment, teen pregnancy, family conflict, and lack of support services. Supports included family and community connections, community identity, resilient spirit and supportive adults. Most youth have a high level of self-efficacy but are not optimistic about future opportunities in their communities.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

*There isn't enough things for the youth to do. In the future I can see the population here being low, and what population there is would be that of seniors. The youth get bored here easily and turn to things like drugs and alcohol. We need better things to do here and more job opportunities.<sup>1</sup>*

Young man, age 16

Life has changed for youth in coastal communities. Many of the opportunities once available to young people in these communities have been altered due to environmental, social, political, and economic restructuring. Industries such as fishing, forestry, and mining have been affected by changes in governmental regulations and environmental impacts resulting in layoffs and closures which have led to a decline in the populations of these communities (Statistics Canada, 2004). Many families have been forced to relocate in order to find work. With their families and communities in transition, youth face the multiple challenges associated with shifting economic bases, high rates of social assistance, and chronic unemployment (Marshall, Shepard, & Roberts, 2001). Social and economic restructuring also has a profound impact on the health and well-being of youth. Young people in families and communities that are experiencing stress related to restructuring are at high risk for injuries and health problems. Substance abuse, peer violence, depression, and high risk sexual practices are examples of behaviours associated with the effects of societal restructuring and the resultant family stress, economic hardship, and reduced community services (Jackson, Highcrest, & Coates, 1992; Marshall, Shepard & Batten, 2002). It is essential, therefore,

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<sup>1</sup> Participant quotes appear throughout the thesis, in italics.

to attempt to understand how restructuring impacts youth, families, and communities in order to address the challenges and encourage positive change and hope for the future.

*“Coasts Under Stress” Research Project*

A group of researchers have been assessing restructuring on both the east and west coasts of Canada. A major collaborative research initiative between Memorial University of Newfoundland and the University of Victoria, together with several other universities and partner agencies in Canada and the United States has taken place entitled “Coasts Under Stress: The Impact of Social and Environmental Restructuring on Environmental and Human Health in Canada” ([www.coastsunderstress.ca](http://www.coastsunderstress.ca)). This multidisciplinary five year project, which was funded jointly by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, began in April of 2000. The goal of the study was “to identify the important ways in which changes in society and the environment in coastal British Columbia and coastal Newfoundland and Labrador, have affected, or will affect, the health of people, their communities and the environment over the long run” (Ommer, 2003, p.1). The results of the study “should provide people on the coasts with an assessment of their current environmental and social community health status, an analysis of how situations developed and policy suggestions for the future” (Ommer, 2002, p.1).

The Coasts Under Stress research project involved interdisciplinary teams of researchers working in collaboration with partners in selected local communities, among First Nations, and in various institutions, industry, and government. The focus of the research was on lay and expert knowledge, environmental health, fisheries and forestry, mineral and energy resources, and finally, social and political restructuring. A sub-section

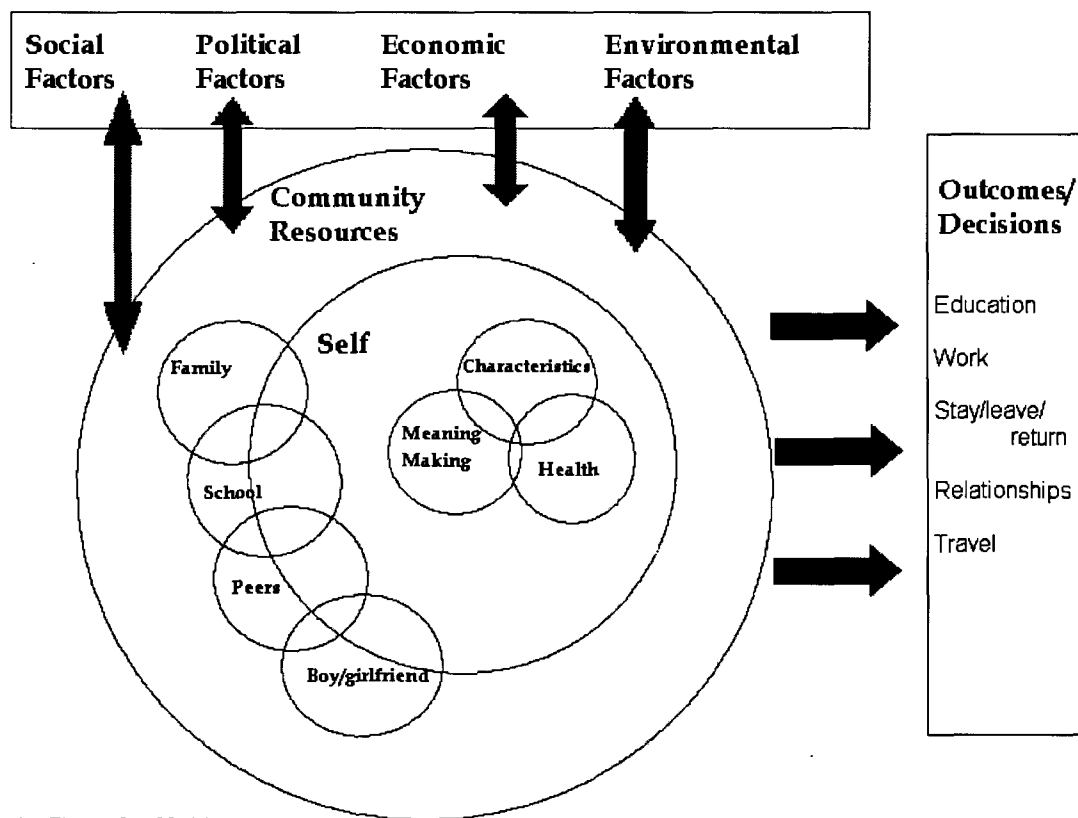
of the larger research project investigating, Social and Political Restructuring and the Health of Individuals, Families and Communities, asked the research question, “how has social and political change (or lack thereof) affected the health of individuals, families and their communities?” (Coasts Under Stress, 2002). It is within this sub-section that research focusing on the life-career development and planning for adolescents has been explored by Dr. Anne Marshall and her research team. This study is part of that research.

*“Life-Career Development and Planning for Adolescents”*

The purpose of Phase One of the “Life-Career Development and Planning for Adolescents” study was to obtain a picture of the challenges young people currently face, and what resources and strategies are available to them (Marshall, 2002). To accomplish this, in-depth interviews and focus groups with youth were conducted in five coastal communities. In addition, several parents, teachers, and community leaders were interviewed. The interview process concentrated on the research questions, “what are the life-career issues, supports, challenges, and barriers for youth in small coastal communities?” and “what has helped and will help them to access the supports and address the challenges and barriers?” (Marshall). During the analysis of the data, several content categories emerged: Impacts of Restructuring, Limited Resources, Internal and External Barriers, Multiple Transitions, Life-Career Decision Process, Cultural Influences, Possible Selves, Community Attachment, Role of Adult Mentors, Need for Education and Training, and Hope for the Future. These initial themes, described more fully in Chapter Two, form the basis of the survey developed for this research project. Figure 1 illustrates the model of the Coasts Under Stress interview themes from Phase One of Marshall’s research.

Figure 1.

## Data Themes Model from West Coast Youth Life-Career Interviews



CUS Interview Themes Data Model

*Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of the present research project was to gather information, through a survey questionnaire, about coastal youth's own views of challenges they face in planning for their futures, and the information and resources available to them. Youth have typically not been included in the discussion about restructuring and its effects, even though they are constantly told that they "are the future" and will be the ones to shape it (Marshall, Jackson, Tirone, Donovan, & Shepard, under review). The survey provided a greater number of young people with a voice to tell us about themselves and about living in communities impacted by restructuring. The data collected from this phase of the study

were intended to enhance and broaden the results from the earlier individual interviews and focus groups. Results from the research will also contribute to literature on career development and assist adult partners (parents, teachers, employers, community leaders) in providing relevant and suitable resources and information to youth to help them with their planning.

### *The Research Questions*

Building on Marshall's Phase One interview data, the research questions for this second phase were as follows:

1. What are the issues, challenges and supports facing youth and their families?
2. How do youth view their school experience and school connections?
3. How and to what extent are youth involved in the work force?
4. How do youth living in coastal communities appraise their coping self-efficacy in their current life situation and in thinking about their futures?
5. How do youth view the quality of life in their neighbourhood and community?
6. How do youth regard substance use in their communities?
7. What are the differences with respect to gender, Aboriginal status, age and community in youths' responses to family, school connections, work, coping efficacy, supports, barriers, quality of life, and future outlook?

### *Definition of Terms*

The following definitions are offered as the basis of terminology used in this study:

Supports

“resources that assist youth in planning for their future.” (Teranishi & Kara, 2003, p. 2)

Career	<p>“is a combination of all of the activities that take place in life roles being played out by an individual at a given point in time. These roles may include child, student, worker, spouse, parent, homemaker, citizen, and leisurite. They interact with and affect each other.” (Super, 1980, p 283)</p>
Coping Self-Efficacy	<p>“a person's subjective appraisal of his/her ability to cope with the environmental demands of a stressful situation.” (Benight, 1996, <a href="http://www.colorado.edu/hazards/qr/qr87.html">http://www.colorado.edu/hazards/qr/qr87.html</a>)</p>
Future Outlook	<p>“refers to individuals’ attitudes and expectations about the construction of future events.” (Honora, 2002, p. 2)</p>
Life Planning	<p>“to help youth build a positive self-image, motivate them to take responsibility for their health and happiness, and help them to understand themselves and their potential in life.” (Advocates for Youth, 2004, <a href="http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/lpc">http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/lpc</a>)</p>
Quality of Life	<p>“a construct that connotes an overall sense of well-being when applied to an individual and a supportive environment when applied to a community.” (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships, n.d., <a href="http://dekalbhealth.net/mapp/">http://dekalbhealth.net/mapp/</a>)</p>
Restructuring	<p>“involves complex interactions among environmental, institutional, industrial, and social processes, which, in combination, affect human, community and biophysical health.” (Dolan, Taylor, Neis, Ommer, Eyles, Schneider &amp; Montevecchi, 2005, p. 2)</p>
Small Communities	<p>(often same as “rural” or “small town”) “refers to individuals in towns or municipalities outside the commuting zone of large urban centres (with 10,000 or more population)” (du Plessis, Beshiri, Bollman, &amp; Clemenson, 2001, p. 1)</p>

Youth “young people between the ages of 15 and 24.”  
(United Nations General Assembly, 1985,  
<http://www.young-ga.org/four2gt.htm>)

### *Researcher's Beliefs and Interests*

My own beliefs, interests and experiences have motivated me to work toward making a difference in the lives of youth and their families. These are briefly described here in order to more fully explicate the context I bring to the research.

Youth have a keen desire to share their experiences and their knowledge. Yet, I have often noticed that while youth are frequently “spoken to” by the adults in their lives, they are seldom “listened to” by those adults. In various counselling positions, youth confirm my observations; they have told me that they are not given the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings in the adult world, and, consequently, that they sometimes become unmotivated to set positive goals for themselves. I believe that youth need willing, caring adults to stand by them, to listen to them, and to affirm their capabilities, as they formulate and experiment with various future conceptions of themselves, their place in the world, and what they might contribute to it.

I have been privileged, when I have given young people my undivided attention and truly listened to them, to be on the receiving end of their offerings. I believe that my willingness to respectfully listen to youth supports them in learning, growing, and in making positive changes in their lives. I am impressed by the deep and genuine concern that youth have for their futures, the futures of their peers, and their communities. It is my belief that we provide youth with as many opportunities to tell us about their experiences and to work collaboratively with them to help them make the best possible decisions for their futures.

In this study, I wanted to capture as many voices of coastal youth as possible. To accomplish this, I elected to use a survey as my research tool. My observations that youth have a strong desire and a need to be heard, was reinforced by the large numbers of youth who chose to write additional comments at the end of the survey. Over three hundred youth wrote statements about living and working in their communities, some at great length. Many remarks were insightful, perceptive and had clearly been well thought out by the individuals who wrote them. Some of these comments will be shared throughout this document in italics.

### *Summary*

This section has provided a brief introduction to the life-career development and planning issues facing youth living in coastal communities as well as a background of the Coasts Under Stress research project. An outline of the purpose of the study with research questions, definition of terms and the researcher's beliefs and interests was also included. Chapter Two presents an exploration of restructuring and a discussion in two parts focusing on theoretical and contextual considerations.

*It is fun, and an awesome place to live. Weather is so  
unpredictable, like our lives are. So if you like not knowing  
what is in store for you come and live in Prince Rupert!*

Young woman, age 14

## Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

*Life in Prince Rupert can be extremely depressing for youth. The problems with drinking and drugs just seem to be getting worse. The youth of Prince Rupert seem to have given up on the town. There's just not a lot here anymore. However, there are a lot of community groups trying to change things here. Personally, I believe it's too little too late.*

Young female, age 19

In this chapter, the theoretical and contextual frameworks for this study will be explored. Theoretical considerations pertain to constructivist career development theory and social cognitive career theory. In addition, research focusing on several aspects of adolescent health is included. Secondly, contextual considerations include social restructuring, current trends of youth living in small communities, youth life-career planning, supports and resources, barriers and challenges, quality of life, future outlook, substance use, gender, and aboriginal perspectives. Findings from Phase One of the larger life-career research project will also be explored.

### *Theoretical Considerations*

#### *Constructivist career development theory*

The theoretical approaches used in research should determine or constitute knowledge about human experience. Mason (2002), states that “your epistemology, is literally your theory of knowledge, and should therefore concern the principles and rules by which you decide whether and how social phenomena can be known, and how knowledge can be demonstrated” (p. 16). The present study is based on constructivist

career development theory in which career is viewed “as a socially constructed process that reflects both individual actions and the person’s interactions with others” (Chen, 2003, p.3). A person will form their own identity by how they construe experiences and the actions they take. “Increasingly, societal conditions call for individuals to be active and reflective selves, aware of the contexts in which they live, and capable of becoming agentic – at times resistive – and creative in relationships and work” (Peavy, 1995, p 10). In considering the changing economic, political, social, and environmental restructuring facing coastal communities today, youth are facing unique challenges in planning for their futures. These changes affect the family, the community as a whole, and future opportunities for youth. Constructivist career development theory also considers internal and external resources in the search for the preferred future. Internal resources would include skills, personality styles, beliefs, and characteristics like self-esteem and self-confidence. External resources would include family, friends, and institutional supports, as well as access to education, jobs, financial means, and broader cultural ideals that place value on individuals’ choices (Campbell & Ungar, 2002).

### *Social Cognitive Career Theory*

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which has many similarities with constructivist career development theory, is based on the premise that three variables: personal attributes, environmental factors, and overt behaviour, affect one another through complex, reciprocal linkages (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1996). To expand on this further, Lent et al. (1996) describe, SCCT as

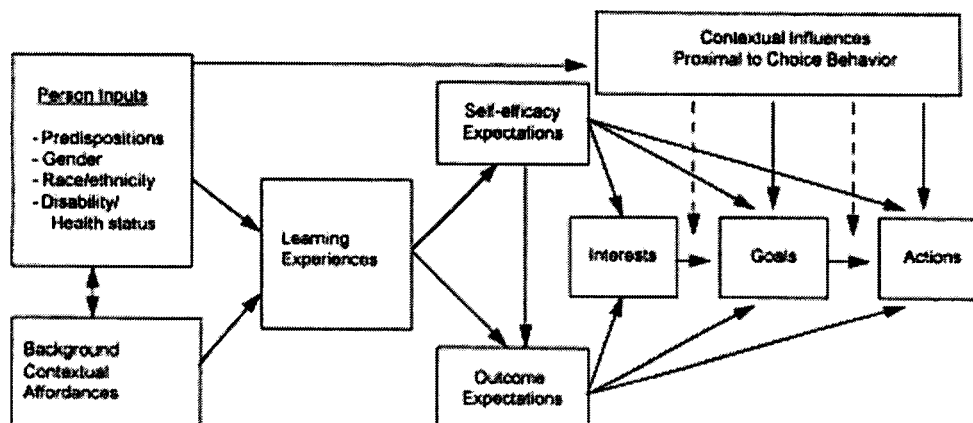
more concerned with the specific cognitive mediators through which  
learning experiences guide career behaviours with the manner in which

variables such as interests, abilities, and values interrelate; and with the specific plans by which person and contextual factors influence career outcomes. It also emphasizes the means by which individuals emphasize personal agency (p. 377).

Personal agency or choice is viewed as an essential part of life-career decision-making recognizing there are often internal and external factors to choice, including change and growth may affect life--career outcomes. The central tenets of SCCT include self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, internal personal goals, and external factors including gender, culture, genetic endowment, socio-economic considerations, barriers, and disability/health status. When these factors work together with an individual youth's cognitions, the nature and range of life-career possibilities will be affected. Figure 2 is a model of social cognitive influences on career choice behaviour. Note that dotted paths indicate moderator effects on interest-goal and goal-action relations (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, p. 93).

Figure 2.

Model of Social Cognitive Influences on Career Choice Behaviour



Self-efficacy, first identified by Bandura (1986), refers to “learned expectations that one is capable of carrying out or producing a desired outcome in a particular situation” (Feldman, 1995, p. 123). “Through understanding self-efficacy, an individuals’ beliefs in their ability to perform certain skills combined with the probable outcome of a set behaviour determines whether a behaviour will be initiated” (Lent et al., 1996, p. 375). Beyond initiation, self-efficacy and expectations determine how much effort will be exerted and, in the face of obstacles, how long the behaviour will continue. A youth’s level of self-esteem may be a determinant of how much effort they are likely to exert when they find a task or area interesting.

SCCT emphasizes the environmental influences or external factors. According to Lent, Hackett, & Brown (2000), “SCCT is influenced both by objective and perceived environmental factors” (p. 37). An example of an objective factor for a youth living in a coastal community might include a limited number and range of science courses available at higher grade levels. Perceived barriers might include the idea that because coastal youth might not have access to the types of courses or programs that other students in other communities do, their chance of getting into post-secondary is lower. In other words, the greater the opportunities or encouragement each youth is given, the more likely they are to put their career/life interests into goals and their goals into actions. Those youth who encounter more barriers with unsupportive conditions will have more difficulty reaching their preferred career or life path. Their ability to cope may be challenged. Coping self-efficacy, as defined by Benight (1996), is “a person’s subjective appraisal of his/her ability to cope with the environmental demands of a stressful situation” ([www.colorado.edu/](http://www.colorado.edu/)). Specific items within the survey of the present study

were used to identify coping self-efficacy in coastal youth living in communities impacted by restructuring.

Career barriers, a construct that is conceptually related to SCCT, include incidents or conditions, either internal or external to the individual, that make life-career planning and development challenging (Swanson & Woitke, 1997). These events or conditions often occur together. When considering the effects of restructuring on the west coast, youth could, directly or indirectly, be affected by aspects of the objective and perceived events within their communities. For example, if an individual youth witnesses a friend's father being laid off from his job in the forest industry, he will learn vicariously about his friend's parents' experiences with certain barriers. This particular youth, however, may have quite a different set of beliefs about whether certain barriers exist in his community if these barriers are experienced directly e.g. his own father was laid off. It can be quite different to know that jobs within a specific sector are being cut and another to think about how one would deal with it personally. These direct or perceived experiences may have a lasting affect on the choices coastal youth may make toward their future goals.

#### *The Three B's*

Established in 1989, The Centre for Health Promotion, Department of Public Health Sciences, University of Toronto, is a community-academic partnership. The Centre takes a multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach in developing and evaluating innovative health promotion in Canada and abroad. Recent literature by Raphael (1996), as part of The Centre for Health Promotion, considers determinants of adolescent health. His four definitions of adolescent health include successful transition to adulthood, successful coping, lack of mortality and morbidity, and healthy behaviors and risk

avoidance. He presents determinants of health within a framework focused upon personal characteristics of adolescents (Being); aspects of their immediate environment (Belonging) and adolescent's daily activities and opportunities for growth (Becoming) and their influence on adolescent health. Similar to constructivist career development theory and SCCT, Raphael also acknowledges personal and environmental domains as determinants of adolescent health. The three "B's" provide an in-depth look at understanding adolescent health determinants through coping self-efficacy, future outlook, and quality of life. These constructs will generate a deeper understanding of the issues coastal youth face while planning for their futures.

*Being.* According to Raphael, Being or personal characteristics include such things as values, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviours. Current literature on individual characteristics focus on three main themes: resiliency and factors associated with resiliency, general coping abilities, and predictors of personal behaviours. "Adolescents with inner coping resources, including a sense of self-efficacy and competence, and expectations of future success, are more likely to exhibit healthy behaviours and appropriate coping skills" (Raphael, 1996, p. 10). These factors do not work in isolation, however. A youths' direct environment has an enormous influence on his or her growth and development.

*Belonging.* When considering Belonging or the impact of environments, Raphael examines closely the impact of family, school, peers, and community on adolescent health. He considers protective factors for health indicators to be quality schools, cohesive family, community resources, interested and supportive adults, positive role models, and high controls against deviant behaviours. Related risk factors might include

poverty, racism, a peer group that engages in deviant behaviours, and conflict with family or friends.

*Becoming.* Becoming, or daily activities and opportunities for growth, focus on family relations and leisure, daily school activities, employment and perception of future opportunities, and their impact on the health of adolescents.

“Developing a sense of efficacy is crucial during adolescence because of the youth’s heightened self-consciousness and increasing cognitive awareness. Development, however, is partially determined by the opportunities, limitations and expectations that society makes available to the individual” (Swanson, Spencer, dell’Angelo, Harpalani, & Spencer, 2002, p. 79). If youth are developing in communities affected by restructuring that are experiencing declining populations, high unemployment, lack of job opportunities, larger school class sizes and fewer subject choices at the higher levels, lack of community resources, and the resulting stress for individuals and families that accompanies all of these factors, the outlook for youth in the areas of Being, Belonging and Becoming do not appear hopeful.

#### *The Five C’s*

Thriving is an important element during adolescence. According to Lerner, Brentano, Dowling, & Anderson’s (2002) view of developmental systems theory, “thriving is conceptualized as adaptive regulation that involves mutually beneficial and sustaining exchange between individuals and contexts (such as family, peer group or community)” (p. 5). It is believed that thriving youth will become healthy and productive adults through behaviours that are continually mastered and improved upon and valued in their specific communities. To promote positive functioning within young people, Lerner

et al. identified five behaviours or the “five C’s” of positive youth development. These include: competence, confidence, character, social connection, and caring (or compassion). If these behaviours are mastered, youth will develop the desire to contribute to their individual communities.

Will communities affected by restructuring maintain the social systems that support the positive functioning of youth? If there are fewer teachers; fewer recreational activities that provide positive mentoring, role models, and coaches; fewer community support agencies; and fewer part-time jobs for youth, there will be fewer opportunities for young people to contribute to their communities and thus develop these behaviours.

In addition to the largely individual characteristics described above, a person’s context is also influential. Understanding the specific factors impacting youth living in a coastal setting compared to an urban centre is important if we are to make future recommendations for youth living in coastal communities.

### *Contextual Considerations*

#### *Restructuring*

Coastal communities in British Columbia, as well as on the east coast of Canada, have experienced restructuring; that is, changes to our social and natural environments. “Despite extensive investments in resource management and environmental impact assessments, we have over-harvested our groundfish, our salmon, our marine, terrestrial and atmospheric habitats” (Ommer, 2000, p.2). Environmental degradation poses social difficulties for coastal communities. Social changes such as job loss, economic hardship, and family stress are associated with health risks such as depression, substance abuse, and family violence (Marshall et al., under review). As a result of the social changes,

families have moved from their home communities. Generations of families who have worked in the forestry and fishing industries now find themselves out of work with few transferable skills to gain alternate employment. Young people living in these communities no longer have opportunities in these industries and are uncertain of their futures. Understanding how restructuring affects youth and their families in coastal communities will provide the knowledge to create programs and services that meet the needs of these individuals. In their research with youth on the east and west coasts of Canada, Marshall et al. (under review), found that youth have similar perspectives in relation to the effects of restructuring in their communities.

Our discussions with youth on both coasts point to feelings of powerlessness and lack of agency vis-à-vis the depletion of natural resources and related job losses, out migration of individuals and families from the communities, and reduction in services and structured recreational activities. However, intertwined with feelings of powerlessness and lack of agency were expressions of power and control in other aspects of their lives (p. 4).

They also believe that restructuring processes will be shaped by youth because youth ties to the community, job and career decisions, and life plans, will affect the community and the physical and social environment (Jackson, Marshall, Tirone, Donovan & Shepard, under review).

### *Community Size*

Many of the coastal communities in B.C. outside the Vancouver/Victoria area could be classified as “rural”. For the purposes of this study we use the term “small communities” or “coastal communities” instead of rural, however the term rural is most

often used in the literature. Research has been completed among youth living in rural communities in Canada (Bollman, 1999; Bollman & Biggs, 1992; Crockett, Shanahan & Jackson-Newsom, 2000; Erhncraft & Beeman, 1992; Marshall, 2002; Marshall et al., 2002; Marshall & Wolsak, 2003). Findings from these studies assist us in gaining insight into the key issues in coastal communities. It is important to note first, however, that there is great variation in the literature on what constitutes rural. Statistics Canada, within their census, uses measures of population size and identity, based on information on municipalities, small unincorporated communities, and enumeration areas. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) uses percentage of the population to classify areas deemed as rural. Non-governmental researchers have different means of explaining rural. Their definitions are often subjective and social in their description. Crockett et al. (2000) emphasize the importance of recognizing other types of diversity among rural communities and rural youth. “Although rural communities may share important characteristics that distinguish them from metropolitan communities they may differ from each other along such potentially important dimensions as geographic region, ethnic composition, occupational structure, and access to major cities” (p. 45).

#### *Developmental Perspective*

As a central psychoanalytic concept, adolescence is a time of identity development and preparation for adulthood (Erikson, 1968; Harter, 1999; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996). “The development of the young people’s self-identity is often directly attributed to their role as a family member, or member of a sports team or community group” (Marshall, 2002, p. 77). Youth living in coastal communities may not

have the same resources or opportunities available to them as youth living in urban areas. In considering the type of work they might want to pursue while planning for their futures, youth often look to the adults in their life for information and access. If the adults are stressed and unable to give encouragement and support because of their own experiences due to economic and socio-political restructuring, it may be more difficult for youth to develop the self-efficacy needed in order to develop a life-career plan.

### *Youth Life-Career Planning*

Education can play an important role in a youth's life-career planning. Canadian census data shows that youth from small communities are more likely to leave high school before completion (Bollman, 1999; Bollman & Biggs, 1992; Fellegi, 1996; Statistics Canada 1995). These youth are also less likely to obtain a university degree (Bollman). Reference is also made to the fact that the lowest levels of education completion correspond with the most rural of communities. In a major study completed in the United States, it was shown that parental levels of education were linked with student educational aspirations and academic ability (Van Hook, 1993). This outcome is similar to research completed in Canada. Looker and MacKinnon (1999) document that parents of rural youth have lower educational expectations for their children than do parents in more urban areas. Blackwell and MacLaughlin (1999) found that the backgrounds of parents had a direct effect on rural youth aspirations. The results of their study showed that urban parents were more likely to have some college and hold professional occupations than rural parents. They also discovered that many rural youth, particularly males, were discouraged to attend college by an influential parent. Continued reliance on jobs within the manufacturing and service industries in rural

communities could provide one explanation. There may also be a concern that if a son leaves home to go to college, he will not return home. It might also be assumed that females would be less apt to consider college because they would rather stay in their communities, get married and start a family. Generations of families living in coastal communities have worked in the fishing, forestry, and mining industries for many years without attaining a high level of education. It is expected that the results of this study will reveal that few parents have gone further in their education than high school and, therefore, will not have high educational expectations for their own children.

During Phase One of Marshall's Life-Career Development and Planning for Adolescents Study, she found that youth believed knowledge was acquired through formalized lessons such as a school classroom or through discussions and stories recounted by family members. Young people in research studies in coastal communities agreed that education was more important now than it had been in the past. Youth realized that education was essential if they wanted to attain the personal and financial goals they hoped for as they entered adulthood. (Marshall et al., under review).

Employment patterns also play a key role in youth's life-career planning. Although the youth unemployment rate (14%) in Canada is far above the national average (7.4%), unemployment rates for youth in small communities tend to be higher (Statistics Canada, 2004). Occupational outcomes for rural youth tend to be lower-status or unskilled positions, accompanied by higher unemployment rates. They are also less likely to sustain full-time, year round employment (Looker, 2001). This is further exacerbated by the fact that in many rural areas in Canada, jobs in traditional sectors are disappearing while few new jobs in expanding, knowledge-based manufacturing and

service industries are being developed (Shepard, 2002). This is partially due to current social and economic change. The decline in the forestry, mining, and fishing economies due to restructuring, has eroded the viability and operation of coastal communities. If this pattern continues, there will be few opportunities for youth to attain employment and stay in their small communities. Chapter Three will provide a description of the communities accessed in this study.

### *Supports, Resources, and Positive Trends*

Despite the difficulties facing youth living in small communities, studies have found that, for the most part, youth believe growing up in rural communities is positive (Glendinning Nuttall, Hendry, Kloep & Wood, 2003). In Canada, many rural youth have close connections to their communities (Jamieson, 2000; Looker, 1993) and would choose to stay (Wilson & Peterson, 1988). The OECD (1993) reports the following:

Socially and culturally, rural areas are perceived as offering their residents many special benefits including a more cohesive life, less crime and congestion, and better access to natural recreation. Many rural areas host rich, sometimes ancient cultural and artisanal traditions that cannot be transferred or recreated elsewhere (p. 30).

Supports were identified in the high levels of “connectedness” found in the results of a recent study conducted by The McCreary Centre Society (2004)<sup>2</sup>. The majority of participants from northern Vancouver Island and the northwest region of the province in the McCreary study, similar areas to the present study, “said they have an adult in their

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<sup>2</sup> The Adolescent Health Survey III, conducted by The McCreary Centre Society, was distributed to various regions of British Columbia to determine health status, health promoting practices and risky behaviours. Participants included students between grades seven to twelve. This survey, with some adaptations per year of distribution, has been administered to students in 1992, 1998 and 2003.

family they would feel comfortable talking to if they had a personal problem” (The McCreary Centre Society, 2004, p. 33). In addition, a significant number of the same youth would speak to someone outside their family about a serious problem. Healthy youth development can also be linked to parental presence at critical times during the day (McCreary Centre Society, 2004). The majority of youth who participated in this survey said they have at least one parent home when they wake up in the morning on three or more school days per week, have at least one parent at home when they come home from school, have at least one parent home for dinner, and have at least one parent home when they go to bed at least three or more school days per week.

Results from this survey also revealed positive trends or improvements in specific areas for northern Vancouver Island and the northwest region over the past three distributions. For northern Vancouver Island, these include: a decrease in the number of physical fights, less emotional distress and fewer youth seriously considering suicide. The northwest region discovered improvements in the following areas: an increase in exercising 3 or more days a week, a decrease in the number of physical fights, less emotional distress, a decrease in discrimination due to physical appearance, and fewer youth carrying weapons to school.

#### *Barriers, Challenges, and Causes for Concern*

Specific challenges facing youth in small communities include attending rural schools, obtaining secure employment, and acquiring support services. With rural schools, youth often face limitations because rural communities do not have the tax base to provide the range of academic or support options that many urban students have (Looker, 2001). Lack of tax dollars may result in a limited range of courses offered for

youth. Students may be limited in entering programs at the post-secondary level. For example, individuals who want to pursue a science program at a university level would need Calculus 12, Physics 12, and Chemistry 12. If not enough students enroll in these courses, there is a good chance they would not be offered. The youth would need to take this course by correspondence in order to fulfill his or her requirements. Offsetting these rural disadvantages, however, may be the close relationships established between teachers and students and their families in smaller communities.

A second challenge facing youth is the opportunity to secure stable employment. Because communities often rely on natural resource industries, this economic dependence on resources restricts both the number and range of occupational opportunities in the goods-producing sector. Additionally, small populations in these communities limit opportunity in the service industries (Ehrensaff & Beeman, 1992). Because of economic restructuring in coastal communities, the opportunities for employment in the forestry, fishing, and mining industries is dwindling. As a result, many families are moving away. This out-migration results in lower populations in these communities which consequently leaves fewer individuals needing services and hence fewer job opportunities.

As more and more individuals and families move away from their communities, monetary resources decrease which consequently affects the range of services to the community as well as the disposable income available. Government funding to social service agencies are often concentrated in urban areas. Rural communities do not have the resources to offer the full range of support services that urban areas usually have (Looker, 2001). While it is acknowledged that youth from small communities may have

strong informal supports, they may lack the range and extent of formal, specialized supports that would assist them in making life-career decisions.

Results from the Adolescent Health Youth Survey III (McCreary Centre Society, 2004) discovered specific areas that did not improve over three distributions of the survey within both regions. For northern Vancouver Island results declined in students responses to always feeling safe at school and in having an excellent self-reported health status. The northwest region found lower results to always feeling safe at school and being overweight. Since one of the research questions in the present study is to consider quality of life, safety and self-reported health status will provide comparisons to items in this study.

Findings from the interview phase of Life-Career Planning and Development for Adolescents found that lack of leisure activities and opportunities for socializing with peers was identified as a barrier (Marshall, 2002). Marshall found that it was clear from their discussions that they considered it a problem for them in terms of their general well-being. In addition, Marshall also discovered that because of family stress and changes related to economic and social restructuring in their communities, mental health challenges were evident. Many youth stated that they felt the loss of friends whose families have had to leave these coastal communities in search of work elsewhere. The stress of out-migration was apparent. In a 2002 report for The Canadian Rural Partnership (Malatest & Associates), out-migration from rural areas will likely continue, if not accelerate in the near future. This report indicates that more than one-half (55%) of youth intend to move to an urban area. In contrast, among former rural youth currently

residing in an urban centre, only one-third (37%) planned to return to their small community. The 1993 OECD report summarizes the concern as follows:

Working-age people – especially the best educated younger workers – are attracted elsewhere, sometimes reluctantly, by better employment opportunities. Thus, many rural populations are declining while average ages are rising, endangering the rural fabric, and stimulating emigration (p. 25).

In general, Marshall found that coastal youth used hobbies and other activities to cope with continual losses in their communities. Participants were also thinking about their futures and possible careers. Being able to work was acknowledged by many youth as an important factor related to healthy self-esteem and mental health, but often seen as out of their control (Marshall et al., under review). Staying in their comfort zone of familiar but limited options versus the stresses and uncertainty of leaving, is a big decision for young people in these coastal communities.

### *Quality of Life*

Quality of life has often been identified as an underlying factor in sustaining mental health. In a recent study of rural adolescents, youth reported on their subjective experiences of loneliness and their perceptions of their community environments (Chipuer, Bramston, & Pretty, 2002). Not surprisingly, higher levels of loneliness were linked to lower levels of quality of life. When considering the developmental changes that youth go through, adolescence is a time of struggle to make sense of their world and how they fit into it. During this time, feelings of isolation and loneliness may be heightened. These emotions could impact quality of life. This study also found that the

direct effect of youths' perceptions of their neighbourhood and school belongingness and their reports of quality of life decreased as they grew older. When youth enter late adolescence they may become less connected to their neighbourhood and community because their focus turns toward peers. They are beginning to separate from their family of origin, attempting to become more independent.

Lindstrom (1994) examined quality of life in four spheres: personal, interpersonal, external, and global. This study, completed among Nordic children, has become a model for adolescent health research because it considers the importance of societal and structural determinants of health. The external sphere includes aspects of work, income and housing, while the global sphere includes the societal macroenvironment, specific cultural aspects, and human rights and social welfare policies (Raphael, 1996). When we consider the impact of restructuring on the health of youth living in coastal communities, the external and global issues are important if we are to understand the quality of life for these young people. Therefore, several items within this survey have been selected to measure quality of life.

### *Future Outlook*

Future outlook "refers to individuals' attitudes and expectations about the construction of future events" (Honora, 2002, p. 1). Honora studied future outlook and its relation to school achievement in African American adolescents and found that adolescents' conceptions of the future may shape their academic performance. This research evolved from Nuttin's (1974) idea that cognitive manifestations of the future, either positive or negative, influence current behaviour and may serve as a motivating factor for school achievement. In addition, future outlook involves the belief that

individuals' hopes for and expectations of the future influence present behaviour. Academic, employment, sports and leisure and marriage and family were the main categories in this research. The results of this study suggested that students also expected to finish school and get a job before getting married. There were differences in gender however. Girls set more goals in the areas of education, employment, and marriage and family. Boys led only in the area of sports and leisure (Honora, 2002).

Future outlook was the focus of an additional study (Dellana & Snyder, 2004) among students in a rural minority high school in the United States. Quality of counselling, race, gender, grade level, and academic performance were used as variables. The outcome shows that quality of counselling and self-reported grades were positively associated with future outlook. It was also found that perception of counselling quality was also positively linked to gender, grades and grade level. What this study indicates is that the quality of support youth receive has a direct effect on the future outlook of youth.

### *Substance Use*

A challenge identified by interview participants in Phase One of the "Life-Career Development and Planning for Adolescents", which attempted to understand the challenges and resources available to young people in coastal communities, was the use of alcohol and drugs. Youth agreed that use of substances other than alcohol has increased, and the variety of substances available in these coastal communities is similar to what urban youth describe (Marshall et al., under review). A significant finding, however, was acknowledgement of peer support for non-use choices. Youth felt respected when they made the choice to not use drugs or alcohol.

The results of the Adolescent Health Survey III (McCreary Centre Society, 2004) showed significant results relating to substance use. About two-thirds of students living on northern Vancouver Island and the northwest region have consumed a drink of alcohol. The percentage of youth drinking alcohol in both regions increases with age. Results of the Adolescent Health Survey III, showed that about half of males and a slightly lower percentage of females engaged in binge drinking in the past month. Binge drinking is defined as having five or more alcoholic drinks in a couple of hours. Eleven percent of students on northern Vancouver Island and 8% from the northwest region, who have used alcohol, have engaged in binge drinking on six or more days in the past month.

When asked about smoking, small percentages of students from the Northwest region and northern Vancouver Island say they are current smokers (McCreary Centre Society, 2004). Girls are less likely to be non-smokers than boys in the northwest region while the percentages were the same on northern Vancouver Island.

According to the Adolescent Health Survey III (McCreary Centre Society, 2004), about half of youth in the northwest region and northern Vancouver Island have used marijuana at least once. Use, however, increases with age. Among students who have used marijuana, 18% of youth living in the northwest region have use marijuana 100 or more times in their life and 11% used it 20 or more times in the past month. In the north Vancouver Island region, 29% of youth have used marijuana 100 or more times and 17% of youth, 20 or more times in the past month.

### *Gender*

In rural communities where livelihoods often depend on natural resource industries, opportunities may be limited for young women. “Whether rural or urban, the

career development process of young women is particularly complex” (Shepard & Marshall, 2000, p. 157). Shepard and Marshall state that women often adapt their plans, aspirations, and needs to the situations in which they find themselves, and to the expectations they perceive others to have of them. Since there have been so many job layoffs and industry closures in the coastal communities focused in this research, the opportunities may not be available for young women. Therefore they may be forced to consider relocation. Leaving home can be especially difficult for young women. Although it has been shown that young women perform better in school and often have higher educational aspirations than their male counterparts, it seems to be very difficult for the females to sever their connections with their communities (Looker, 1997). This may also be related to the early age of marriage and of child bearing among rural women (Looker, 2001).

Better school performance in females is also shown in secondary school graduation rates. According to the B.C. Ministry of Education (2005) statistics, in 2003/04, a larger number of females completed their six-year Dogwood than males in the northwest region and northern Vancouver Island.

The Adolescent Health Survey III (McCreary Centre Society, 2004), north Vancouver Island and northwest regions, found differences in gender outcomes. In both regions girls are more likely than boys to feel seriously distressed and girls are more likely than boys to have experienced physical or sexual abuse. In addition, about one quarter of females in both regions had considered suicide in the past year. Males received a much smaller result. When youth were asked whether or not they had been

discriminated against due to physical appearance in the past 12 months, more females from both regions said yes.

### *Aboriginal Perspective*

The OECD (1993) reports that some rural areas host a concentration of Aboriginal peoples. More than half of First Nations people in Canada are under the age of 24, and due to their high birth rate, the proportion of First Nations youth will continue to rise (Canadian Ministry of Supply and Services [CMSS], 1996). Most First Nations youth do not finish high school (CMSS, 1996; Charleston, 1988). Neumann, McCormick, & Amundson (2000) state that “motivating youth to complete their education is of great importance to the economic future of First Nations communities. Having career goals and a career direction is probably the greatest motivation for First Nations youth to finish school” (p. 172). Results of the Adolescent Health Survey III (McCreary Centre Society, 2004) indicated that in both regions, Aboriginal students learned most about their culture and heritage from family, then school, and lastly, community.

The B.C. Ministry of Education District Performance Report (2005) for School District 85 – Vancouver Island North states that about one third of their students are Aboriginal. About two-thirds of Aboriginal students in this district received their six-year Dogwood or high school graduation. This was above the provincial rate in 2003/2004 where less than half of Aboriginal students graduated. The Dogwood completion rate has seen an improvement for Aboriginal students in this district since 1999/2000.

According to the District Performance Report for School District 52 – Prince Rupert (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2005), over half of students enrolled in schools in

this district are Aboriginal. The six-year Dogwood completion rate indicated only half of Aboriginal students graduated in 2003/2004. This also represents an increase to the graduation rates since 1999/2000.

Recent research on the mental health of the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis of Canada (Kirmayer, Brass, & Tait, 2000) found that “cultural discontinuity and oppression have been linked to high rates of depression, alcoholism, suicide, and violence in many communities, with the greatest impact on youth” (p. 607). It is important to understand the Aboriginal cultures of each of the communities we work with if we are to support youth in their search for wellness. Since there is a large percentage of Aboriginal youth that took part in this study, it is essential that we be respectful and sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal youth in coastal communities.

#### *Summary*

Chapter Two has presented an overview of the theoretical and contextual frameworks for this study. An emphasis on internal and external factors for healthy youth development is a central tenet within each of the theories used in this study. This chapter has also provided an overview of select literature on rural communities and youth. These studies indicated that the opportunities for education, employment and access to support services are lower in rural communities than urban centres. Quality of life is considered a factor in sustaining mental health and future outlook has been linked with the quality of support a youth receives.

Recent findings on substance use and youth living in coastal communities suggest that alcohol and drug use is a major problem. There also appear to be differences in results between gender and Aboriginal status on life-career planning. Further study of the

impacts of restructuring on youth in coastal communities is important if we are to assist them in facing the challenges they face in planning for the future. This topic is the focus of the present research. Chapter Three will explore the methodology for this study.

*With poor economic outlook, the youth of our communities will generally leave shortly after high school. If the city administration would work harder to develop both industrial and commercial economies, the city would begin to prosper again in the future.*

Young man, age 16

### Chapter Three: Methodology

*Because it is a small community, it is a fairly easy place to live in, but there are not a lot of jobs that offer good pay and good hours. Because the pulp mill shut down here, many people are moving away to get better jobs.*

Young woman, age 17

This chapter discusses the methodology for this study. The procedures and techniques used to collect and analyze information for this study are described through the headings of participants, survey, validity and reliability, data collection, and procedure for data analysis. To begin, however, a description of the research design and the communities accessed in this study will be presented.

#### *Research Design*

The design for the larger life-career research project includes qualitative and quantitative approaches. The present study focuses on the quantitative aspect. Benefits of a quantitative research design include its ability to be predictive and reach a large and broad sample of the population. A self-report survey was chosen in order to reach a large sample of coastal youth in several communities. In keeping with my ontological perspective that reflects the philosophy of constructivism, this approach emphasizes the importance of the knowledge, beliefs, and skills an individual brings to an experience. Individuals make choices about what new ideas to accept and how to fit them into their established views of the world (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). The present survey tapped a broad range of work and life topics that were relevant to adolescents, thus, for many of

the participants, the items in the survey might have started the process of thinking about the issues and supports they face in their communities while planning for their futures.

Self-efficacy, a key concept of SCCT, is an individual's evaluation of his ability to cope with a situation and outcome expectancy (Lent et al., 2000). Many of the items within the present survey pertained to self-efficacy issues and might have permitted the respondents to assess their levels of self-efficacy while completing the survey. Examples of items within the survey that pertain to self-efficacy include "I have a lot of control over the things that happen to me (item 56) and "I can do just about anything I really set my mind to" (item 64).

#### *Community Profiles – North Island*

The north region of Vancouver Island is a rugged, wilderness setting. It is famous for its great fishing in spectacular settings. This region consists of small communities such as Port McNeill, Alert Bay, Telegraph Cove, Port Alice, and Sayward. Port Hardy is the largest centre on the north Island and is also the southern terminal for the B.C. Ferries northern route to Prince Rupert.

#### *Port Hardy*

In 2001, Port Hardy had a population of 4,574, down from the 1996 Census at 5,283 (B.C. Statistics, 2005). At the time of the 2001 census, there were 385 youth between the ages of 15 and 19. More specifically, 195 males and 190 females. According to B.C. Statistics (2005), the 2003 population of Port Hardy was 4,551, indicating a slight decline. The nearby rural areas are home to another 2,000 people, including those who live in Coal Harbour, Holberg, Quatsino and Winter Harbour. Nearby are also the reserves of the Kwakiutl, Quatsino and 'Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nations.

Resource industries were the biggest employers, providing 450 jobs, while 425 worked in health and education, 410 in manufacturing, 385 in wholesale and retail trade, 360 in business services and 105 in finance and real estate. There are three public elementary schools and one secondary school, Port Hardy Senior Secondary; one Secondary private and one post-secondary, North Island College. Figure 3 is a map of the North Island region of British Columbia indicating the location of Port Hardy, Alert Bay and Port McNeill, communities accessed in this study.

Figure 3.

Map of the North Island



### *Alert Bay*

Alert Bay is on Cormorant Island, about 3 kilometers off the northeast coast of Vancouver Island. The population of about 1,100 is comprised of the Municipality of Alert Bay and the 'Namgis First Nation. There are two schools: an elementary school, kindergarten to grade seven; a continuing education centre; T'lisala'gilakw School, and a

nursery school to grade nine. Unemployment rate in the 2001 Census was 17 percent (B.C. Statistics, 2005).

#### *Port McNeill*

Port McNeill, with a population of 2,821 according to the 2001 Census, is situated on the east coast of Vancouver Island and is the second largest community on the north island. Two million hectares of forested land provide approximately 8% of the total provincial timber harvest. Unemployment rate in October, 2004 was 7.5% compared to the provincial rate of 7.0% (B.C. Statistics, 2005). There is a small branch of a regional community college; one secondary school, North Island Secondary; and two elementary schools.

#### *Mt. Waddington Regional District*

A statistical profile of Mt. Waddington Regional District (B.C. Statistics, 2003) which includes Port Hardy, Alert Bay and Port McNeill, shows that the income share of poorest households (2000) for this region is 24.1 compared to the B.C. score of 21.4 which indicates the proportion of each region's household income that accrues to households earning less than the median income. The number of households paying 30% or more on housing costs (2001) for this region was 16.7; 28.6, B.C.

Indicators of children at risk as well as youth at risk are also available through B.C. Statistics. Child abuse rates per 1,000 population (age 0 – 18) for the Mt. Waddington Regional District are 21.4 compared to the B.C. rate of 7.6 (B.C. Statistics, 2003). The children in care rate for this district per 1,000 population is 11.2, higher than the provincial rate of 9.9. Averages from 2001-2003 indicate that 37.3% of students in grades 4, 7, and 10 were below standard in reading in Mt. Waddington Regional District

compared to the B.C. average of 24%, while 22% of students were below standard in writing compared to the 13.5% from the provincial average. About 27.5% of students were below standard in mathematics compared to the B.C. percentage of 18.4. Thirty-seven percent of grade twelve students from this Regional District did not write or pass the grade 12 provincial English exam and there were 37% of grade ten students below standard in reading (B.C. Statistics, 2003). The six-year Dogwood completion rate (public schools) for students in this regional district in 2003/2004 was 78%, similar to the provincial rate. The teen pregnancy rate was a shocking 61.5 (rate per 1,000 females age 15-17) in this regional district, much higher than the provincial average of 22.3. The Mt. Waddington Regional District had a juvenile (age 12-17) crime rate per 1,000 population (average 2000-2002) as follows: (a) serious violent - 4.1; 3.0 B.C.; (b) serious property – 8.5; 3.9 B.C.; and (c) non-cannabis drug offences per 100,000 population – 278.8; 136.6 B.C.

#### *School District #85 – Vancouver Island North*

Statistics from the Information Department of the B.C. Ministry of Education (2005) reveal declining projected enrollment rates for School District 85. The 2004/2005 population of 1,872 is a 2.3% decline from the 1996/1997 population of 2,710. The 2012/2013 student population is expected to be 1,608 a 1.17% decline from the 1996/1997 figures.

#### *Community Profiles – North Coast*

The North Coast Region of British Columbia is known for its coastal mountain scenery, fishing, and forests. Prince Rupert is one of the major centres of this region.

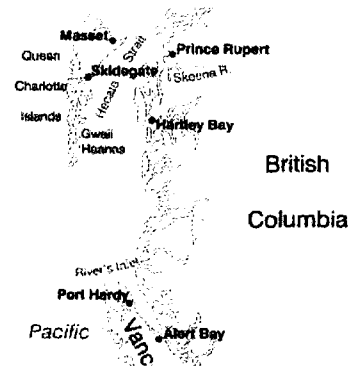
Figure 4 is a map of the North Coast region of British Columbia indicating the location of Prince Rupert and Hartley Bay, communities accessed in this study.

### *Prince Rupert*

Prince Rupert is the largest city within the Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District, with a population of 14,645 in 2001 (a 12 percent drop since the 1996 census, when the population was 16,714). Key employers are the public sector, with primary resource industries of fishing and forestry being the key private sector components of the local economy. Transportation and tourism are becoming increasingly significant. Unemployment in October, 2004 was 9.5%; 7.0, B.C. (B.C. Statistics, 2005). Education facilities in Prince Rupert consist of a regional community college; a First Nations education centre; two secondary schools, Prince Rupert Secondary and Charles Hays Secondary; and six elementary schools.

Figure 4.

Map of the North Coast



### *Hartley Bay*

Hartley Bay or Git ga'ta is located at the mouth of Douglas Channel, 90 miles southeast of Prince Rupert, accessible by air and water only. It has a population of 200 band members living on reserve and 400 members living off reserve. Hartley Bay School

(part of Prince Rupert School District 52) serves about 60 pre-Kindergarten to grade 12 students.

*Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District*

Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District includes Prince Rupert and Hartley Bay. Statistical profiles for 2001 completed by B.C. Statistics (2003) for this region of indicators of economic hardship show that the income share of poorest households is 20.9 compared to the B.C. score of 21.4. As explained earlier this is the proportion of each region's household income that accrues to households earning less than the median income. The number of households paying 30% or more on housing costs in 2001 for this region was 25.5; 28.6, B.C..

This particular statistical profile also shows child abuse rates in this district (B.C. Statistics, 2003) per 1,000 population (age 0 – 18) are 31.3 compared to the B.C. rate of 7.6. The children in care rate for this district per 1,000 population is 26.0, higher than the provincial rate of 9.9. There are 39.2% of regional students in grades 4, 7 and 10 below standard in reading (average 2001-2003) compared to the B.C. average of 24%; 21.3% of students below standard in writing compared to the 13.5% provincial average; and 30.4% of students below standard in mathematics compared to the B.C. percentage of 18.4. Forty-seven percent of grade twelve students from this Regional District did not write or pass the grade 12 provincial English exam and there were 42% of grade ten students below standard in reading (B.C. Statistics, 2005). The teen pregnancy rate in this regional district was very high at 55.9 per 1,000 females aged 15-17, much higher than the provincial average of 22.3. The Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District had juvenile (age 12-17) crime rates per 1,000 population (average 2000-2002) as follows:

(a) serious violent - 4.1; 3.0 B.C.; (b) serious property – 9.7; 3.9 B.C.; and (c) non-cannabis drug offences per 100,000 population – 344.4; 136.6 B.C.

*School District #52 – Prince Rupert*

Statistics from the Information Department of the B.C. Ministry of Education (2005) reveal declining projected enrollment rates for this district as well. The 2004/2005 population of 2,777 for School District #52 is a 1.6% decline from the 1996/1997 population of 3,803. The 2012/2013 student population is expected to be 2,439 a 1.41% decline from the 1996/1997 figures. The six-year Dogwood completion rate (public schools) for this school district in 2003/2004 was 73%, lower than the provincial rate of 78%. It should be noted, however, that this percentage reveals a steady increase of the proportion of students completing grade 12 since 1999/2000. In 1999/2000, 58% completed grade 12, in 2000/2002, 64% completed, in 2001/2002, 69% completed, while in 2002/2003, 65% of students completed.

*Ministry of Education Outcomes*

According to S.D. #52, Ministry of Education (2005) statistics, the student population in Prince Rupert District is composed of 49% females and 51% males and 48% females and 52% males in the Vancouver Island North School District, S.D. #85. In 2003/2004, 78% of females completed their six-year Dogwood compared to 67% of males in the Prince Rupert School District. In Vancouver Island North (S.D. #85), 81% of females and 74% of males completed their Dogwood certificate. In 2003/2004 only 3% of grade 12 females and 2% of males in the Prince Rupert School District received scholarships. This is a decline from previous years. In 2001/02 there was an equal percentage of grade 12 scholarship recipients between gender (5%) and in 2002/2003, 5%

of females and 2% of males received scholarships. The Vancouver Island North School District shows that 5% of females and 2% of males received scholarships in 2003/2004. In 2001/2002, 5% of females and 4% of males were scholarship recipients and in 2002/2003, 7% of females and 2% of males received scholarships.

### *Participants*

A sample of 942 youth took part in this study. They were between the ages of 13 and 19 from five coastal areas of British Columbia and enrolled in grades 8 through 12. Because School District #85 (North Vancouver Island) and School District #52 (Prince Rupert) were community partners involved in this research study, participants were recruited in these School Districts. Five schools took part.

After receiving approval of my application for ethical review of human research from the University of Victoria (Appendix A), a letter was sent to school district superintendents to receive permission to contact principals directly to identify youth who may be willing to participate (Appendix B). This letter introduced myself and provided a description and purpose of the research. This letter was also followed up by a telephone call in order to answer any questions after a week of receiving the letter. When permission was granted, principals of individual schools were contacted by the researcher, originally by letter, and later by telephone, in order to arrange recruitment of youth for participation (Appendix C). In the recruitment letter sent to principals, it was stated that “we need youth input in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the supports and challenges coastal youth face in planning for their futures, and the information and resources available to them.” Principals chose how to recruit youth to participate in this study. In some instances, research assistants involved in the Coasts

Under Stress research project and who were currently living in the specific coastal communities chosen for this study, assisted in the distribution and administering of surveys.

Within each of the schools, convenience sampling was employed. Superintendents and principals indicated their desire to have as little disruption as possible to students and teachers, thus, teachers who were willing to allow their class to participate in completing the survey did so. A disadvantage of this method of sampling is uncertainty with respect to whether the sample is representative of the larger population. In order to alleviate this possible bias, several steps were employed. The survey was administered at different times and/or on different days of the week, and to as many classes as possible. As the participants completed the survey individually, there was no interaction with or influence by the researcher.

### *Survey*

Earlier in the Coasts Under Stress research project, a youth survey was conducted on the east coast of Canada. The goal of this survey was to understand youth's viewpoints about their communities and their perceptions about the types of changes that have occurred over the last while due to restructuring. As a result of any changes, an additional goal was to determine whether there were any ramifications for their health and well-being, as well as future outlook. In addition, Jackson conducted focus group interviews with youth in a small community in Newfoundland. Her objective was to hear stories from youth themselves about what restructuring meant to them because youth often do not have the opportunity to do so (Jackson et al., under review).

In order to gain a broader understanding of the issues facing youth in the coastal communities on the west coast, a survey was also used to reach a larger sample. In survey research “the investigator selects a sample of subjects and administers a questionnaire to collect data. Surveys are used frequently to describe attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and other types of information” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p. 163). The challenge associated with using a descriptive research design is to be clear on what data are needed for description and to develop a survey that will accurately reflect the achievement, attitudes, and other characteristics of coastal youth. Data themes that emerged from the previous qualitative phase of the study were incorporated into the survey.

In developing the survey, two goals guided the choice of survey items: 1) relevance to themes and topics identified in the literature and in Phase One of the research, and 2) similarity to the Healthy Youth Survey in order to maximize comparability. The Healthy Youth Survey was part of a project entitled “Healthy Youth in a Healthy Society: A Community Alliance for Reducing Risks for Injury in Children and Adolescence”, University of Victoria and funded by the Canadian Institute for Health Research (Centre for Youth and Society). The Healthy Youth Survey “examines the relationships that exist among risk factors (including individual health-compromising behaviours, family stresses, and community/social adversities), protective factors (including individual health promoting behaviours, family strengths, and community/social capital), and physical injury” (Centre for Youth and Society, [www.youth.society.uvic.ca](http://www.youth.society.uvic.ca)). Since the Healthy Youth project is a partner to Coasts Under Stress and Marshall is a researcher on both the Healthy Youth and Coasts Under Stress

research teams and because many of the topics addressed on the Healthy Youth Survey are applicable to Coasts Under Stress research, a large number of items were incorporated into the “Life-Career Development and Planning Survey” with permission. The survey (Appendix D) was organized into seven sections described below.

*A. Tell Us About Yourself.*

First, demographic items were used for the Tell Us About Yourself section in the survey. These items assisted in identifying participants’ age, gender, grade level, and community, for example. Fill-in-the blank and multiple choice items were used here. There are also items taken and/or adapted from the Healthy Youth Survey that were used in this section for the purposes of this research and for possible comparability at a later date. These include items regarding participants current living situation (item 8) and father’s and mother’s level of education (items 9 and 11) and whether or not these parents are currently working in a paid job (items 10 and 12). There are also items in both surveys pertaining to years lived at current home (item 13) and times moved to a different home (item 14).

*B. Family.*

Under Family, participants were asked whether financial difficulties occur in their families, how often and whether help was sought and received for these problems. A Likert scale was used in this section to identify how often difficulties are experienced. Options include Doesn’t Apply, Never, Less than Monthly, Monthly, or Weekly. To determine if help was found for identified difficulties, participants were asked to indicate no or yes.

### *C. School*

The focus of this section was school experiences and the connections youth are making within this learning environment. All items within this section were taken directly from the Healthy Youth Survey. A fill-in-the-blank item was used to determine the number of different schools youth attended and multiple choice items were used for specific topics including individual ratings of reading skills and grades. A Likert scale was also employed within this category to understand the relationships youth are making with their teachers and their satisfaction with school.

### *D. Work*

The purpose of the Work items was to find out the amount of time spent in paid work and the types of work youth are involved in. All items within the Work section were also taken straight out of the Healthy Youth Survey. Multiple choice answers were used in each of the three questions asking how many full months youth have worked for pay, the number of hours per week worked on average, and the type of work done.

### *E. Behaviour and Activities*

Again all items in this section were taken directly from the Healthy Youth Survey. These items were originally taken from “A Self-Image Questionnaire for Young Adolescents (SIQYA): Reliability and Validity Study” (Petersen, Schulenberg, Abramowitz, Offer, & Jarcho, 1984). This questionnaire, designed for young adolescents, asked respondents about self-image during adolescence.

The Behaviour and Activities section has two parts. Although Likert scales were used in both sections, different options were implemented. In the first set youth were queried on their self-concept. To do this, youth were asked how true specific things they

may deal with are. Options included Never True, Sometimes True, or Often True. The second set asks youth how strongly they agree with specific statements and seeks to identify levels of self-efficacy among youth. Respondents were asked to select from Disagree, Neither Agree or Disagree, or Agree.

#### *F. Youth Issues*

A Likert scale was used within this section to understand how youth are dealing with specific issues within their lives. Participants were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with individual statements about their community. Options within this scale included Strongly Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Strongly Agree, or No Opinion.

#### *G. Neighbourhood and Community*

The final section asks coastal youth to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with specific statements about life in their community. Topics range from economic outlook, employment opportunities, environmental issues, racism, safety, and planning for the future.

At the end of the survey, an open ended item was provided for participants to write out anything they wished to share about living and working in their community.

#### *Validity and Reliability*

Validity and reliability is especially important in research. Internal validity is strongest “when the study’s design (subject, instruments, and procedures) effectively controls possible sources of error so that those sources are not reasonably related to the study’s results (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p. 186). To increase internal validity, the items within the survey were brief, simple, and easy to understand. The majority of

the youth did not have difficulty completing the survey. There was feedback from two teachers that some grade eight students found the survey “hard”.

Reliability is also necessary to achieve validity. Reliability is “the correlation between the observed variable and the true score when the variable is an inexact or imprecise indicator of the true score” (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Inexact measures can come from a participant randomly choosing responses or guessing. To measure reliability, a measure of internal consistency is used. Internal consistency measures how well the items used in a scale to measure one variable appear to fit together. The rationale is that if the underlying items can be used to measure the same variable, then they should probably change together so that an individual with a higher score on the one item should have a predictable score on the other item. In sections of the “Life-Career Development and Planning Survey” that contained scales, the widely accepted value of .70 was adopted as an indication of internal consistency. Internal consistency measures estimate how consistently individuals respond to the items within a scale.

In addition, a number of items used from the Healthy Youth Survey constitute sub-scales from standardized measures which have been previously developed and validated.

#### *Data Collection*

After permission was granted by school district superintendents and after principals of specific schools had been contacted, surveys were delivered directly to school staff by Coast Under Stress team members during a scheduled visit in the Spring of 2004 and by research assistants or courier in the Fall of 2004. Once youth and/or classes had been selected in each of the coastal communities, each youth received a

participant information and consent form (Appendix E). Completion of surveys was described to participants in the consent form entitled, “Life-Career Development and Planning Survey”, which outlined the purpose of the study and the details of participation. Anonymity was ensured by not recording names. Only the month and year of birth was recorded. The process of implied consent was used by which the consent form clearly stated that “by completing and submitting the survey, the person has agreed to participate.” No signature was required. Instructions were outlined in written form on the actual surveys at the beginning and throughout the forms as required. The consent form letters stated:

the potential benefits of your participation in this research include contributing to the knowledge and development of partnership practices in career development. Your participation will provide new information on the career development process of coastal youth. In addition, you may benefit from thinking about your future and you may discover overlooked support systems in your community.

Confidentiality was protected, and explained in the consent letter as follows: “your confidentiality will be protected by a data summarizing process and by storing completed surveys in a locked filing cabinet. Only the researchers will have access to the data.”

Completed surveys were either picked up by members of the research team or sent directly to the Coast Under Stress research office in the Faculty of Education by mail or courier. Coast Under Stress research assistants, high school teachers and/or counsellors oversaw the distribution and collection of the surveys.

*Procedure for Data Analysis*

As surveys were returned, each survey was given a code number. This number was written on the top right hand corner of individual surveys. This code number allowed the researcher to verify any responses when required and to label survey comments. Each item in the survey was given a number prior to distribution. The number of each item was also given a variable name which was used to enter data directly. Responses to each item within the survey, using the variable name, was entered onto a database called Excel, more specifically a spreadsheet.

After the data entry phase was complete, data from the spreadsheet was transferred to a quantitative statistical software program called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences or SPSS. SPSS “is a data management and analysis product. It can perform a variety of data analysis and presentation functions, including statistical analyses and graphical presentation of data” ([www.utexas.edu/cc/stat/software/spss](http://www.utexas.edu/cc/stat/software/spss)). After the data was transferred to SPSS, the process of computing the basic statistics for all items in the questionnaire began.

It is important to note that during data input onto the database, it became apparent that there was some confusion for participants in filling out the Family section of the survey (Appendix D). This section was divided into two parts: 1) how often they experienced a particular family problem and 2) whether or not they found help for this difficulty. The frequency of how often they experienced a problem was broken down into choices of Doesn't Apply, Never, Less than Monthly, Monthly or Weekly. Although respondents were asked to choose one, many youth circled both Doesn't Apply and Never. Some answered only section one or section two rather than both and a number of

participants left the whole Family section blank. In consultation with data analysis experts in quantitative research, the viewpoint was given that Doesn't Apply could mean that youth haven't given much thought to a specific problem or difficulty and as a result could not sufficiently answer the question, hence select Doesn't Apply. It would, however, be assumed that a youth who selected Never had given thought to the difficulty and concluded that their family never experienced this problem. Therefore it was decided to delete Doesn't Apply responses in the Family section during the analysis procedures. It was also concluded that the Found Help responses would not be analyzed because a significant number of youth did not respond to this portion of the item.

The above scenario was also similar to what occurred in the Youth Issues and Neighbourhood and Community sections of the survey (Appendix D). In both categories, an option of No Opinion was given and placed at the end of the alternate responses of Strongly Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree and Strongly Agree. It was unclear what No Opinion meant, therefore, the No Opinion data was left out of the analysis.

The first phase of the data analysis procedure included calculations of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, variance, range, and sum for each variable. Frequency distributions and percentages were also achieved. Measures of reliability or measures of internal consistency were carried out using Cronbach's alpha. Total range scores of data within the specific sections of the survey were also completed to achieve overall computation. Because many of the statements amongst the categories were phrased both positively and negatively, reverse coding was implemented to achieve an accurate result

of total range scores. For example, the scores for the negative statements were reversed to positive ones to achieve consistency before data analysis of the total range scores.

The next phase examined the data in more statistically complex ways. SPSS is particularly well-suited to survey research. This software allowed manipulation of data into sophisticated statistical procedures such as cross tabulations and chi-square. Data, where appropriate, was also put into bar graphs for easier analysis and comparisons. Cross-tabulations were performed on all data between gender, age, Aboriginal/ non-Aboriginal and community. Age was separated by younger and older youth. To do this, lower and senior grades were separated into two groups. For example, grades 8, 9 and 10 identified younger youth and grades 11 and 12 older. Participants were divided into North Island and North Coast. Youth who specified they were attending Port Hardy Secondary School or North Island Secondary School were placed in the North Island category, and students who wrote down Charles Hays Secondary School, Prince Rupert Secondary School, or Hartley Bay School were put into North Coast. Numerous relationships and clusters of items were examined. The next chapter provides the results.

*The community is friendly but it is just too small. The only reason I would not raise a family here is because there aren't many job opportunities. The town is full of rumours because it is so small. However there are many friendly people. There are no opportunities for athletics or academics if a person wishes to go further with those subjects they must move down South.*

Young woman, age 17

## Chapter Four: Results

*Our community I feel is going to prosper through the years economically. Hopefully by that time, there will be a wider range of cultures and different types of jobs for youth and adults.*

Young woman, age 16

The purpose of this research project was to gather information about coastal youth's own views of the challenges they face in planning for their futures, and the resources available to them. It was also an opportunity to give a greater number of young people a voice to tell us about themselves and about living in communities impacted by restructuring. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section, Phase One Analysis, is separated into headings within the survey including Tell Us About Yourself, Family, School, Work, Behaviour and Activities, Youth Issues, and Neighbourhood and Community. The second section, Phase Two Analysis, provides a more comprehensive look at several areas related to the study's research questions. These include coping self-efficacy, quality of life, future outlook, and substance use. Sub-sample comparisons between gender, aboriginal/non-aboriginal, age, and communities are also included within each section.

Of the 942 surveys completed by coastal youth, 8 were considered unusable because they were incomplete or the responses recorded were inappropriate. Inappropriate meaning the answers were irrelevant for this research. Therefore, data analysis was conducted on 934 surveys or 99% of the questionnaires. Please note that total numbers vary across items because not all of the participants answered each item

and certain responses were deleted because of confusion as explained in Chapter Three, page 49.

### *Phase One Analysis*

#### *Demographics*

Under the heading, Tell Us About Yourself, respondents in coastal communities identified personal characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, community in which they reside, school, grade, current living situation, parent or guardian's highest level of education, and more. Table 1 shows the ages of participants (item 1).

Table 1.

#### Age of Participants

Age	Frequency	Percentage
13.0	33	3
13.5	45	5
14.0	70	7
14.5	108	12
15.0	87	9
15.5	118	13
16.0	88	9
16.5	108	12
17.0	89	10
17.5	109	12
18.0	38	4
18.5	24	3
19.0	9	1
19.5	4	0

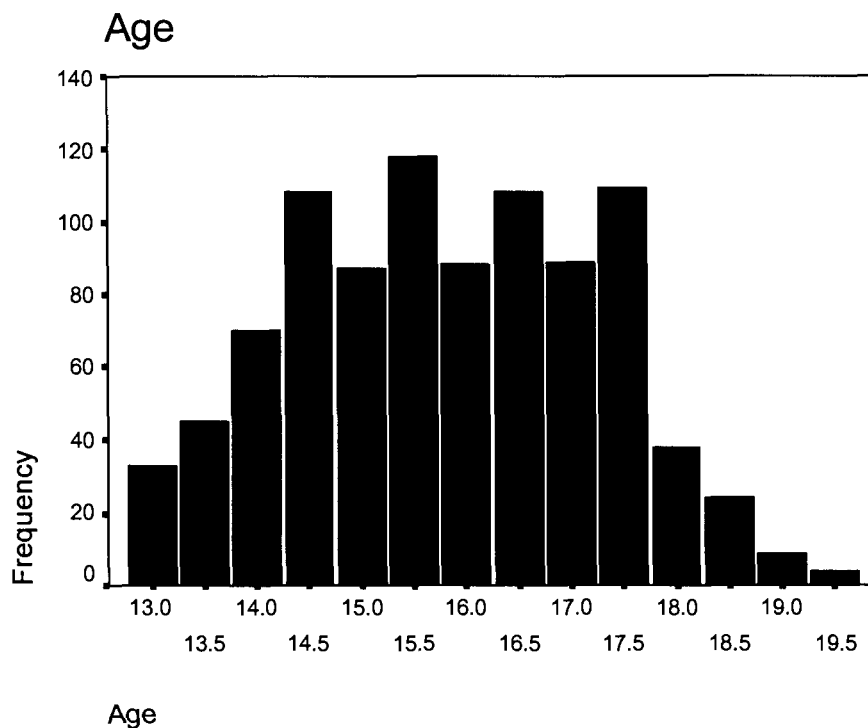
$N = 930$

Respondents were asked to indicate the month and year of their birth date (item 1). This information was input into SPSS to the half year at the time of completing the survey. For example, if the youth indicated that their birth date was March of 1990 and the survey was completed in November of 2004, the birth date was recorded as 14.5. Initially, it was decided that dividing age into six month intervals might provide a clearer insight into whether or not developmental issues were a factor in the results. After some consideration, it was determined the best and most practical method to consider age in future analysis was to divide grades into senior and lower levels. The majority of youth who participated in this survey are between the ages of 14.5 and 17.5 (78%).

For comparison purposes, Figure 5 shows the same data in bar graph form.

Figure 5.

Age of Participants



Youth were asked to identify whether they were male or female (item 2). Of the 928 participants, 45% were male and 55% female; six did not respond. Participants were also requested to select one of seven ethnic origins (item 3). Fifty-four percent of participants were white, 30% Aboriginal, and 16% have classified themselves with a different ethnicity. Table 2 indicates ethnicity of participants, separated into North Island and North Coast.

Table 2.

## Ethnicity of Participants

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percentage
	North Island ( $n = 220$ )	
Aboriginal	49	22
Asian	1	1
Black	0	0
Hispanic or Latino	2	1
East Indian or Indo-Canadian	3	1
White	161	73
Other	4	2
	North Coast ( $n = 701$ )	
Aboriginal	225	32
Asian	65	9
Black	6	1
Hispanic or Latino	5	1
East Indian or Indo-Canadian	35	5
White	337	48
Other	28	4

Cross-tabulations revealed a significant relationship between community and ethnicity,  $\chi^2 = (6, N = 921) = 52.71, p < .05$ . Table 2 reveals there are more Aboriginal respondents from the North Coast (32%) than the North Island (22%); (b) more Asian respondents from the North Coast (9%) than the North Island (1%); (c) a greater number of East Indian or Indo-Canadian completed the survey from the North Coast (5%) than the North Island (1%); and (d) a much lower percentage of “white” coastal youth from the North Coast (48%) than the North Island (73%).

Coastal youth were asked to indicate their community of residence (see Table 3). The largest percentage of participants were from the city of Prince Rupert (70%), followed by Port Hardy (10%), and Port McNeill (9%). Table 3 illustrates the distribution of participants among communities accessed in this study.

Table 3.

Community Participants' Reside

Community	Frequency	Percentage
Alert Bay	17	2
Port McNeill	85	9
Port Hardy	93	10
Hartley Bay	25	2
Prince Rupert	649	70
Other	64	7

$N = 933$

Respondents were asked to write down which school they presently attend (Table 4). Table 4 indicates there are more respondents from the North Coast (75%) which

consist of Charles Hays Secondary, Prince Rupert Secondary and Hartley Bay School. The North Island (25%) includes Port Hardy Secondary and North Island Secondary.

Table 4.

## School Presently Attending

School	Frequency	Percentage
Charles Hays Secondary School	329	35
Hartley Bay School	22	2
North Island Secondary School	126	14
Port Hardy Secondary School	100	11
Prince Rupert Secondary School	357	38

$N = 934$

Students of the secondary schools listed above were asked to identify their current grade level (item 7). Please note that originally it was not the intention for grade eights to participate in this study, however, North Coast schools wanted all of their students to participate. Because 9% of the total sample were grade eight students, it was decided to include them in the analysis. Table 5 indicates that the percentages of grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 students are comparable at 22%, 24%, 26% and 19% respectively.

Table 5.

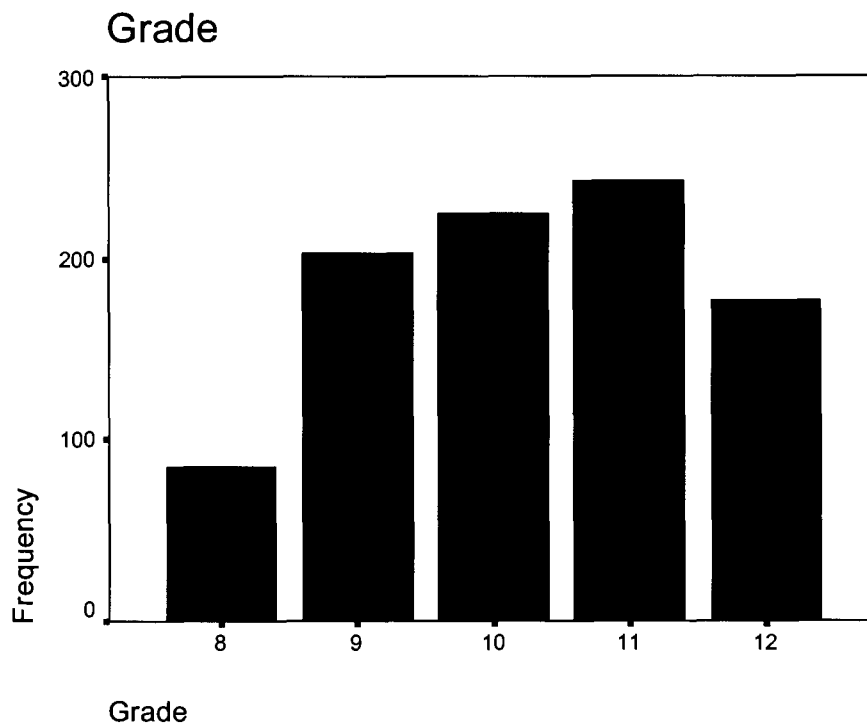
## Grade Level

Grade	Frequency	Percentage
8	85	9
9	203	22
10	225	24
11	243	26
12	177	19

For comparison purposes, Figure 6 shows the same data in bar graph form.

Figure 6.

### Grade Distribution



Cross-tabulations between grades and community indicated a significant relationship,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 933) = 48.07, p < .05$ . Responses differed according to grade because there was no representation of grade 8's from the North Island and 12% from the North Coast. There were more grade 11 and 12 students from the North Island (35% and 27% respectively) than the North Coast (23% and 16%).

Coastal youth were asked what their current living situation was or "who do you live with?" (item 8). The "other" option would include choices such as grandparent(s),

on own, or with friends. Table 6 reveals the variances between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth and whom participants live with.

Table 6.

Who Do You Live With? – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

<u>Current Living Situation</u>	<u>Aboriginal (n = 273)</u>	<u>Non-Aboriginal (n = 646)</u>
Both Parents	110 (40)	427 (66)
Mother Only	48 (18)	72 (11)
Father Only	16 (6)	34 (5)
Back and Forth Between Mother and Father	12 (4)	29 (5)
Mother and Friend/Partner/Step-Father	25 (9)	58 (9)
Father and Friend/Partner/Step-Mother	8 (3)	6 (1)
Guardian(s) or Foster Parent(s)	19 (7)	1 (0)
Other	35 (13)	19 (3)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

Cross-tabulations revealed significant relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youths' current living situation,  $\chi^2 = (7, N = 919) = 105.85, p < .05$ . Table 6 reveals differences in response rates as follows: (a) fewer Aboriginals live with both parents (40%) compared to non-Aboriginals (66%); (b) more Aboriginal youth live with mother only (18%) than non-Aboriginal (11%); (c) more Aboriginal youth (7%) are living with a guardian(s) or foster parent(s) than non-Aboriginal (0%) and (f) a greater number of Aboriginal youth (13%) selected "other" than non-Aboriginal (3%).

Respondents were requested to identify both their father/male parent/guardian's and mother/female parent/guardian's education (if known) as well as whether these

persons were employed (items 9, 10, 11, and 12). Table 7 shows differences in results between father's and mother's education level.

Table 7.

Parent's Education – Father/Mother Comparison

Education Level	Father ( <i>n</i> = 916)	Mother ( <i>n</i> = 919)
Did not finish high school	197 (22)	174 (19)
Finished high school	159 (17)	190 (21)
Vocational training	77 (8)	27 (3)
Some college/university courses	100 (11)	159 (17)
Finished college/university	178 (20)	208 (23)
Don't know	205 (22)	161 (17)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

Table 7 indicates that in relation to education, fathers were less likely to have “finished high school” (17%) compared to 21% of mothers. More mothers continued on with their education and completed “some college/university courses” (17%) or “finished/college university” (23%) than fathers (11% and 20% respectively). Fathers, however, were more apt to have vocational training (8%) than mothers (3%).

Frequency scores found that more fathers are working (82%) than mothers (75%). Cross-tabulations did not find significant differences between whether or not fathers or mothers were working and the community where they reside.

Cross-tabulations revealed no significant relationships with respect to parental education and gender, grade or community. However, there were significant relationships for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sub-samples. When looking at father's education in Table 8,  $\chi^2 = (5, N = 904) = 92.89, p < .05$ , more Aboriginal father's (37%)

did not finish high school compared to non-Aboriginal (15%). More non-Aboriginal father's (38%) went on to take some college/university courses or finished college/university than Aboriginal (13%). Table 8 depicts an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal comparison of father/male parent/guardian's education.

Table 8.

## Father/Male Parent/Guardian's Education – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

Father's Education	Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 269)	non-Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 635)
Did not finish high school	99 (37)	98 (15)
Finished high school	46 (17)	111 (17)
Vocational training	13 (5)	63 (10)
Some college/university courses	21 (8)	79 (13)
Finished college/university	14 (5)	157 (25)
Don't know	76 (28)	127 (20)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

Table 9.

## Mother/Female Parent/Guardian's Education – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

Mother's Education	Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 269)	non-Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 637)
Did not finish high school	91 (34)	82 (13)
Finished high school	51 (19)	136 (21)
Vocational training	4 (2)	23 (4)
Some college/university courses	36 (13)	118 (19)
Finished college/university	33 (12)	172 (27)
Don't know	54 (20)	106 (16)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

In Table 9, mother's education,  $\chi^2 = (5, N = 906) = 69.23, p < .05$ , revealed that more Aboriginal mothers (34%) did not finish high school than non-Aboriginal (13%) and a greater number of non-Aboriginal mothers (46%) completed either some college/university courses or finished college/university compared to Aboriginal (25%). Important to note is the difference within Aboriginal parents' education. More Aboriginal mothers (25%) have completed some college/university courses or finished college/university than Aboriginal fathers (13%). In relation to whether or not coastal youths' parents were currently working, there are more non-Aboriginal fathers (89%) employed than Aboriginal (66%) and more non-Aboriginal mothers (83%) than Aboriginal (58%).

Participants were asked how many years they had lived at their current home. Responses ranged from 1 month to 19 years. The mean score was 8.06 ( $N = 913, SD = 5.6$ ) and the mode or most frequent number of years stated was 14. Cross-tabulations revealed that Aboriginal youth have lived a shorter amount of time at their current home than non-Aboriginal,  $\chi^2 = (38, N = 900) = 122.73, p < .05$ . Aboriginal responses ranged from 0 to 18 with a mean score of 6.17 ( $N = 267, SD = 5.6$ ) and a mode of 1. Aboriginal youth have spent less time at their current home than non-Aboriginal youth.

Coastal youth were also asked how many times they remembered moving to a different home in their life. The responses to this item varied from 0 to 25. Because twelve students wrote "too many" in place of a specific number, an accurate measurement of the mean, median and mode for this item could not be calculated. It can be concluded, however, that Aboriginal youth have moved more than non-Aboriginal

youth in their life. Cross-tabulations did not reveal significant relationships between number of times moved and gender, community or age.

To determine whether or not youth had a health condition or disability that prevented them from doing things that most young people do such as sports or getting together with friends, respondents were asked to select from the options of no, yes – a physical disability, yes – a long term illness, or yes – a mental, emotional or learning condition. The results, shown in Table 10, were as follows: (a) 88% of respondents stated no; (b) 2% have a physical disability such as deafness or cerebral palsy; (c) 5% have a long term illness such as diabetes or asthma; and (d) 5% have a mental, emotional or learning condition such as depression, eating disorder, ADHD, or a learning disability. Cross-tabulations did not reveal any significant relationships among health conditions.

Table 10.

Health Condition/Disability

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No	807	88
Yes, a physical disability	20	2
Yes, a long term illness	46	5
Yes, a mental, emotional, or learning condition	42	5

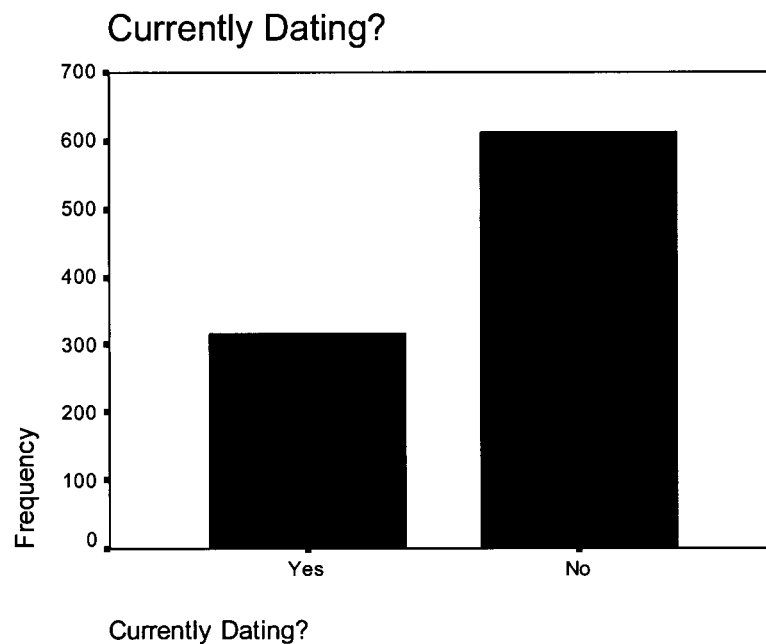
$N = 915$

Youth from coastal communities were asked whether or not they were currently dating. Figure 7 reveals that more youth were not dating. More specifically, 34% answered yes and 66%, no ( $N = 927$ ). Cross-tabulations revealed a significant relationship between dating and gender,  $\chi^2 = (1, N = 921) = 3.66, p < .05$ . More Females (37%) responded with yes than Males (31%). There was also a significant relationship

between dating and age,  $\chi^2 = (1, N = 927) = 23.56, p < .05$ . A higher percentage of older youth (42%) selected yes to dating compared to younger (27%). There were no significant relationships between dating and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal or community.

Figure 7.

### Currently Dating



### Family

The items in the Family section (items 18-28) were used to give an indication of how coastal youth view difficulties within their families. They were asked how often, over the past twelve months, their family had experienced difficulties in several areas. The Doesn't Apply option as well as the Found Help section were not included in this analysis because they were found to be confusing for respondents<sup>3</sup> (see explanation in Chapter 3, page 49).

<sup>3</sup> The "Doesn't Apply" and "Found Help" options were not included in the analyses; therefore, sample sizes ( $n$ ) for frequencies, chi-square and cross-tabulations differ from those shown in other tables.

As shown in Table 11, overall, coastal youth do not appear to be experiencing family difficulties based on the higher percentages in the Never column. This was also validated by the Family range mean score (items 18-25) of 2.4 ( $N = 464$ ,  $SD = .46$ ). This indicates that the majority of respondents chose between Never and Less Than Monthly. There was also a similar result when an overall mean score of the Family section was completed for Aboriginal participants only. Their mean score of 2.46 ( $N = 113$ ,  $SD = .56$ ) indicates that most Aboriginal youth responded either Never or Less than Monthly to experiencing family difficulties. Table 11 displays the outcomes for the Family section of the survey.

Table 11.

## Family

Family Difficulties	Never	Less Than Monthly	Monthly	Weekly
18. Financial difficulties ( $N = 724$ )	371 (51)	219 (30)	102 (14)	32 (5)
19. Employment problems ( $N = 694$ )	521 (75)	103 (15)	38 (5)	32 (5)
20. Parenting problems ( $N = 725$ )	486 (67)	137 (19)	50 (7)	52 (7)
21. Conflict with family members ( $N = 776$ )	253 (33)	239 (31)	112 (14)	172 (22)
22. Lack of support from family and friends ( $N = 729$ )	535 (73)	93 (13)	55 (8)	46 (6)
23. Lack of family or personal time ( $N = 734$ )	443 (61)	155 (21)	61 (8)	75 (10)
24. Problem meeting basic needs ( $N = 693$ )	619 (89)	43 (6)	21 (3)	10 (2)
25. Transportation problems ( $N = 714$ )	539 (75)	104 (15)	42 (6)	29 (4)

26. Problem finding satisfactory housing ( $N = 672$ )	620 (92)	38 (6)	10 (1)	4 (1)
27. Worries about suicide ( $N = 666$ )	573 (86)	46 (7)	23 (3)	24 (4)

Within “conflict with family members” (item 21), youth have indicated they are experiencing conflict with family members at higher rates. As shown in Table 11, the responses for item 21 are: (a) Weekly (22%), (b) Monthly (14%), and (c) Less than Monthly (31%). Cross-tabulations found a significant relationship between gender and this variable,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 863) = 37.01, p < .05$ . More Female respondents said they Monthly, or Weekly encounter conflict (40%) compared to Males (24%).

Further cross-tabulations of gender revealed two additional significant relationships. They included financial difficulties and lack of family or personal time. The first, financial difficulties,  $\chi^2 (4, N = 867) = 7.79, p < .05$  conveyed that more Female respondents (42%) said they either Less than Monthly, Monthly, or Weekly experience financial difficulties, compared to Male respondents (33%). Lack of family or personal time,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 857) = 20.40, p < .05$ , also revealed that Females believe they have less family or personal time, Less than Monthly, Monthly, or Weekly (36%), as compared to Male responses of 25%.

Cross-tabulations identified that when comparing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 853) = 27.93, p < .05$ , fewer Aboriginal families (59%) said they Never have a problem meeting basic needs compared to non-Aboriginal families (69%).

### *School*

The third category in the survey was School. To begin, coastal youth were asked to write down the number of different schools they had ever gone to (item 29). Responses ranged from 0 to 14 with a mean of 2.92 and mode of 2 ( $N = 918$ ,  $SD = 1.82$ ). Cross-tabulations revealed that Aboriginal youth have attended a greater number of schools than non-Aboriginal youth,  $\chi^2 = (14, N = 905) = 55.94$ ,  $p < .05$ . The mean for Aboriginal youth was 3.10 ( $N = 265$ ,  $SD = 1.99$ ). Calculation of frequency scores found that 19% of Aboriginal youth ( $N = 265$ ) had attended 5 or more different schools as compared to 10% of non-Aboriginal ( $N = 640$ ). There were no significant relationships between number of schools attended and gender, age or community.

This section also asked young people to describe their reading skills (item 30). Before cross-tabulations, youth rated their reading skills as Below Average (9%), Average (55%) or Above Average (36%). Cross-tabulations disclosed that significant relationships exist between reading skill evaluations and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal,  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 913) = 52.69$ ,  $p < .05$ . As shown in Table 12, only 20% of Aboriginal youth considered their reading skills to be Above Average compared to non-Aboriginal (42%). A greater number of Aboriginal youth (64%) rate their reading skills as Average compared to non-Aboriginal (51%). There were no significant relationships between reading skills and gender, age or community. Table 12 indicates the differences between Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal youth and rating of reading skills.

Table 12.

## Reading Skills – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

Rating of Reading Skills	Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 270)	non-Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 643)
Above Average	53 (20)	274 (42)
Average	173 (64)	326 (51)
Below Average	44 (16)	43 (7)

Coastal youth were also asked what, in general, they considered their grades to be (item 31). Twenty-seven percent of respondents chose Mostly A's, Mostly B's (37%), Mostly C's (32%), and 4%, Mostly D's or F's. Table 13 reveals current grade assessments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth.

Table 13.

## Current Grade Assessment - Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Youth Comparison

Grade Levels	Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 270)	non-Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 642)
Mostly A's	21 (8)	224 (35)
Mostly B's	87 (32)	250 (39)
Mostly C's	140 (52)	155 (24)
Mostly D's and F's	22 (8)	13 (2)

Cross-tabulations showed significant relationships between analysis of grades and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal as well as gender. The differences between Aboriginal assessment of grades and non-Aboriginal,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 911) = 117.56, p < .05$ , occurred at the higher levels: (a) Only 8% of Aboriginal chose their grades to be Mostly A's compared to 35% of non-Aboriginals; and (b) Fewer Aboriginal youth (32%) selected Mostly B's to non-Aboriginal (39%); (c) More Aboriginal youth (52%) selected Mostly

C's to non-Aboriginal (24%); (d) More Aboriginal youth (8%) chose Mostly D's and F's than non-Aboriginal (2%).

The significant relationships between gender and current grade assessment,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 918) = 9.38, p < .05$ , were found in the Mostly A's and Mostly C's categories. As shown in Table 14, fewer Males (22%) considered their grades to be Mostly A's than Females (30%) whereas a larger number of Males (37%) chose Mostly C's than Females (29%). Table 14 shows a gender comparison of current grade assessments.

Table 14.

Current Grade Assessment – Gender Comparison

Grade Levels	Male ( <i>n</i> = 411)	Female ( <i>n</i> = 507)
Mostly A's	92 (22)	154 (30)
Mostly B's	152 (37)	187 (37)
Mostly C's	150 (37)	148 (29)
Mostly D's and F's	17 (4)	18 (4)

Within the school satisfaction and perceptions of teachers cluster (SSPT), shown in Table 15, coastal youth were asked to consider their connections within their school learning environment (items 32-35). Combined responses of the SSPT cluster received an overall mean score of 3.39 ( $N = 918, SD = .78$ ). This means that most youth responded between the Neither Agreed nor Disagreed and Agree options. Further analysis, indicated that Aboriginal youth's overall mean score ( $M = 3.34$ ) was comparable to the result from the total sample. The sub-samples were also analyzed for differences on the individual items. Significant relationships occurred when cross-tabulations were performed between Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, gender, age, and

community. Table 15 illustrates overall responses to items concerning school satisfaction and perceptions of teachers (SSPT).

Table 15.

School Connections

School Connections	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
32. Teachers care about how I'm doing ( <i>N</i> = 924)	46 (5)	82 (9)	282 (30)	412 (45)	102 (11)
33. Most teachers like me ( <i>N</i> = 923)	40 (4)	72 (8)	243 (26)	453 (49)	115 (13)
34. I care what most teachers think of me ( <i>N</i> = 920)	101 (11)	153 (16)	248 (27)	319 (35)	99 (11)
35. I feel satisfied with school because I am learning a lot ( <i>N</i> = 924)	63 (7)	116 (12)	295 (32)	352 (38)	98 (11)

When asked to consider whether “Most teachers like them” (item 33, Table 16), there was a significant relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal responses,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 910) = 10.54, p < .05$ . The response rate, as shown in Table 16, varied as follows: (a) More Aboriginal youth (9%) Disagreed that “Most teachers liked them” than non-Aboriginal (7%); (b) more Aboriginals (31%) Neither agreed nor disagreed than non-Aboriginals (24%); (c) fewer Aboriginal youth (46%) Agreed than non-Aboriginals (51%); and (d) fewer Aboriginals (9%) Strongly Agreed compared to non-Aboriginal youth (14%). Table 16 reveals Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal responses to whether or youth believed most teachers liked them.

Table 16.

## Most Teachers Like Me – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

Most Teachers Like Me	Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 269)	non-Aboriginal ( <i>n</i> = 641)
Strongly Disagree	14 (5)	25 (4)
Disagree	26 (9)	45 (7)
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	83 (31)	157 (24)
Agree	123 (46)	326 (51)
Strongly Agree	23 (9)	88 (14)

The same item had a significant relationship between gender,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 917) = 34.16$ ,  $p < .05$  within the Agree response. Table 17 shows that a larger percentage of Females (58%) answered with Agree than Males (39%), however, more Males (15%) Strongly Agreed than Females (10%).

Table 17.

## Most Teachers Like Me – Gender Comparison

Most Teachers Like Me	Male ( <i>n</i> = 410)	Female ( <i>n</i> = 507)
Strongly Disagree	22 (5)	18 (3)
Disagree	41 (10)	31 (6)
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	126 (31)	115 (23)
Agree	159 (39)	294 (58)
Strongly Agree	62 (15)	49 (10)

There was also a significant relationship between gender and “I care what most of my teachers think of me”. Table 18 indicates that more Females (39%) responded with Agree to “Caring what teachers think of me” than Males (29%).

Table 18.

## Care What Teachers Think of Me – Gender Comparison

Care What Teachers Think of Me	Male ( <i>n</i> = 408)	Female ( <i>n</i> = 506)
Strongly Disagree	57 (14)	43 (9)
Disagree	74 (18)	77 (15)
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	118 (29)	130 (26)
Agree	119 (29)	199 (39)
Strongly Agree	40 (10)	57 (11)

Cross-tabulations revealed significant relationships between community and the statements, “My teachers care about how I’m doing” (item 32),  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 924) = 37.21$ ,  $p < .05$ , “I care what most of my teachers think of me” (item 34),  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 920) = 13.24$ ,  $p < .05$ , and “I feel satisfied with school because I am learning a lot” (item 35),  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 924) = 63.78$ ,  $p < .05$ . Table 19 illustrates community comparison responses to whether or not youth believed teachers cared about how they were doing.

Table 19.

## Teachers Care About How I’m Doing – Community Comparison

Teachers Care About How I’m Doing	North Island ( <i>n</i> = 223)	North Coast ( <i>n</i> = 701)
Strongly Disagree	14 (6)	32 (5)
Disagree	36 (16)	46 (6)
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	81 (36)	201 (29)
Agree	82 (37)	330 (47)
Strongly Agree	10 (5)	92 (13)

As shown in Table 19, a larger percentage of youth living on the North Coast (47%) Agree that teachers care about how they are doing than on the North Island (37%). A greater number of youth from the North Coast (12%) Strongly Agree with the

statement “I care what most of my teachers think of me” than on the North Island (6%). Results also indicate that North Coast youth are more “Satisfied with school because they are learning a lot” compared to North Island youth. Thirteen percent of North Coast youth Strongly Agreed than youth from the North Island (3%) and 43% of North Coast youth Agreed compared to 24% from the North Island. Tables 20 and 21 display the full community comparison results for whether or not youth cared what teachers thought of them and satisfaction with school.

Table 20.

## Care What Teachers Think of Me – Community Comparison

Care What Teachers Think of Me	North Island ( <i>n</i> = 224)	North Coast ( <i>n</i> = 696)
Strongly Disagree	33 (15)	68 (10)
Disagree	45 (20)	108 (16)
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	61 (27)	187 (27)
Agree	72 (32)	247 (35)
Strongly Agree	13 (6)	86 (12)

Table 21.

## Satisfaction with School – Community Comparison

Feel Satisfied with School	North Island ( <i>n</i> = 223)	North Coast ( <i>n</i> = 701)
Strongly Disagree	25 (11)	38 (5)
Disagree	47 (21)	69 (10)
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	91 (41)	204 (29)
Agree	53 (24)	299 (43)
Strongly Agree	7 (3)	91 (13)

Table 22.

## Most Teachers Like Me – Age Comparison

Most Teachers Like Me	Grades 8, 9, 10 ( <i>n</i> = 509)	Grades 11/12 ( <i>n</i> = 414)
Strongly Disagree	26 (5)	14 (3)
Disagree	48 (9)	24 (6)
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	152 (30)	91 (22)
Agree	232 (46)	221 (53)
Strongly Agree	51 (10)	64 (16)

Cross-tabulations among age or grade levels resulted in significant relationships between whether youth felt that teachers liked them,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 923) = 19.07, p < .05$  and whether or not they were satisfied with school,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 924) = 18.02, p < .05$ . Table 22 shows significant differences within the Agree and Strongly Agree categories. Fewer grades 8, 9, and 10 students Agreed (46%) that teachers liked them compared to grade 11 and 12 students (53%); and fewer younger youth (10%) Strongly Agreed than older youth (16%). Table 23 depicts age comparisons for satisfaction with school.

Table 23.

## Satisfaction with School – Age Comparison

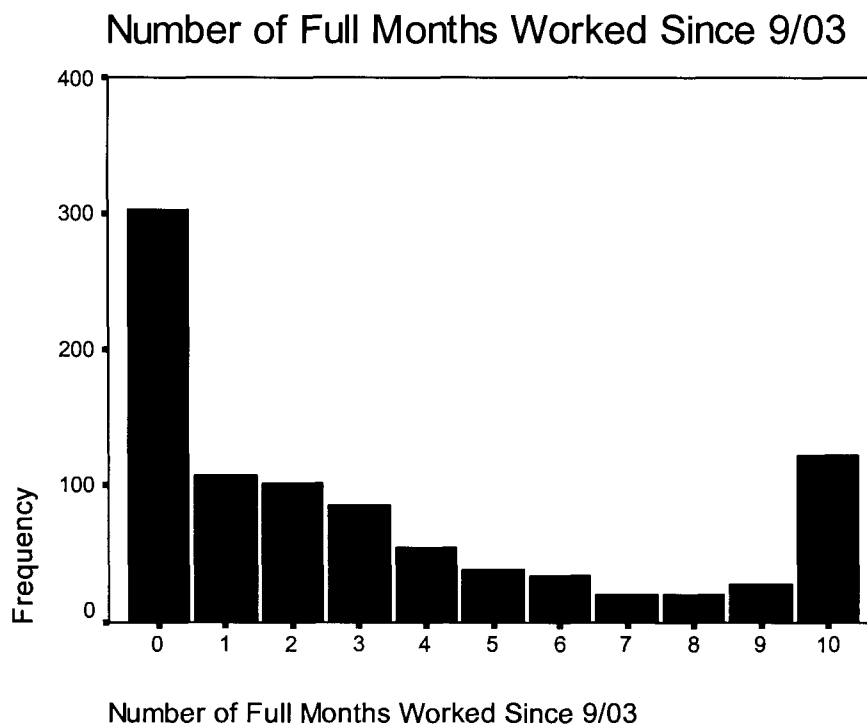
Feel Satisfied with School	Grades 8, 9, 10 ( <i>n</i> = 509)	Grades 11/12 ( <i>n</i> = 415)
Strongly Disagree	30 (6)	33 (8)
Disagree	60 (12)	56 (14)
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	149 (29)	146 (35)
Agree	198 (39)	154 (37)
Strongly Agree	72 (14)	26 (6)

As shown in Table 23, more junior students or younger youth either Agree (39%) or Strongly Agree (14%) than senior students or older youth (37% and 6% respectively) with a “Satisfaction of school because they are learning a lot”.

### *Work*

For the category of Work, coastal youth were asked to identify the number of full months they worked since September of 2003 (item 36). The item was phrased, “Since September 2003, how many full months have you worked for pay? Figure 8 shows that 24% of youth living in coastal communities have worked 6 or more full months since September of 2003.

Figure 8.



The number of hours per week on average ranging from none to 20 hours per week or more in addition to the type(s) of work they have done was also asked of those

youth who are working for pay (item 37). Thirty-six percent of coastal youth work more than 10 or more hours per week with the majority working for pay as babysitters and/or have paper routes (45%) and a notable number in the restaurant and sales industries (27%).

Cross-tabulations revealed significant relationships between number of hours per week worked on average and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, gender, age, and community. As seen in Table 24, non-Aboriginal coastal youth had higher numbers of hours per week on average,  $\chi^2 = (5, N = 893) = 27.91, p < .05$ . More Aboriginal youth (39%) don't work or chose None to non-Aboriginal (27%). Fewer Aboriginal youth (5%) work "15 to 19 hours per week" than non-Aboriginal (10%) however a larger percentage of Aboriginal youth (17%) work "20 hours per week or more" than non-Aboriginal (11%). Table 24 shows Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal comparisons to hours per week worked on average. Table 24.

#### Hours Per Week Worked on Average – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

Hours Per Week	Aboriginal ( $n = 265$ )	Non-Aboriginal ( $n = 628$ )
None	102 (39)	169 (27)
Less than 5 hours per week	33 (12)	107 (17)
5 to 9 hours per week	42 (16)	106 (17)
10 to 14 hours per week	29 (11)	114 (18)
15 to 19 hours per week	13 (5)	62 (10)
20 hours per week or more	46 (17)	70 (11)

Table 25 displays comparisons between gender and hours per week worked on average. Cross-tabulations between gender and the number of hours per week worked on average,  $\chi^2 = (5, N = 901) = 22.40, p < .05$ , revealed significant differences. A larger

percentage of Males (35%) responded with None than Females (27%), more Females (19%) work “5 to 9 hours per week” than Males (13%), and more Males (17%) work “20 hours per week or more” than Females (10%).

Table 25.

Hours Per Week Worked on Average – Gender Comparison

Hours Per Week	Male ( <i>n</i> = 405)	Female ( <i>n</i> = 492)
None	140 (35)	133 (27)
Less than 5 hours per week	57 (14)	83 (17)
5 to 9 hours per week	53 (13)	93 (19)
10 to 14 hours per week	61 (15)	84 (17)
15 to 19 hours per week	26 (6)	49 (10)
20 hours per week or more	68 (17)	50 (10)

Table 26.

Hours Per Week Worked on Average – Age Comparison

Hours Per Week	Grades 8, 9, 10 ( <i>n</i> = 497)	Grades 11/12 ( <i>n</i> = 409)
None	182 (37)	92 (23)
Less than 5 hours per week	104 (21)	38 (9)
5 to 9 hours per week	79 (16)	71 (17)
10 to 14 hours per week	57 (11)	88 (22)
15 to 19 hours per week	22 (4)	53 (13)
20 hours per week or more	53 (11)	67 (16)

Table 26 shows the comparisons between hours per week worked and age. Cross-tabulations between age and hours per week worked on average,  $\chi^2 = (5, N = 906) = 73.88, p < .05$ , revealed: (a) A larger number of younger youth in grades 8, 9, 10 (37%)

don't work compared to older youth in grades 11 and 12 (23%); (b) More younger youth (21%) work "less than 5 hours per week" than older youth (9%); (c) More grade 11 and 12 youth (22%) work "10 to 14 hours per week" compared to grade 8, 9, and 10 youth (11%); (e) More older youth (13%) work "15 to 19 hours per week" than younger youth (4%); and (f) More older youth (16%) work "20 hours per week or more) than students in grades 8, 9, and 10 (11%).

Table 27 reveals the community comparisons for hours per week worked on average. A larger percentage of North Coast youth (32%) do not work than North Island youth (23%) and fewer North Coast youth (6%) work "15 to 19 hours per week" than North Island youth (14%).

Table 27.

#### Hours Per Week Worked on Average – Community Comparison

Hours Per Week	North Island (n = 217)	North Coast (n = 689)
None	50 (23)	224 (32)
Less than 5 hours per week	26 (12)	116 (17)
5 to 9 hours per week	35 (16)	115 (17)
10 to 14 hours per week	44 (20)	101 (15)
15 to 19 hours per week	30 (14)	45 (6)
20 hours per week or more	32 (15)	88 (13)

#### *Behaviour and Activities*

The Behaviour and Activities section was broken down into two categories for exploration. At the onset it was explained to young people that "below are some examples of things that some people your age deal with". The first set (items 39-55) began with the sentence "Do you notice that you . . ." and youth were asked to respond to

statements coming after this. For example, “do you notice that you generally have a cheerful mood?” Before analysis, items 39 and 55 were reversed coded to achieve consistency among the variables. Table 28 reveals frequency and percentage scores for the entire sample for the first set of Behaviour and Activities items.

Table 28.

## Behaviour and Activities (First Set)

Do you notice that you ...	Never True	Sometimes True	Often True
39. generally have a cheerful mood? ( <i>N</i> = 929)	29 (3)	407 (44)	493 (53)
40. feel hopeless? ( <i>N</i> = 924)	401 (43)	452 (49)	71 (8)
41. get no pleasure from your usual activities? ( <i>N</i> = 921)	427 (46)	429 (47)	65 (7)
42. have trouble enjoying yourself? ( <i>N</i> = 921)	478 (52)	366 (40)	77 (8)
43. are defiant, or that you talk back to people? ( <i>N</i> = 925)	215 (23)	521 (56)	189 (21)
44. jump from one activity to the other? ( <i>N</i> = 925)	187 (20)	506 (55)	232 (25)
45. worry about your past behaviour? ( <i>N</i> = 926)	338 (36)	421 (46)	167 (18)
46. worry about doing the wrong thing? ( <i>N</i> = 925)	165 (18)	477 (51)	283 (31)
47. are easily annoyed by others? ( <i>N</i> = 929)	175 (19)	506 (54)	248 (27)
48. worry about doing better at things? ( <i>N</i> = 925)	151 (16)	467 (51)	307 (33)
49. are unhappy sad or depressed? ( <i>N</i> = 928)	430 (46)	378 (41)	120 (13)
50. become overly upset while away from someone you are close to? ( <i>N</i> = 929)	319 (34)	399 (43)	211 (23)

51. fail to finish things you start? ( <i>N</i> = 928)	294 (32)	518 (56)	116 (12)
52. are cranky? ( <i>N</i> = 927)	273 (30)	576 (62)	78 (8)
53. are impulsive, or that you act without stopping to think? ( <i>N</i> = 927)	296 (32)	498 (54)	133 (14)
54. have difficulty knowing directions or instructions? ( <i>N</i> = 926)	414 (45)	433 (47)	79 (8)
55. are full of energy? ( <i>N</i> = 929)	68 (7)	450 (49)	411 (44)

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*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

The overall mean score for the first set of Behaviour and Activities items was 1.79 (*N* = 889, *SD* = .30). This means that coastal youth responded between Never True and Sometimes True with more coastal youth associating with Sometimes True. Further analysis revealed that Aboriginal youth had a similar mean score of 1.74. With a range mean score of 1.79 and 1.74 respectively, a conclusion can be made that the majority of coastal youth have a positive self-concept but, from time to time, feel despondent.

Cross-tabulations found there were significant relationships between gender, Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, and age and items within the Behaviour and Activities section. There were no significant relationships between community and the first set of items in Behaviour and Activities. Table 29 reveals an important link among gender and feeling hopeless (item 40),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 923) = 1.8, p < .05$ . A larger percentage of Males (52%) responded with Never True than Females (36%) and fewer Males (42%) answered this item with Sometimes True than Females (55%).

Table 29 also shows an indicative relationship between gender and whether or not youth are unhappy, sad or depressed,  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 922) = 38.04, p < .05$ . Fewer Males (57%) selected Never True to this item than Females (38%); more Females (46%)

responded with Sometimes True compared to Males (34%); and more Females (16%) answered with Often True than Males (9%).

A significant relationship was also discovered between gender and becoming overly upset while away from someone you are close to,  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 923) = 57.05, p < .05$ . As seen in Table 29, a larger percent of Males (47%) responded with Never True than Females (24%) and more Females (28%) selected Often True than Males (16%).

Table 29.

Behaviour and Activities (First Set) – Gender Comparison

Do you notice that you . . .	Never True	Sometimes True	Often True
Males			
40. feel hopeless? ( <i>n</i> = 411)	214 (52)	171 (42)	26 (6)
49. are unhappy sad or depressed? ( <i>n</i> = 414)	237 (57)	141 (34)	36 (9)
50. become overly upset while away from someone you are close to? ( <i>n</i> = 413)	195 (47)	153 (37)	65 (16)
52. are cranky? ( <i>n</i> = 411)	152 (37)	236 (57)	23 (6)
Females			
40. feel hopeless? ( <i>n</i> = 507)	184 (36)	280 (55)	43 (9)
49. are unhappy sad or depressed? ( <i>n</i> = 508)	190 (38)	235 (46)	83 (16)
50. become overly upset while away from someone you are close to? ( <i>n</i> = 510)	123 (24)	243 (48)	144 (28)
52. are cranky? ( <i>n</i> = 510)	121 (24)	334 (65)	55 (11)

The last significant relationship when focusing on gender was in the comparison with “being cranky”,  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 922) = .17, p < .05$ . Table 29 shows that a larger percentage of Males (37%) selected Never True as compared to Females (24%), more

Females (65%) chose Sometimes True than Males (57%), and more Females (11%) answered with Often True than Males (6%).

Table 30 shows significant relationships between Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and specific items within the first set of the Behaviour and Activities section. The first is amongst Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and cheerful mood,  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 916) = 10.49, p < .05$ . This cross-tabulation revealed that more Aboriginal youth (51%) selected Sometimes True to a cheerful mood than non-Aboriginals (41%) yet fewer Aboriginal youth (45%) chose Often True than non-Aboriginals (56%).

When looking at item 51, “Failing to finish things you start” and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal factors,  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 915) = 13.76, p < .05$ , Table 30 shows that fewer Aboriginal youth (24%) selected Never True than non-Aboriginals (35%) yet more Aboriginal youth (17%) chose Often True than non-Aboriginal youth (11%).

An important discovery was also found between Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and having difficulty following directions or instructions (item 54),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 913) = 20.44, p < .05$ . A smaller percentage of Aboriginal youth (34%) chose Never True to this question than non-Aboriginal (49%) yet more Aboriginals (12%) selected Often True than non-Aboriginal youth (7%).

The final significant relationship in this section was between Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and whether or not they considered themselves full of energy (item 55),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 916) = 14.87, p < .05$ . The results, shown in Table 30 indicate that fewer Aboriginal youth (35%) chose Never True than non-Aboriginal (46%) and a larger percentage of Aboriginals (12%) said they were “often” full of energy compared to non-Aboriginal youth (7%).

Table 30.

## Behaviour and Activities (First Set) – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

Do you notice that you . . .	Never True	Sometimes True	Often True
Aboriginal			
39. generally have a cheerful mood? ( <i>n</i> = 273)	12 (4)	139 (51)	122 (45)
51. fail to finish things you start? ( <i>n</i> = 273)	66 (24)	160 (59)	47 (17)
54. have difficulty following directions or instructions? ( <i>n</i> = 272)	92 (34)	147 (54)	33 (12)
55. are full of energy? ( <i>n</i> = 273)	95 (35)	144 (53)	34 (12)
Non-Aboriginal			
39. generally have a cheerful mood? ( <i>n</i> = 643)	18 (3)	264 (41)	361 (56)
51. fail to finish things you start? ( <i>n</i> = 642)	222 (35)	352 (55)	68 (10)
54. have difficulty following directions or instructions? ( <i>n</i> = 641)	315 (49)	282 (44)	44 (7)
55. are full of energy? ( <i>n</i> = 643)	296 (46)	305 (47)	42 (7)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

The single significant relationship amongst age and the items in the Behaviour and Activities section (First Set) was between age and worrying about doing better at things (item 48),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 925) = 10.37, p < .05$ . Older youth (39%) stated they often worry about doing better at things than younger youth (27%).

The second set (items 56-64) asked youth to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with particular statements about self-concept. Items 59 and 62 were recoded to achieve consensus before analysis.

The overall mean score for items 56 to 64 was 2.45 ( $N = 892$ ,  $SD = .36$ ). This means young people in coastal communities told us their responses were primarily between Neither Agree or Disagree or Agree. There are, however, individual items that have significant relationships within Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, community, and age. There was one significant relationship between gender and an item within the second set of the Behaviour and Activities section which will be identified in Phase Two. Table 31 reveals results of Behaviour and Activities (second set) from the entire sample.

Table 31.

Behaviour and Activities (Second Set)

Indication of how strongly youth agree or disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree
56. I have a lot of control over the things that happen to me. ( $N = 927$ )	80 (8)	376 (41)	471 (51)
57. My work, in general, is at least as good as the work of most others. ( $N = 920$ )	99 (11)	323 (35)	498 (54)
58. There is usually a way I can solve the problems I have. ( $N = 919$ )	58 (6)	236 (26)	625 (68)
59. There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life. ( $N = 921$ )	330 (35)	402 (44)	189 (21)
60. I often feel confident in dealing with problems of life. ( $N = 923$ )	128 (14)	371 (40)	424 (46)
61. I am looking forward to the years ahead. ( $N = 925$ )	57 (6)	178 (19)	690 (75)
62. Sometimes I feel that I am being pushing about in life. ( $N = 921$ )	303 (33)	375 (41)	243 (26)

63. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me. ( $N = 922$ )	50 (6)	197 (21)	675 (73)
64. I can do just about anything I really set my mind to. ( $N = 924$ )	52 (5)	228 (25)	644 (70)

Table 32 reveals significant differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal responses. The first relationship is between Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and the statement, “my work, in general, is at least as good as the work of most others” (item 57),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 907) = 36.58, p < .05$ . This cross-tabulation revealed that fewer Aboriginal youth (39%) Agreed with this statement than non-Aboriginals (61%).

Table 32 also indicates an important link among Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and solving problems (item 58),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 907) = 11.66, p < .05$ . Fewer Aboriginal youth (62%) Agreed with this factor than non-Aboriginals (71%).

A significant relationship was also discovered between Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and the degree to which youth believe they “Can change important things in their life” (item 59),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 908) = 10.87, p < .05$ . Fewer Aboriginal youth (28%) Disagreed with this statement compared to 39% of non-Aboriginal. Table 32 illustrates the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal comparisons for the second set of the Behaviour and Activities section.

Further analysis also revealed significant relationships between community and whether or not youth believed they could “Change important things in their life” (item 59),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 921) = 10.23, p < .05$  as well as the statement, “what happens to me in the future mostly depends on me” (item 63),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 921) = 9.88, p < 0.5$ . More North Coast youth (22%) Agreed that they could change important things in their life than youth from the North Island (15%). A very large percentage of North Coast youth

(76%) Agreed that their “future depends on them” as compared to youth from the North Island (65%).

Table 32.

Behaviour and Activities (Second Set) – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

Strongly Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree
Aboriginal			
57. my work, in general, is at least as good as the work of most others. ( <i>n</i> = 269)	43 (16)	121 (45)	105 (39)
58. there is usually a way I can solve the problems I have. ( <i>n</i> = 270)	27 (10)	76 (28)	167 (62)
59. there is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life. ( <i>n</i> = 271)	77 (28)	125 (46)	69 (26)
Non-Aboriginal			
57. my work, in general, is at least as good as the work of most others. ( <i>n</i> = 638)	54 (8)	198 (31)	386 (61)
58. there is usually a way I can solve the problems I have. ( <i>n</i> = 637)	30 (5)	156 (24)	451 (71)
59. there is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life. ( <i>n</i> = 637)	248 (38)	271 (43)	118 (19)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

The only significant relationship between age and the second set of Behaviour and Activities was with the ability to change important things in their life (item 59),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 921) = 14.68, p < .05$ . A larger percentage of older youth (42%) Disagreed that they can change important things in their life than younger youth (31%) while, at the same

time, 17% of grade 11 and 12 students Agreed to the same statement as compared to grade 8, 9, and 10 students (24%).

### *Youth Issues*

In Youth Issues (items 65-82) coastal youth were asked “to what extent do you Agree or Disagree with statements about youth issues in your community? It was further clarified that “for the purposes of this survey, youth meant young people between the ages of 15 and 24”. As explained earlier, however, many of the youth who completed this survey were 13 and 14. The No Opinion option was not included in this analysis<sup>4</sup>. In order to achieve consistency among the range total, items 65, 71, 76, 78, 79, 80, and 81 were recoded. Table 33 illustrates frequency and percentage scores for items in the Youth Issues section for the full sample.

The overall mean score of the Youth Issues items was 2.7 with a *SD* of .42. This means the majority of responses within Youth Issues fell between Somewhat Disagree and Somewhat Agree, leaning closer to Somewhat Agree. As all statements within Youth Issues were phrased to reflect difficulties after recoding and before analysis, youth conveyed they mostly Somewhat Agree that there are difficulties within their communities.

Cross-tabulations performed within the Youth Issues section revealed significant relationships amongst all four categories of gender, Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, age, and community. Table 34 shows the differences between gender and youth issues.

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<sup>4</sup> As previously stated in Chapter Three, the “No Opinion” option was not included in the chi-square and cross-tabulation analyses, therefore sample sizes (n) differ from those in other frequency tables.

Table 33.

## Youth Issues

My community . . .	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
65. Has a good variety of activities for youth. ( <i>N</i> = 873)	157 (18)	177 (20)	385 (44)	154 (18)
66. Has too much tobacco use among its youth. ( <i>N</i> = 854)	50 (6)	60 (7)	242 (28)	502 (59)
67. Has a problem with youth using drugs. ( <i>N</i> = 850)	60 (7)	45 (5)	253 (30)	492 (58)
68. Needs a wider variety of recreational activities for youth. ( <i>N</i> = 840)	40 (4)	82 (10)	299 (36)	419 (50)
69. Has too many teen pregnancies. ( <i>N</i> = 778)	95 (12)	155 (20)	295 (38)	233 (30)
70. Is having a problem with juvenile crime. ( <i>N</i> = 758)	123 (16)	210 (28)	305 (40)	120 (16)
71. Has good parental involvement with youth. ( <i>N</i> = 771)	111 (15)	187 (24)	372 (48)	101 (13)
72. Needs conflict resolution education for youth. ( <i>N</i> = 668)	56 (9)	116 (17)	334 (50)	162 (24)
73. Has a problem with youth poverty. ( <i>N</i> = 676)	142 (21)	191 (28)	271 (40)	72 (11)
74. Is experiencing a problem with youth depression. ( <i>N</i> = 729)	106 (15)	186 (25)	320 (44)	117 (16)
75. Has a problem with young people feeling angry. ( <i>N</i> = 766)	64 (8)	134 (18)	394 (51)	174 (23)
76. Has adequate services for youth who may be considering suicide. ( <i>N</i> = 666)	127 (19)	206 (31)	249 (37)	84 (13)
77. Has a problem with youth violence. ( <i>N</i> = 791)	73 (9)	166 (21)	361 (46)	191 (24)
78. Makes its young people feel that their contributions to the community are valued. ( <i>N</i> = 742)	104 (13)	197 (27)	346 (47)	95 (13)

79. Has good opportunities for youth to be involved in the life of the community. ( $N = 781$ )	84 (11)	187 (24)	379 (48)	131 (17)
80. Has good options for youth to work part-time while they are in school. ( $N = 826$ )	118 (14)	178 (22)	337 (41)	193 (23)
81. Has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area. ( $N = 785$ )	250 (32)	271 (34)	209 (27)	55 (7)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

As shown in Table 34, the responses differ between gender and teen pregnancy,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 910) = 54.93, p < .05$  (item 69). A greater number of Males (17%) Strongly Disagreed there are too many teen pregnancies compared to Females (8%) while more Females (34%) responded with Strongly Agree compared to Males (24%).

Gender answers to youth depression,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 903) = 19.37, p < .05$ , displayed in Table 34 (item 74), identified that Females believe their community is experiencing a problem with youth depression more than Males. Forty-eight percent of Females Somewhat Agreed and 19%, Strongly Agreed while 38% of Males Somewhat Agreed and 13%, Strongly Agreed with this problem.

Problems with young people feeling angry and gender (item 75),  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 904) = 12.83, p < .05$ , discovered a larger percentage of Males, Strongly Disagreed (10%) and Somewhat Disagreed (21%) there is a problem with young people feeling angry in their communities than Females (7% and 15% respectively).

Table 34.  
Youth Issues – Gender Comparison

<u>My community . . .</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>
Males				
69. has too many teen pregnancies. ( <i>n</i> = 311)	54 (17)	64 (21)	118 (38)	75 (24)
74. is experiencing a problem with youth depression. ( <i>n</i> = 319)	60 (19)	95 (30)	123 (38)	41 (13)
75. has a problem with young people feeling angry. ( <i>n</i> = 329)	34 (10)	68 (21)	162 (49)	65 (20)
Females				
69. has too many teen pregnancies. ( <i>n</i> = 462)	40 (8)	91 (20)	175 (38)	156 (34)
74. is experiencing a problem with youth depression ( <i>n</i> = 404)	45 (11)	90 (22)	194 (48)	75 (19)
75. has a problem with young people feeling angry. ( <i>n</i> = 431)	29 (7)	65 (15)	229 (53)	108 (25)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

Table 35 identifies a significant relationship when youth were asked about whether or not there is a problem with youth using drugs in their communities and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal responses,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 903) = 24.63, p < .05$  (item 74). A significantly larger percentage of non-Aboriginal youth (63%) responded with Strongly Agreed than Aboriginal (46%) yet fewer non-Aboriginal youth (27%) responded with Somewhat Agreed than Aboriginal (37%). Table 35 displays the results between Youth Issues and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal significant responses.

Table 35.

## Youth Issues – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

My community . . .	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Aboriginal				
67. has a problem with youth using drugs. ( <i>n</i> = 246)	23 (9)	19 (8)	92 (37)	112 (46)
76. has adequate services for youth who may be considering suicide. ( <i>n</i> = 195)	33 (17)	42 (21)	91 (47)	29 (15)
78. makes its young people feel that their contributions to the community are valued. ( <i>n</i> = 207)	26 (12)	41 (20)	107 (52)	33 (16)
81. has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area. ( <i>n</i> = 225)	57 (25)	75 (33)	71 (32)	22 (10)
non-Aboriginal				
67. has a problem with youth using drugs. ( <i>n</i> = 593)	34 (6)	24 (4)	160 (27)	375 (63)
76. has adequate services for youth who may be considering suicide. ( <i>n</i> = 463)	89 (19)	163 (35)	157 (34)	54 (12)
78. makes its young people feel that their contributions to the community are valued. ( <i>n</i> = 526)	75 (14)	155 (29)	235 (45)	61 (12)
81. has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area. ( <i>n</i> = 551)	190 (34)	193 (35)	136 (25)	32 (6)

Adequate services for youth who may be considering suicide (item 76) and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal responses,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 894) = 15.70, p < .05$ , revealed that overall Aboriginal youth agreed more strongly than non-Aboriginal. More Aboriginal

youth responded with Somewhat Agree (47%) and Strongly Agree (15%) than non-Aboriginal (34% and 12% respectively).

As shown in Table 35, Aboriginal youth as compared to non-Aboriginal felt their contributions within their communities were valued more,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 901) = 13.22, p < .05$  (item 78). More Aboriginal youth responded with Strongly Agree (16%) and Somewhat Agree (52%) than non-Aboriginal (12% and 45% respectively).

In asking participants whether their communities have enough opportunities for young people to stay in the area, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth responded differently,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 895) = 13.08, p < .05$ . Table 35 identifies that more Aboriginal youth either Somewhat Agreed (32%) or Strongly Agreed (10%) than non-Aboriginal (25% and 6% respectively).

Significant relationships, as shown in Table 36, were also discovered between Youth Issues and age. Younger youth were more likely to agree that there is a good variety of activities for youth in their communities than older youth,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 915) = 37.99, p < .05$  (item 65). The variation of responses showed that a larger percentage of younger youth Somewhat Agreed (49%) and Strongly Agreed (21%) with this statement than older youth (38% and 14% respectively).

Table 36 also identified that older and younger youth disagreed that there are too many teen pregnancies,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 916) = 32.41, p < .05$  (item 69). A larger percentage of older youth (38%) Strongly Agreed that there are too many teen pregnancies than younger youth (24%).

Responses to whether or not participants agreed or disagreed that their community is having a problem with juvenile crime,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 912) = 9.12, p < .05$  (item 70) found

that a smaller percentage of older youth (10%) Strongly Disagreed that there is a problem with juvenile crime than younger youth (21%). Table 36 shows age comparisons for items within the Youth Issues section of the survey.

Table 36.

## Youth Issues – Age Comparison

My community . . .	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Older Youth – Grade 11 and 12				
65. has a good variety of activities for youth. ( <i>n</i> = 398)	97 (24)	97 (24)	150 (38)	54 (14)
69. has too many teen pregnancies. ( <i>n</i> = 353)	40 (11)	43 (12)	138 (39)	132 (38)
70. is having a problem with juvenile crime. ( <i>n</i> = 345)	36 (10)	102 (30)	145 (42)	62 (18)
71. has good parental involvement with youth. ( <i>n</i> = 349)	53 (15)	107 (31)	158 (45)	31 (9)
80. has good options for youth to work part-time while they are in school. ( <i>n</i> = 375)	70 (19)	94 (25)	136 (36)	75 (20)
81. has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area. ( <i>n</i> = 369)	158 (43)	128 (35)	67 (18)	16 (4)
Younger Youth – Grades 8, 9, and 10				
65. has a good variety of activities for youth. ( <i>n</i> = 475)	60 (13)	80 (17)	235 (49)	100 (21)
69. has too many teen pregnancies. ( <i>n</i> = 425)	55 (13)	112 (26)	157 (37)	101 (24)
70. is having a problem with juvenile crime. ( <i>n</i> = 413)	87 (21)	108 (26)	160 (39)	58 (14)
71. has good parental involvement with youth. ( <i>n</i> = 422)	58 (14)	80 (19)	214 (51)	70 (16)

80. has good options for youth to work part-time while they are in school. ( $n = 451$ )	48 (11)	84 (19)	201 (44)	118 (26)
81. has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area. ( $n = 416$ )	92 (22)	143 (35)	142 (34)	39 (9)

A significant relationship between age and whether or not there was good parental involvement with youth (item 71),  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 913) = 20.89, p < .05$  (item 71), revealed that 16% of younger youth Strongly Agreed and Somewhat Agreed (51%) compared to older youth (9% and 45% respectively).

Table 36 also displayed responses between age and whether are not there are good options for working part-time while in school,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 911) = 20.26, p < .05$  (item 80), that found that older youth were less likely to agree with this statement. For example, 25% of students in grade 11 and 12 or older youth Strongly Disagreed and 19% Somewhat Disagreed with this statement while 19% of younger youth Strongly Disagreed and 11%, Somewhat Disagreed.

Item 81 in Table 36 identifies the significant relationship amongst age and whether or not there are enough opportunities for youth to stay in the area,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 908) = 60.49, p < .05$ . The results disclosed that only 4% of older youth Strongly Agree with this statement compared to 9% of younger youth. Similarly, a small percentage of older youth (18%) Somewhat Agreed than younger youth (34%).

Table 37 indicates that North Coast youth, more than youth from the North Island, believe that their community has a good variety of activities for youth,  $\chi^2 = (3, N = 873) = 70.15, p < .05$ . (item 65). Twenty-one percent of North Coast youth Strongly Agree

and 48% Somewhat Agree compared to youth living on the North Island (7% and 33% respectively).

A larger percentage of youth from the North Coast disagreed that there are too many teen pregnancies in their communities compared to North Island youth,  $\chi^2 = (3, N = 778) = 28.32, p < .05$ , (item 69). Cross-tabulations revealed that 22% of youth living on the North Coast Strongly Disagreed compared to 9% of youth from the North Island.

Cross-tabulations revealed a significant relationship between community and beliefs about juvenile crime,  $\chi^2 = (3, N = 758) = 7.03, p < .05$ , (item 70). As shown in Table 37, a larger percentage of youth from the North Coast (21%) Strongly Agreed that there is a problem with juvenile crime compared to North Island youth (14%).

Item 71 which asks respondents whether their community has good parental involvement, showed a significant relationship after cross-tabulations,  $\chi^2 = (3, N = 771) = 16.44, p < .05$ . Fifteen percent of youth from the North Coast Strongly Agreed that there is good parental involvement and 50% Somewhat Agreed compared to youth living on the North Island (8% and 42% respectively).

A significant relationship occurred between communities and whether or not there are good opportunities for youth to be involved in the community,  $\chi^2 = (3, N = 781) = 38.26, p < .05$ , (item 79). A larger percentage of North Coast youth either Strongly Agreed (19%) or Somewhat Agreed (52%) that there are good opportunities to be involved than youth from the North Island (9% and 38% respectively). Table 37 identifies community differences to youth issues.

Table 37.

## Youth Issues – Community Comparison

My community . . .	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
North Island				
65. has a good variety of activities for youth. ( <i>n</i> = 211)	70 (33)	58 (27)	69 (33)	14 (7)
69. has too many teen pregnancies. ( <i>n</i> = 185)	41 (22)	44 (24)	56 (30)	44 (24)
70. is having a problem with juvenile crime. ( <i>n</i> = 197)	31 (16)	44 (22)	81 (41)	41 (21)
71. has good parental involvement with youth. ( <i>n</i> = 191)	37 (19)	59 (31)	80 (42)	15 (8)
79. has good opportunities for youth to be involved in the community ( <i>n</i> = 185)	32 (17)	66 (36)	71 (38)	16 (9)
81. has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area. ( <i>n</i> = 197)	85 (43)	73 (37)	31 (16)	8 (4)
North Coast				
65. has a good variety of activities for youth. ( <i>n</i> = 662)	87 (13)	119 (18)	316 (48)	140 (21)
69. has too many teen pregnancies. ( <i>n</i> = 593)	54 (9)	111 (19)	239 (40)	189 (32)
70. is having a problem with juvenile crime. ( <i>n</i> = 561)	92 (16)	166 (30)	224 (40)	79 (14)
71. has good parental involvement with youth. ( <i>n</i> = 580)	74 (13)	128 (22)	292 (50)	86 (15)
79. has good opportunities for youth to be involved in the community ( <i>n</i> = 596)	52 (9)	121 (20)	308 (52)	115 (19)
81. has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area. ( <i>n</i> = 588)	165 (28)	198 (34)	178 (30)	47 (8)

Cross-tabulations also revealed significant differences between communities and whether or not there are enough opportunities for youth to stay in their area,  $\chi^2 = (3, N = 785) = 26.00, p < .05$ , (item 81). A much larger percentage of North Island youth (43%) Strongly Disagreed that there are enough opportunities to stay than youth from the North Coast (28%).

### *Neighbourhood and Community*

Table 38 shows frequency and percentage scores from the entire sample for the Neighbourhood and Community section of the survey.

Table 38.

### Neighbourhood and Community

Extent to which youth agree or disagree with the following statements	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
83. The economic outlook for my community appears bright. (N = 790)	179 (23)	239 (30)	295 (37)	77 (10)
84. Housing is reasonably priced in my community. (N = 750)	63 (8)	162 (22)	398 (53)	127 (17)
85. I am satisfied with employment opportunities in my community. (N = 798)	187 (23)	262 (33)	294 (37)	55 (7)
86. People living in my community are willing to accept people from different ethnic groups. (N = 807)	85 (11)	132 (16)	333 (41)	257 (32)
87. There are enough recreation areas (e.g. parks, conservation areas) (N = 823)	124 (15)	225 (27)	343 (42)	131 (16)
88. The crime rate in my community is low. (N = 766)	111 (14)	228 (30)	306 (40)	121 (16)
89. I feel safe living in my community. (N = 851)	48 (6)	120 (14)	343 (40)	340 (40)

90. My community does a good job of planning for the future. ( <i>N</i> = 737)	134 (18)	244 (33)	286 (39)	73 (10)
91. If I have children, I would encourage them to live in this community. ( <i>N</i> = 790)	269 (34)	216 (27)	227 (29)	78 (10)
92. The quality of life in this community is good. ( <i>N</i> = 787)	84 (11)	185 (23)	391 (50)	127 (16)
93. Pollution in my community is low. ( <i>N</i> = 773)	79 (10)	148 (19)	319 (41)	227 (30)

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*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

Coastal youth were queried about their neighbourhoods and communities (items 83-93). The No Opinion column was not included in this analysis<sup>5</sup>. The overall mean score for Neighbourhood and Community (items 83-93) was 2.58 (*N* = 492, *SD* = .59). This means the average response to Neighbourhood and Community statements is closer to Somewhat Agree. As all statements in this category were phrased positively, one could conclude that overall, coastal youth feel good about life in their communities.

As indicated in Table 39, there was some variation in the results between gender and whether or not youth feel safe living in their communities,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 908) = 3.30, p < .05$  (item 89). More Males (44%) Strongly Agreed that they feel safe in their community compared to Females (37%) yet fewer Males (39%) Somewhat Agreed than Females (42%).

When participants were asked to consider whether they would encourage their children to live in their community, a significant relationship occurred between gender,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 906) = 12.99, p < .05$  (item 91). Table 39 shows that a larger percentage of Females (38%), Strongly Disagreed with this statement than Males (29%) with fewer

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<sup>5</sup> As previously stated in Chapter Three, the "No Opinion" option was not included in the chi-square and cross-tabulation analyses, therefore sample sizes (*n*) differ from those in other frequency tables.

respondents overall selecting Strongly Agree, (9% of Females, 12% of Males). Table 39 displays Neighbourhood and Community responses between gender.

Table 39.

Neighbourhood and Community – Gender Comparison

Extent to which youth agree or disagree with the following statements	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Males				
89. I feel safe living in my community. (n = 370)	19 (5)	44 (12)	144 (39)	163 (44)
91. If I have children, I would encourage them to live in this community. (n = 341)	99 (29)	89 (26)	113 (33)	40 (12)
Females				
89. I feel safe living in my community. (n = 476)	29 (6)	74 (15)	198 (42)	175 (37)
91. If I have children, I would encourage them to live in this community. (n = 444)	167 (38)	126 (28)	113 (25)	38 (9)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

Table 40 illustrates significant relationships between Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and different statements within the Neighbourhood and Community section. When asked to indicate the extent to which youth agreed or disagreed whether the economic outlook for their community appears bright, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth responses differed,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 903) = 30.83, p < .05$  (item 83). Fewer Aboriginal youth (17%) Strongly Disagreed and Somewhat Disagreed (26%) to a brighter economic outlook than non-Aboriginal (24% and 33% respectively).

Table 40.

## Neighbourhood and Community – Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal Comparison

Extent to which youth agree or disagree with the following statements	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
	Aboriginal			
83. the economic outlook for my community appears bright. (n = 212)	37 (17)	54 (26)	99 (47)	22 (10)
90. my community does a good job of planning for the future. (n = 215)	34 (16)	63 (29)	86 (40)	32 (15)
91. If I have children, I would encourage them to live in this community. (n = 227)	63 (28)	57 (25)	74 (33)	33 (14)
93. pollution in my community is low. (n = 217)	31 (14)	57 (26)	91 (42)	38 (18)
	non-Aboriginal			
83. the economic outlook for my community appears bright. (n = 569)	138 (24)	184 (33)	195 (34)	52 (9)
90. my community does a good job of planning for the future. (n = 513)	97 (19)	179 (35)	198 (38)	39 (8)
91. If I have children, I would encourage them to live in this community. (n = 555)	202 (37)	157 (28)	152 (27)	44 (8)
93. pollution in my community is low. (n = 529)	46 (9)	91 (17)	224 (42)	168 (32)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

The statement, “my community does a good job of planning for the future” (item 90) brought a variance of responses between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 898) = 10.57, p < .05$ . As shown in Table 40, only 8% of non-Aboriginal youth Strongly Agreed and 15% of Aboriginal with this assertion.

Differences of responses also occurred on whether or not Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal youth would encourage their children to live in their communities,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 899) = 13.93, p < .05$  (item 91). The responses were as follows: (a) Fewer Aboriginal youth (28%) Strongly Disagreed with the statement than non-Aboriginal (37%) while overall, smaller percentages occurred with the response Strongly Agree (14% Aboriginal; 8% non-Aboriginal). Table 40 reveals comparison responses between Neighbourhood and Community and Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal participants.

Opinions with regard to pollution had variances in responses between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 898) = 32.69, p < .05$  (item 93). Table 40 shows a larger percentage of non-Aboriginal youth (32%) “Strongly Agreed” that pollution in their community is low compared to Aboriginal (18%) with only 9% of non-Aboriginal youth responding with Strongly Disagree and 14% of Aboriginal with the same statement.

Cross-tabulations revealed in Table 41, show significant relationships between age and items within the Neighbourhood and Community section. Age and the statement “the economic outlook for my community appears bright”,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 916) = 6.30, p < .05$  (item 83), found that more older youth (26%) Strongly Disagreed with this statement than younger youth (20%) and a very low percentage overall selected Strongly Agree, only 4% of older youth and 9% of younger youth. Table 41 illustrates the significant responses between age and items in the Neighbourhood and Community section.

When youth were asked to consider whether they were satisfied with employment opportunities in their community, differences occurred between age,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 908) = 19.78, p < .05$  (item 85). Table 41 illustrates that older youth (29%) were far more likely

to Strongly Disagree than younger youth (19%). Only 5% of older youth and 9% of youth in grades 8, 9, and 10 responded with Strongly Agree. Table 42 displays responses between Neighbourhood and Community items and community.

Table 41.

## Neighbourhood and Community – Age Comparison

Extent to which youth agree or disagree with the following statements	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Older Youth – Grade 11 and 12				
83. the economic outlook for my community appears bright. (n = 364)	95 (26)	114 (31)	118 (33)	37 (10)
85. I am satisfied with employment opportunities in my community. (n = 367)	106 (29)	120 (33)	124 (34)	17 (4)
Younger Youth – Grades 8, 9, and 10				
83. the economic outlook for my community appears bright. (n = 426)	84 (20)	125 (29)	177 (42)	40 (9)
85. I am satisfied with employment opportunities in my community. (n = 431)	81 (19)	142 (33)	170 (39)	38 (9)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

Cross-tabulations revealed a significant relationship between economic outlook and communities,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 916) = 16.17, p < .05$  (item 83). Table 42 found that fewer North Island youth (7%) Strongly Agreed than youth from the North Coast (11%) and fewer North Island youth again (40%) Somewhat Agreed compared to youth living on the North Coast (28%).

Table 42.

## Neighbourhood and Community – Community Comparison

Extent to which youth agree or disagree with the following statements	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
North Island				
83. the economic outlook for my community appears bright. ( <i>n</i> = 186)	51 (27)	71 (38)	52 (28)	12 (7)
89. I feel safe living in my community. ( <i>n</i> = 204)	15 (7)	38 (19)	64 (31)	87 (43)
91. If I have children, I would encourage them to live in this community. ( <i>n</i> = 195)	81 (41)	50 (26)	53 (27)	11 (6)
93. pollution in my community is low. ( <i>n</i> = 189)	21 (11)	24 (13)	68 (36)	76 (40)
North Coast				
83. the economic outlook for my community appears bright. ( <i>n</i> = 604)	128 (21)	168 (28)	243 (40)	65 (11)
89. I feel safe living in my community. ( <i>n</i> = 647)	33 (5)	82 (13)	279 (43)	253 (39)
91. If I have children, I would encourage them to live in this community. ( <i>n</i> = 595)	188 (32)	166 (28)	174 (29)	67 (11)
93. pollution in my community is low. ( <i>n</i> = 584)	58 (10)	124 (21)	251 (43)	151 (26)

*Note: numbers shown in brackets are percentages*

Differences in responses also occurred between communities and whether or not youth felt safe,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 914) = 11.23, p < .05$  (item 89). Table 42 shows that a larger percentage of North Island youth (43%) responded with Strongly Agree that they feel

safe than youth living on the North Coast (39%) yet more North Coast youth (43%) responded with Somewhat Agree compared to youth from the North Island (31%).

Encouraging their own children to grow up in their communities revealed variations in responses between communities,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 912) = 11.63, p < .05$  (item 91). Only 6% of North Island youth and 11% of North Coast youth Strongly Agreed they would encourage their children to grow up in these communities.

Cross-tabulations also revealed a significant relationship between pollution and communities on the North Island and North Coast,  $\chi^2 = (4, N = 911) = 18.77, p < .05$  (item 93). Table 42 indicates that more North Island youth (40%) Strongly Agreed that pollution is low compared to youth living on the North Coast (26%) yet more North Coast youth (43%) Somewhat Agreed than youth from the North Island (36%).

#### *Phase Two Analysis*

A second phase of analysis was completed in order to achieve a more comprehensive picture of the issues facing coastal youth living in coastal communities impacted by restructuring. Factors such as coping self-efficacy, quality of life, future outlook and substance use were created to complement results from Phase One of the ‘Life-Career Development and Planning for Adolescents’ research and to gain further insight. Specific questions throughout the survey were selected to represent these topics for data analysis and will be listed under each heading.

#### *Coping Self-Efficacy*

Coping Self-Efficacy is explained earlier in this document as “a person’s subjective appraisal of his/her ability to cope with the environmental demands of a stressful situation” (Benight, 1996). In this particular instance, the “stressful situation”

may be the effects of restructuring on coastal youth living in coastal communities. In order to analyze this topic, statements under the Behaviour and Activities category were selected. These include “I have a lot of control over the things that happen to me” (item 56), “there is usually a way I can solve the problems I have” (item 58), “I often feel confident in dealing with problems of life” (item 60) and “I can do just about anything I usually set my mind to” (item 64). The overall mean score of the Coping Self-Efficacy (items 56, 58, 60, and 64) was 2.5 ( $N = 911$ ,  $SD = .46$ ). This means that coastal youth responded exactly between Neither Agree or Disagree and Agree. A conclusion could be made from this mean score that coastal youth feel fairly confident with their ability to cope in stressful situations. Table 43 shows the results for Coping Self-Efficacy items for Aboriginal youth, Males and Females, older and younger youth and for the North Island and North Coast.

Table 43.

Coping Self-Efficacy Mean Scores by Sub-Scales

Sub-Scale (Total Sample $M = 2.5$ )	Mean Score	$N$	$SD$
Aboriginal	2.46	268	.48
Gender: Male	2.50	403	.46
Female	2.47	502	.45
Age: Older	2.53	411	.46
Younger	2.47	500	.46
Community: North Coast	2.51	696	.44
North Island	2.42	215	.51

Table 43 shows that overall mean scores for Coping Self-Efficacy items differed between males and females minimally. Males had a slightly higher mean score of 2.5

than females 2.47. The Aboriginal mean score for the items chosen to identify Coping Self-Efficacy factors was 2.46, a lower result from the total sample.

Variations occurred between mean scores of older and younger youth. As indicated in Table 43, older youth had a mean score of 2.53 for Coping Self-Efficacy and younger 2.47. Although omitted from the earlier results of the second set of Behaviour and Activities because they were not as significant as other items, it is beneficial to mention two findings between this section and age. These include “I have a lot of control over the things that happen to me” (item 56),  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 927) = 5.30, p < 0.5$ , and “there is usually a way I can solve the problems I have” (item 58).  $\chi^2 = (2, N = 919) = 6.29, p < 0.5$ . Item 56 found that more older youth (55%) “Agree” that they have control over the things that happen to them than younger youth (48%) while more younger youth (44%), Neither Agreed or Disagreed with this statement as compared to older youth (37%).

There were also differences between age and item 58. There was a larger percentage of older youth (71%) that Agreed that there is usually a way they can problems compared to younger youth (65%) while more younger youth (29%), Neither Agreed or Disagreed with this statement than older youth (22%).

Table 43 also illustrates contrasting results between mean scores and the two communities of North Island and North Coast. The Coping Self-Efficacy mean score for the North Island was lower at 2.42 than the North Coast ( $m = 2.51$ ).

### *Quality of Life*

Quality of life is defined as,

a construct that connotes an overall sense of well-being when applied to an individual and a supportive environment when applied to a community.

While some dimensions of quality of life can be quantified using indicators that research has shown to be related to determinants of health and community-well being, other valid dimensions include the perceptions of community residents about aspects of their neighborhoods and communities that either enhance or diminish their quality of life” (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships [n.d.], <http://dekalbhealth.net/mapp>).

To determine coastal youth’s perceptions of Quality of Life, statements were chosen in the Youth Issues and Neighbourhood and Community sections. In Youth Issues statements used for Quality of Life analysis are comprised of “my community makes its young people feel that their contributions to the community are valued” (item 78), “my community has good opportunities for youth to be involved in the life of the community” (item 79), and “my community has good options for youth to work part-time while they are in school” (item 80). Neighbourhood and Community statements include “I feel safe living in my community” (item 89), “the quality of life in this community is good” (item 92) and “people living in my community are willing to accept people from different ethnic groups” (item 86). The No Opinion responses were deleted during the analysis process. The overall mean score of Quality of Life factors was 2.79 ( $N = 594$ ,  $SD = .63$ ). This means the majority of coastal youth responded close to Somewhat Agree when thinking about the quality of life in their communities. With a mean score of 2.79, it could be determined that coastal youth have a fairly good sense of well-being, however, there is still room for improvement. Table 44 displays the mean score results by subscales.

Table 44.

## Quality of Life Mean Scores by Sub-Scales

Sub-Scale (Total Sample $M = 2.79$ )	Mean Score	$N$	$SD$
Aboriginal	2.76	162	.67
Gender: Male	2.84	263	.62
Female	2.76	327	.64
Age: Older	2.72	288	.65
Younger	2.85	304	.61
Community: North Coast	2.84	455	.61
North Island	2.63	137	.67

As shown in Table 44, the mean score for Aboriginal responses to quality of life items was similar to the total sample at 2.76. There was a difference, however, between gender mean scores. Males had a higher Quality of Life mean score of 2.84 than females ( $m = 2.76$ ). Participants from the North Coast had a much higher mean score for Quality of Life of 2.84 than youth from the North Island, ( $m = 2.63$ ). Older and younger youth also had variations between mean scores for Quality of Life items. Older youth had a lower mean score of 2.72 than younger, ( $m = 2.85$ ).

*Future Outlook*

Referring to “individuals’ attitudes and expectations about the construction of future events” (Honora, 2002), as defined in Chapter One, Future Outlook statements have been chosen from the Behaviour and Activities, Youth Issues and Neighbourhood and Community sections. In Behaviour and Activities, the phrases used for analysis include “I am looking forward to the years ahead” and “what happens to me in the future depends on me” (items 61 and 63). Within this category youth chose from Disagree,

Neither Agree or Disagree or Agree therefore are analyzed separately from the statements selected within Youth Issues and Neighbourhood and Community. The mean score of the combination of the two statements in Behaviour and Activities is 2.68 ( $N = 920$ ,  $SD = .47$ ). This indicates that the majority of coastal youth responded closer to the Agree choice than the other two alternatives in the Behaviour and Activities section. With a mean score of 2.68, the conclusion can be made that most youth have an optimistic attitude about their future.

As seen in Table 45, Aboriginal youth scored similarly to the total sample with a mean score of 2.66. Females had a higher mean score for the first set of Future Outlook items at 2.7 compared to males, ( $m = 2.65$ ). Youth from the North Island had a lower mean score for Future Outlook at 2.6 compared to North Coast youth, ( $m = 2.7$ ). In addition, older youth scored only slightly higher at 2.69 than younger youth, ( $m = 2.67$ ).

Table 45.

Future Outlook Mean Scores by Sub-Scales (Set One)

Sub-Scale (Total Sample $M = 2.68$ )	Mean Score	$N$	$SD$
Aboriginal	2.66	269	.45
Gender: Male	2.65	409	.48
Female	2.70	505	.46
Age: Older	2.69	416	.48
Younger	2.67	504	.46
Community: North Coast	2.70	699	.45
North Island	2.60	221	.52

In Youth Issues and Neighbourhood and Community youth chose from the options, “the economic outlook for my community appears bright”, “my community has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area”, “I am satisfied with

employment opportunities in my community” and “my community does a good job of planning for the future” (items 81, 83, 85, and 90). The overall mean score of questions pertaining to Future Outlook in Youth Issues and Neighbourhood and Community was 2.25 ( $N = 608$ ,  $SD = .71$ ). This indicates that most coastal youth chose slightly above Somewhat Disagree to illustrate their thoughts on their outlooks for the future. For example, only 28% of youth living in coastal communities either Somewhat Agree or Strongly Agree that there are “enough opportunities for youth to stay in the area” and 38% “satisfied with employment opportunities.” Tables 30 and 31 illustrate frequency responses to whether or not youth believe there are enough opportunities for them to stay in the area and whether or not they are satisfied with the employment opportunities in their community. With a mean score of 2.25 with items that are indicative of external factors affecting their futures, it could be stated that youth do not feel positive about opportunities for the future in their communities. Table 46 illustrates the mean scores for Future Outlook, set two by sub-scales.

Table 46.

Future Outlook Mean Scores by Sub-Scales (Set Two)

Sub-Scale (Total Sample $M = 2.25$ )	Mean Score	$N$	$SD$
Aboriginal	2.41	167	.72
Gender: Male	2.31	277	.71
Female	2.20	326	.71
Age: Older	2.12	288	.68
Younger	2.38	320	.71
Community: North Coast	2.30	459	.72
North Island	2.10	149	.66

Table 46 reveals that Aboriginal youth had a higher mean score than the total sample for the second set of Future Outlook items at 2.41. Females had a lower mean score for the same items at 2.20 compared to males, ( $m = 2.31$ ). Communities from the North Coast had a higher outlook for the future with a mean score of 2.3 than North Island communities, ( $m = 2.1$ ). Older youth had a much lower mean score for future outlook with 2.12 than younger youth, ( $m = 2.38$ ).

### *Substance Use*

Responses to items focusing on tobacco and drug use were combined to achieve a mean score for substance use. The overall mean score for substance use (items 66 and 67) was 3.39 ( $N = 823$ ,  $SD = .78$ ). This indicates that the majority of responses for the two items indicating substance use were between Somewhat Agree and Strongly Agree. From this outcome, the majority of coastal youth agree that there is a problem with substance use in their communities. Table 47 shows the mean scores for substance use by sub-scales.

Table 47.

Substance Use Mean Scores by Sub-Scales

Sub-Scale (Total Sample $M = 3.39$ )	Mean Score	$N$	$SD$
Aboriginal	3.26	236	.82
Gender: Male	3.34	361	.81
Female	3.44	458	.75
Age: Older	3.43	380	.75
Younger	3.37	443	.81
Community: North Coast	3.40	622	.78
North Island	3.35	201	.77

As shown in Table 47, Aboriginal youth scored lower to the total sample with a mean score of 3.26. Females had a higher mean score for Substance Use items at 3.44 compared to males, ( $m = 3.34$ ). Older youth scored higher at 3.43 than younger youth, ( $m = 3.37$ ). In addition, youth from the North Island had a lower mean score for Substance Use at 3.35 compared to North Coast youth, ( $m = 3.4$ ).

### *Summary*

This chapter revealed data from the “Life-Career Development and Planning Survey” which was completed by youth living in Alert Bay, Port McNeill, Port Hardy, Hartley Bay, Prince Rupert and surrounding areas in grades 8 through 12. Within the survey, specific items about family, school, work, behaviour and activities, youth issues, and neighbourhood and community were explored. A secondary analysis focused on coping self-efficacy, quality of life, future outlook, and substance use variables. Each of these topics and variables was broken down into sub-samples of gender, Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, age and community. The following chapter will discuss the results according to the research questions within this study.

*Job opportunities for students with no previous experience are poor, even for good, reliable students. How are we supposed to get a good job if no one will hire us without any experience? Also many jobs are based on connections with people which is quite unfair.*

Young woman, age 16

## Chapter Five: Discussion

*A lot of students who graduate find it difficult if they go on to college or university. I wish our school had honors classes or an enrichment program for the few students who are really trying hard.*

Young woman, age 14

This chapter examines the results of the survey according to the seven research questions introduced at the outset of this study. The findings are discussed in the context of relevant literature and other sources of data about the communities.

*Discussion of the Research Questions*

1. *What are the issues, challenges and supports facing youth and youths' families?*

The major issues and challenges identified by coastal youth include substance use<sup>6</sup>, lack of leisure activities, employment, teen pregnancy, family conflict, and lack of support services. One participant encapsulated their thoughts of several issues in one comment:

*Too much: underaged drinking, underaged smoking, drug use, crime, littering, violence, teen pregnancy, graffiti.*

Young man, age 17

Supports included family and community connections, community identity, resilient spirit and supportive adults. These will be discussed separately below. Overlap among some questions occurs because specific items can be discussed in each.

Barriers and supports affect the meaning and quality of life for young people. A counsellor working from a constructivist perspective, would see the issues and supports

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<sup>6</sup> The issue of substance use will be discussed later in a separate research question (#6).

as subjective to give meaning in their clients' lives. For example, a counsellor, working with youth living in coastal communities, could begin by having these young people describe their hopes and dreams before moving forward to goal-setting. This process may take time as adolescents may not yet be aware of their life themes because they have not had an opportunity to think them through (Savickas, 1995). The aim would be to have the young person tell their story. As youth living in coastal communities are facing uncertainty due to social and economic restructuring, focus would be on their stories that illustrate the life evolving. When issues are raised in their stories, the counselor would focus on their meaning and concentrate on their hopes to make plans for their futures. The narratives assist the client to clarify and make choices for their futures.

One of the major issues respondents identified in this survey was lack of youth-friendly activities. An overwhelming response of 80% indicated that youth believe there is a need for a wider variety of recreational activities. This is similar to the key findings of the B.C. Rural Youth Dialogue<sup>7</sup> Final Reports from the communities of Prince Rupert, Port Hardy and Port McNeill. One of the key priorities and recommendations that resulted in these discussions was the need for more recreational and social activities in their communities. Some of the actions recommended were for businesses to offer discounts for youth accessing facilities and the organization of family events (Jeffcoat, 2000). The fallout of youth not having enough activities can include lower quality of life, a lack of desire to work and remain in these communities, lack of positive mental health, and less social connectedness. Adolescent social relationships are believed to be

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<sup>7</sup> The objective of the B.C. Rural Youth Dialogue, hosted by the Community Futures Development Corporation of the Pacific North West, was to solicit, specific tangible input from rural youth on key issues and priorities and reasons they leave their communities.

important to their emotional health (Rutter, 1995). In their study on social relationships and health with rural adolescents in Scotland, Hendry and Reid (2000), found that close friendships had a positive impact on young people's sense of self, level of self-esteem, and acted as a safeguard against stress. The issue of availability was a key factor in the outcomes of this research. If youth living in coastal communities do not have access to youth-friendly activities, opportunities to establish social relationships will be more difficult. According to constructivist career development theory, lack of external supports through relationships with family and/or friends as well as community resources that would allow youth to socially engage with their peers could hamper their search for the preferred future (Peavy, 1995).

Lack of opportunities for part-time work was also a significant result in this study. Only one half of youth indicated that there are good options for working part-time while they are in school. These results are consistent with provincial and federal statistics. Unemployment rates for youth are much higher than the overall unemployment rates which indicates that it is more difficult for youth to gain employment than persons 24 years of age or older. The provincial youth unemployment rate, ages 15 – 24, is 14.6% (Ministry of Skills Development and Labour, 2004), much higher than the overall B.C. unemployment rate of 6.2% (Statistics Canada, 2005). A comparison could not be made to youth unemployment rates for the specific areas accessed in this survey as data is not available for these smaller communities. Many sentiments reflecting lack of opportunities for work were written by youth. One youth stated:

*They need more work for students and higher paid jobs for both.*

Young woman, age 16

Another youth had a different experience however:

*Although Prince Rupert is a small city, if you just look closer at all the small things it has to offer it's a great place to live and grow up. When I was applying for jobs in this town, I got interviews and got a job at Smiles which offers great hours.*

Young man, age 16

Thus, it is important to note that some youth are positive and optimistic about employment opportunities in their communities.

The repercussions of youth unemployment can be detrimental to young people. In the Worklife Report (2000), work opportunities encourage youth to stay in school and acquire more education, which has the potential of higher incomes in the future. This report also indicates that the longer a young person cannot find work, the more difficult it is to find a job because of loss of skills and morale, which may lead to psychological damage. Youth depression was found to be a significant concern in this study. If youth are experiencing depression, they may be less likely to acquire the self-efficacy that would benefit them in applying for work. Within Social Cognitive Career Theory, the concept of self-efficacy indicates that an individual learns what they are capable of doing successfully and, as a result, be more apt to carry out a particular behaviour successfully (Feldman, 1995). Depression could prevent some youth to gain employment, therefore, they would not have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and understanding of what they can accomplish.

There can also be obstacles when it comes to working for coastal youth. One young man from Sointula states:

*It is hard to work here because I go to school in a different community and don't get home til 4:30 (if the ferry is not late) and most stores are closed by 5:30. So not a lot of youth have after school jobs. They get jobs for the summer or they stay late and get a job in Port McNeill (which I did). But living in Sointula is good because it is peaceful and safe and you know everyone's name.*

Young woman, age 17

Another barrier was shared by a coastal youth:

*It is hard to get a job here because it is not what you know but who you know so for those students like me who get high grades don't get good jobs because we don't know the right people.*

Young man, age 15

The lack of jobs was also connected to substance use. One youth said:

*The amount of available jobs for youth is extremely low and this is one of the causes and reasons why many youth are involved in drugs and alcohol. I strongly feel that more jobs for youth equals an overall more happiness.*

Young man, age 15

Thus, lack of employment opportunities for youth can lead to at-risk behaviours. The Worklife Report (2000) indicated that the consequences of lack of job options can be long-term and lead to negative trends such as drug use, juvenile crime, and increased

suicide. If work opportunities are not available for youth, the likelihood of youth engaging in unhealthy behaviours would be greater.

Over half of the respondents in this research believed that teen pregnancy is a problem in their communities which is compatible to statistical results from the Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District and Mt. Waddington Regional District. The Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District results show the teen pregnancy rate at 55.9 (per 1,000 females aged 15-17) much higher than the provincial average of 22.3. In the Mt. Waddington Regional District the teen pregnancy rate was very high at 61.5. Females are more likely to become pregnant in the adolescent years if they do not have a positive outlook on education and do not believe they will likely graduate from high school (Coles, 2005). These attitudes and beliefs may affect the effort young woman place on their education and future outlook. In other words, if young women who live in coastal communities impacted by restructuring do not believe there are opportunities for education and employment in the future, they may be more apt to become pregnant. A University of Arkansas study found that teenage girls who become pregnant reported feeling that their future job choices were limited ([www.pregnancy-info.net/in\\_the\\_news20.html](http://www.pregnancy-info.net/in_the_news20.html)). One youth from the North Coast stated:

*The school I go to has good sports teams and as a participant of these sports teams, I feel that this is important. However, there are some negative things about this town I have noticed, one of them being that this town has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in Canada. I find this to be really sad.*

Young woman, age 16

Three-quarters of youth indicated that they experience family conflict. De Goede, Spruijt, Maas and Duindam (2000) conducted a study to understand the extent to which family characteristics correspond with the employment situation of adolescents. Parental unemployment and low parental affective involvement were specific factors used in this research. The authors in this study found that difficulties in the family of origin increase the risk of unemployment but the majority of adult children of unemployed and affectively remote parents do get and continue to hold jobs. They discovered that parental troubles affect, but certainly do not wholly determine their children's employment situation. Since many of the families living in coastal communities could be experiencing family stress and economic hardship due to the impacts of restructuring, this study gives us some hope that youth with family difficulties such as conflicts can be still be successful in finding and maintaining employment.

Lack of support services for rural communities was an area identified by Looker (2001), however, there were few items within this survey that would indicate the amount of support services available to coastal youth. One youth participant wanted to tell us about supports that they believed were working in Prince Rupert.

*They have very good help programs for youth, teen pregnancies and employment. Planet Youth, the Friendship House, the Edge, and career resource centers are AWESOME. Sometimes its just motivating people to go to these resources.*

Young woman, age 16

On the other hand,

*Living in this community is ok but there are so many things going on here. But they/we need a hangout for youths besides Planet Youth because some people don't like it there and a bigger building to have a little arcade and pool tables and computers for the youth and people to help out with homework.*

Young woman, age 17

Life-career decisions may become difficult for youth and families who do not have access to a full range of support services. According to SCCT, choice is an important aspect of life-career decision-making (Lent et al., 1996). The socio-economic factors that impact communities affected by restructuring may mean that the variety of community resources to assist youth and their families will not be available. This, in turn, impacts the cognitions youth have about their futures and, consequently, their life-career decisions will be affected.

Although the picture painted seems rather bleak in some respects, there were clear statements relating to supports. Supports or assets identified in this survey consist of family and community connections, community identity, resilient spirit and supportive adults e.g. teachers. Almost two thirds of youth feel that there is good parental connection with youth, agree that teachers care about how they are doing and feel that their contributions to the community are valued. The Search Institute (2005) have identified developmental assets for young people that they believe are essential to raising successful young people. They consider external assets to be the positive experiences young people acquire through support and empowerment, and include setting boundaries and expectations, and making positive and constructive use of young people's time. The

Search Institute acknowledges the same external assets that participants in this study revealed. These include the important roles that families, schools, and neighbourhoods play in promoting healthy development. These findings are also consistent with the views of coastal youth from the interview phase of the study which showed that young people have well developed social networks that are major sources of acceptance and support (Marshall et al., under review). Youth also spoke in terms of their attachment to their home community and the beauty of its setting. Some examples representing supports or assets include:

*I really like this community because I like the fact of how friendly and close we are*

Young woman, age 17

*It is nice and small and everybody knows everybody.*

Young man, age 14

*People in town are really generous when others really need help. Like the Elizabeth fire, there was an overflow of donations.*

Young woman, age 15

*I like living here because most of the people here. It's small so I can walk through town and talk to a lot of people.*

Young woman, age 15

The majority of youth respondents did not report family difficulties with finances, employment, transportation, or housing. One half of the youth said they never experienced financial difficulties and one third stated that problems existed Less than Monthly. This perception was somewhat surprising and seems to be inconsistent with income data for the Skeena-Queen Charlotte regional profile (North Coast). This regional district had more households with less than the median provincial average income in 2000. The Mt. Waddington Regional District or northern Vancouver Island had household incomes higher than the provincial median income (B.C. Statistics, 2003). This raises the question of what young people consider to be “financial difficulties”. There are some possible explanations for this apparent discrepancy. Several youth mentioned the recent mill closure, thus, economic fallout might not yet have been experienced for some families. Also, some youth may not be fully aware of family finances or financial difficulties. Parents may not want their children to worry, or indeed they may have been able to locate additional income. Family communication preferences might also reflect the incongruence of outcomes for family difficulties. The reluctance of many parents to address difficult topics with adolescents can contribute to unmet needs of information and dialogue for the youth which, in turn, affects an adolescent’s feeling of “connectedness” within the family (Pistella & Bonati, 1999). Family connectedness is defined as the extent to which the adolescent experiences closeness, caring and satisfaction with the parental relationship and feels understood, wanted and paid attention to by family members (Resnick, Bearman, Blum, Bauman, Harris & Jones, 1997). Without the feeling of family connectedness, youth may be more apt to engage in unhealthy behaviours. The idea of family connectedness corresponds with the

“belonging” construct of the three “B’s” model – belonging, being and becoming related to adolescent health (Raphael, 1996) and the “social connection” behaviour of the “five C’s” – competence, confidence, character, social connection and caring of positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2002). In these approaches, families are encouraged to discuss the difficulties the family was experiencing. Positive communication may avoid risky behaviours. In fact, a family may become more cohesive when working together to overcome family challenges.

Although three quarters of youth reported never having employment difficulties within their families, employment insurance (EI) beneficiary rates for individuals 19 – 64 years for both regions was much higher than the provincial average (B.C. Statistics, 2003). The EI beneficiary rate – 4<sup>th</sup> quarter average to September 2003, for Skeena-Queen Charlotte was 9.3 and for Mt. Waddington, 7.4. The B.C. rate was 3.6. This discrepancy again may indicate that young people are not aware of the extent of the employment difficulties within their families or that parents have not discussed the problem with them. Families can experience stress due to unemployment and lack of resources, which may be manifested as dysfunctional behaviours, cognitions, or emotions for family members and in dysfunctional family organization and communication patterns (Vosler, 1990). It is important then for service providers, employers, educators, government, and community partners to understand the sources of family stress created by restructuring in order to support these families. This is consistent with the concepts of constructivist career development theory (Campbell & Ungar, 2002). The implementation of external resources could assist individuals to search for the jobs or careers they wish to pursue. Effective programs or resources may also encourage and

support youth and their families to overcome any challenges they face. As a result, they could be more optimistic about their futures and possibly develop the self-esteem needed to make positive changes in their lives.

Almost the entire sample indicated that they never experienced housing problems in their family which is similar to housing cost indicators prepared by B.C. Statistics. Both communities accessed in this survey are lower than the provincial average for households paying 30% or more on housing costs 28.6%; B.C., 2001. According to B.C. Statistics (2003), only 16.7 percent of households in the Mt. Waddington regional district (north Vancouver Island) are paying 30% or more on housing costs and 25.5 for Skeena-Queen Charlotte (North Coast). This finding is encouraging as housing affordability problems can create an array of concerns. Stone (1993) explains it this way:

Thus, while affordability is, on its face, simply a way of measuring in monetary terms the relationship between people and housing, at a deeper level affordability expresses a link between the social and economic system and the quest for the satisfaction of basic human needs that is not merely monetary. It is both the outcome and the source of tensions, conflicts and contradictions (p. 6).

Skaburskis (2004) found, in his study, that the number of weeks worked was a large factor in the increase in severe housing affordability problems. Because unemployment is a factor in communities impacted by restructuring, housing affordability may eventually become an issue in the communities accessed in this study.

2. *How do youth view their school experience and school connections?* One third of youth don't have strong opinions about their experiences in school. This was

indicated by the same number of respondents who chose Neither Agree or Disagree to whether or not they believed teachers cared about them, cared what teachers thought of them, thought teachers liked them, and school satisfaction. The present results indicate that only one half of youth were satisfied with school and slightly more believed teachers cared about them. These findings are consistent with a "Satisfaction Survey" completed by the B.C. Ministry of Education on the North Coast but not for the North Island (2004). Within the survey of the present study, 55% of North Coast youth are satisfied with what they are learning at school and 62% believe that teachers care about them. Percentages on the North Island revealed that 29% are satisfied with school and 26% believe that teachers care about them. The discrepancy between the North Island and North Coast will be explained in further detail in research question seven on page 133.

Only a small percentage of youth rated themselves below average in reading (9%). This figure is not consistent with regional district statistics for reading standards. Over one third of students in grades 4, 7 and 10 in both the Mt. Waddington and Skeena-Queen Charlotte regional districts are considered to be below standard in reading (avg. 2001-2003). When respondents were asked to assess their grade levels, a very small number of participants chose Mostly D's or F's (4%). This percentage also does not correspond with regional district statistics since about one quarter of grades 4, 7 and 10 students are considered below standard in writing and almost one-third in both regional districts. One explanation for this discrepancy could be that some youth are overly optimistic about their achievement level. A related point could be whether youth see the relevance of the curriculum to their future goals or the teacher/student relationship. An action research project conducted by Komarchuk, Swenson, & Warkocki (2000) found

that curriculum relevance and choice, family issues, teacher expectations, teacher-student relationships, and risk taking are some of the reasons for lack of student academic success. They suggested the importance of providing students academic choices and communicating with students about the importance of what they are doing. Unfortunately, many of the schools in coastal communities, due to lower enrollments, cannot offer the range and choices of academic courses that students living in urban centres have.

Slightly more than half of students in the present sample believed that teachers cared about them. As found in the study by Komarchuk et al. (2000), the teacher-student relationship was an important factor to academic success. Building and maintaining strong relationships with students can be paramount in their academic success. These relationships can also be one of the supports or “connections” that coastal youth need for their healthy development, as described by Raphael’s (1996) concept of “belonging” in his theoretical framework of the three “B’s” and Lerner et al’s (2000) identification of “social connection”, one of five behaviours that promote positive functioning within young people.

Some of the responses pertaining to school include:

*We need shorter days in school and better teachers because some are better than others and it's not fair if we are not learning anything from them but some are good but not many.*

Young woman, age 15

*I just think that if a teacher's good they should have a guaranteed job. Two of our best teachers lost their jobs because of budget cuts. That's insanely dumb. Education is more important than any union.*

Young woman, age 15

3. *How and to what extent are youth involved in the work force?* Two thirds of youth have worked in the past year and one quarter of them have worked 6 months or more. One quarter of youth work ten or more hours per week while 13% work more than twenty hours per week. Typical work included service, sales, babysitting, and paper routes. This outcome corresponds with the high unemployment rates for these specific areas of the province. According to recent Government of Canada statistics, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, 2004, the unemployment rate for the Greater Vancouver Island region (encompassing Vancouver Island, Duncan and above) was 7.6% (HRCC, Labour Market Bulletin, 2004). This was, however, a significant improvement for the same time a year earlier. The unemployment rate for Greater Vancouver Island in December, 2003, was 12.5%. The unemployment rate for the Northwest Region of the province, which includes Prince Rupert and Hartley Bay, in December, 2004, was 8.6%. This was the first time in many years that the unemployment rate for this region has been below double digits. Both regions are higher than the provincial unemployment rate of 6.1%. Because of high unemployment rates in these communities there are a lack of adequate and rewarding job opportunities for coastal youth. Young people living in coastal communities may believe their only option to attain employment is to leave their community. Youth who leave rural communities are often leaving to pursue job options (Crockett et al., 2000; Huillet,

1997; Johnson & Fuguitt, 2000; Jones, 1999). House, White, & Ripley (1989) found that it is those youth who have low levels of education that are most likely to leave with males to find employment and females to follow a mate.

One-third of the respondents indicated they do not work. It is difficult to know whether those youth who don't work are looking for a job and whether part-time work is difficult to attain. There were no specific items relating to these questions. Because a significant percentage of youth are 16 and under (59%), I believe that many of them are satisfied with not working and prefer to concentrate on school, family and friends. There were differences in responses regarding work from youth. For example, one youth from the North Coast said:

*They need more work for students and higher paid jobs<sup>8</sup>.*

Young woman, age 16

while another youth from the same area stated:

*Youths can find part time jobs that pay minimum wage but getting a good job in this community after college or university would be tough.*

Young woman, age 17

Lack of employment opportunities for youth can have significant implications for youth and coastal communities in the future. For example, if the jobs are not available, youth will move out of these communities to pursue work elsewhere. Felligi (1996), states that "rural youth out-migration is a continuing problem for rural development initiatives. Moving in search of a job has traditionally depleted the human capital

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<sup>8</sup> Please note that all youth comments within this chapter have been inputted exactly as was written on the actual surveys. Therefore spelling and grammatical errors have not been corrected.

complement in rural areas” (p. 6). If the majority of the young people living in coastal communities leave to pursue employment or higher educational opportunities, the survival rate for these communities may be slim. Greater employment and educational opportunities for young people in coastal communities could encourage more youth to stay in these communities.

Employment opportunities are also beneficial to the mental health of young people. Shore (1984) believes that success on the job can build self-esteem, promote independence, and expose youth to different types of work therefore assisting in a choice for a future vocation. Work can also expose youth to adults who act as positive role models. These opportunities will promote personal self-efficacy, thereby, fostering healthy youth development.

According to SCCT, there is a link between what youth think about themselves and their futures and the environmental and behaviour factors affecting them (Lent et al., 1996). Because the majority of youth in the present study believe there are not enough employment opportunities, this has serious implications for healthy youth development in coastal communities.

In addition, Erikson’s theory (1950) of adolescent development describes the task of adolescence as creating a sense of identity. During adolescence, young people need to explore different roles and relationships through a number of experiences without the social, economic and personal pressures or urgency of having to make irreversible decisions. From an employment perspective, this means having an opportunity to experience a number of different jobs in different settings in which there are opportunities to interact in various ways with adults. From these experiences, identity

formation will occur in late adolescence. Because many of the participants said there were not enough jobs for youth, young people may not have the opportunity to try out different types of work in a variety of settings and hence, may have a more difficult time achieving this aspect of identity formation.

4. *How do youth living in coastal communities appraise their coping self-efficacy in their current life situation and in thinking about their future?* Most respondents have a high level of personal self-efficacy although they are not optimistic about future opportunities in their communities. According to Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al., 2000), a youth's level of self-esteem may be a determinant of how much they are likely to exert effort when they find a task or area interesting. It is encouraging that this study found a positive outcome for personal self-efficacy, which can be associated with high self-esteem. Because the confidence levels of youth in these communities appears to be strong, these young people may be motivated to take part in career decision-making programs supported by a positive interpersonal climate in which parents and peers provide choices, feedback, and involvement (Guay, Senecal, Gauthier & Fernet, 2003). They may realize, though, that more opportunities will exist outside their communities. Thus, skill and knowledge transferability becomes an important consideration.

The strong self-efficacy result means that a large percentage of coastal youth believe they are "capable of carrying out or producing a desired outcome in a particular situation" (Feldman, 1995, p. 123). Since the majority of youth believe they have the ability to carry out certain behaviours, programs that encourage further development of skills will benefit youth in life-career planning and decision-making.

Youth feel good about their individual futures. Three quarters of respondents are looking forward to the years ahead and believe that what happens in the future depends on them. They are not, however, confident about future opportunities in their communities. Less than half of youth believe the economic outlook for their community appears bright.

Several responses that represent this item include:

*The economy is obviously going downhill and there isn't much that is being done about it.*

Young woman, age 17

*I think that this community is dwindling in jobs and people are moving away. Those who don't move away, want to. Also, I often hear student's say: "I can't wait to graduate so I can get out of here."*

Young woman, age 19

*The economy in Rupert is getting low, the lack of jobs and lack of money is making everyone miserable.*

Young woman, age 15

An extremely low percentage of youth believe there are enough opportunities for young people to stay in their communities. This was repeatedly conveyed in the survey comments. One youth from the North Island said:

*My community is an excellent place to grow up but staying here after high school is a joke! There are no good opportunities for young adults here and everyone leaves after high school.*

Young woman, age 17

Although many coastal youth believe there are not enough opportunities for them to stay in their communities, it may be difficult for them to leave. As Looker (1993) documents, rural youth, including those who believe they have to leave to get anywhere in their life, have strong ties to their communities. Although many of the youth who leave these communities believe they will return, a small minority do so. For those individuals who do stay, Broomhill and Johnson (1994), say these people pay a price, although a price they are willing to pay.

Those who have strong preferences for remaining in the community face a discouraging opportunity set. This opportunity set is likely to include substandard housing, lower lifetime earnings, lower quality health care, and less certainty with regard to employment. Those who choose to remain in the community are not necessarily disadvantaged because they lack values or attitudes similar to those elsewhere, but because they have stronger locational preferences which discourage relocation to more prosperous communities (p. 566).

Related to youth not believing there are not enough opportunities to stay in the area, less than one half of youth would encourage their children to live in their community. A comment pertaining to this was:

*This community is reasonable. Although I would not continue to live here or raise my children here after school.*

Young female, age 16

5. *How do youth view the quality of life in their neighbourhood and community?*

Overall, youth are feeling positive about the quality of life in their communities but many indicated that there is a lack of activities and youth-friendly spaces. Many of the youth described quality of life in terms of safety, the beauty, and serenity. For example:

*I enjoy living in Prince Rupert because it is somewhat peaceful.*

Young woman, age 16

*Living in Prince Rupert is usually very safe and calm.*

Young man, age 15

*It's my only place where I feel at home. The nature is beautiful, and life is satisfactory here.*

Young woman, age 13

Felligi (1996) reports many “quality of life” issues that are important to rural youth in their decisions to stay or leave their communities including personal safety and lower crime rates. Felligi found that “rural residents are half as likely to feel unsafe when walking alone in their neighbourhoods after dark” (p. 18).

Wilson and Peterson (1988) consider the subjective predictors of life satisfaction. They report that self-esteem has important implications for individuals of their overall sense of well-being as well as “specific discrepancies between goals that individuals aspire to attain, and more pragmatic expectations rooted in the realistic circumstances of everyday life” (p. 85). Although coastal youth may have aspirations and goals, their quality of life might decline because they know that the opportunities in their communities are not available to them.

Three quarters of the present respondents believe there is acceptance of other cultures. These results are generally consistent with outcomes from the B.C. School Satisfaction Survey (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2004). One item on that survey asked students whether they respected people who were different from them. Findings from the four secondary schools who participated in the present study ranged from 61% to 89%. Overall percentages were higher for the North Coast than the North Island. It should be noted that there may be limitations within the B.C. Satisfaction Survey. The participation rates ranged from 35 – 45%. Participation of at least 50% is recommended for a reasonably representative sample.

However, several comments from Aboriginal youth on the present survey described concerns with racism. For example,

*I like living in this community. It's just that there is so much racism here between Aboriginal people and other races.*

Young woman, age 15

*Too many teens and older people are closed minded and racist.*

Young woman, age 16

*The biggest thing killing Prince Rupert is no tolerance of ethnic races between Aboriginals and white but all other minorities are fine.*

Young man, age 17

*Well for one there is a lot of racism going on. Many White do not like the First Nations people and many of the First Nations people do not like the White. Not every person is like this but many are.*

Young woman, age 18

That the majority of youth on this survey indicated that acceptance of people from different ethnic groups may be due to the fact that the majority of respondents were non-Aboriginal.

Lack of things for youth to do was a significant result in this study as outlined in research question one. Only 17% of youth strongly agreed that their community had a good variety of activities while 86% indicated there is a need for a wider variety of recreational activities. According to Lerner et al.'s. (2002), identification of five key behaviours or the "five C's" (competence, confidence, character, social connection, and caring) of positive youth development, a shortage of recreational activities, community support agencies, and employment opportunities for youth would prevent youth from

contributing to their communities. The shortage of activities for youth were described in the following ways:

*It's too small and needs better places to hang out with friends.*

*It's a good place to live but when you're a teenage girl we want malls and dances, just funner things to do.*

Young woman, age 14

Another youth stated:

*If you lived here as long as I have, you always run out of things to do and it gets very boring so I think I would like to live somewhere else for awhile and then move back.*

Young woman, age 14

In addition, many youth told us that the lack of youth activities resulted in alcohol and drug use. For example:

*It would be nice to be accepted more in the community and have somewhere to go and talk about difficulties and problems. And have a classy hang-out so we aren't forced to meet our needs for excitement through racing, drugs, sex, alcohol, or a mixture of all 4.*

Young man, age 17

While another youth stated:

*I don't really like it here because it is too boring. A lot of youth drink, have drugs and party all the time and they talk about it. I think it's because they have nothing better to do and*

*their home life isn't great. Many people's parents seem to be either divorced or separated or single parents and I think it's really sad.*

Young woman, age 17

Over half of youth respondents indicated there is a problem with juvenile crime. This is consistent with findings in the Mt. Waddington and Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District statistical profile (B.C. Statistics, 2003). Charges per 1,000 population of youth aged, 12 – 17 years, for juvenile serious violent crime show that the Mt. Waddington Regional District has a higher rate (4.1) than the provincial average of 3.0 and the Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District, 4.1.

Although adolescence is a time when many youth experiment with healthy and unhealthy behaviours, it is hoped that the negative ones will be discarded and not retained as life long habits (Puskar, Mumford, Sereika, & Lamb, 1999). Youth in this study have indicated that there is a lack of things to do, and, as a result, many youth engage in risky behaviours such as substance use and juvenile crime. It is important then that these communities provide a variety of recreational and youth-friendly activities to promote healthy choices for youth living in coastal communities.

6. *How do youth regard substance use in their communities?* Eighty-eight percent of youth in the present study believe there is a problem with youth using drugs in their community. Many respondents commented on how youth are beginning consumption at younger ages. For example,

*Prince Rupert is not a good community to work or live in.*

*Teens don't have things to do so they resort to drugs and*

*alcohol. The ages of teens starting drugs and drinking is getting younger each year.*

Young man, age 17

And:

*Drugs are running free and kids as young as ten are drinking beer.  
I really have no respect for the community I live in.*

Young man, age 17

The significant outcome that identifies a problem with youth using tobacco and drugs is comparable to what youth told interviewers in Phase One of this research. Interview participants identified that the use of alcohol and drugs by young people in coastal communities was a concern and has increased.

There is a contrast in findings specific to tobacco use between the present study and the McCreary Adolescent Health Survey III (2004). The present study indicates that 87% of youth believe there is too much tobacco use among its youth. The results from the McCreary Adolescent Health Survey show a decline in tobacco smoking. In the northwest region only 7% of students and 9% in the north Vancouver Island region say they are current smokers. The McCreary Adolescent Health Survey, north Vancouver Island region results indicate that 61% of youth have ever used illegal drugs and 56% in the northwest region while 88% of youth in the present study believe there is a problem with youth using drugs. This discrepancy might be a result of perception. The item in the present study asked participants whether or not they believed there is a problem with tobacco use and the McCreary Adolescent Health Survey queried youth on whether or not they were current smokers. As the responses to the present study are subjective to the

community as a whole, young people might have an opinion that tobacco use is greater than it actually is. On the other hand, young people responding to the McCreary survey might not consider themselves “current smokers” as they believe their smoking habits are social in nature. They don’t consider themselves smokers as their smoking is limited to when they are among their peers. Again, the outcomes are subjective.

One youth shared her frustration that there is an assumption that many youth use illegal substances. For example:

*Youth are often stereo typed as being reckless and into drugs,  
alcohol and crime. In many cases this is not true.*

Young woman, age 15

The high level of substance use found in this study is consistent with studies done throughout North America. Youth more than ever are involved in tobacco, alcohol and drug use at alarming rates. In the United States, youths (aged 12 to 18) rank as one of the highest groups in morbidity and mortality rates among an average 500,000 individuals affected annually by substance use (Skiba, Monroe, & Wodarski, 2004). There can be high personal costs as a result of substance use, especially in youth. Many of the intervention strategies in past years have focused on educating young people on the effects of using drugs, however, there has not been a decline in the number of youth who use. Newer approaches appear to be shifting towards building developmental assets in youth rather than education. The Search Institute, founder of the framework for developmental assets, focus on “healthy human development as the cornerstone of well-being, and its emphasis on community-building strategies that unleash public

commitment, passion, and capacity, create opportunities for communities to make progress in implementing supports for social and emotional well-being and increasing the likelihood that children and youth will prosper” (Mannes, Roehlkepartain & Benson, 2005, p. 234).

Although it is encouraging that this study found a positive outcome for personal self-efficacy, will this result stay the same if the youth living in these communities continue to use illegal substances at the high rates they are telling us? Substance use continues to be a health concern in our communities (Biederman, Faraone, Monuteaux, & Feighner, 2000). Since many of the youth in the present survey indicated that there isn’t enough to do in their communities, individual youth may use drugs for recreational purposes and find they cannot easily stop taking drugs. Drug use can also affect many aspects of a young person’s life. A young person’s academic success, job performance, and their relationships may suffer. Each of these factors can play a role in developing self-efficacy. If a young person is not performing well due to the influence of drugs, they will not acquire the understanding that they are capable of being successful. Teen pregnancy was also a significant problem identified by coastal youth. Pregnant women using drugs are at risk for harming their unborn child.

7. *What are the response differences with respect to gender, Aboriginal status, age and community?* Over two thirds of females believed there was a problem with youth depression in their communities compared to one half of males. This is consistent with the majority of studies that determined there are clear gender differences to depression. Females are much more likely to experience depression than males. For example, Kessler, McGonagle & Zhao (1994) reported that females in the United States

are about two-thirds more likely than males to be depressed. Depression when linked with self-efficacy may have implications to the amount of effort a young person will place on looking for work or life-career planning. A coastal youth who has difficulty coping with stressful situations due to loss of family income for example, may be less likely to engage in positive behaviours that would assist them in future decision-making.

Forty percent of females experience weekly or monthly family conflict compared to 24% of males. This outcome could be representative of Gilligan, Ward, Taylor & Bardige's work (1988) on how female's values differ from male's. Females tend to be more concerned with developing personal relationships and helping others while males tend to have a separate, objective self-characterization. Females put more emphasis on relationships within the family and are therefore more apt to enter into conflict. Males, who tend to be more independent, put less energy into connecting with family members and hence are not as likely to engage in controversies.

A larger percentage of Aboriginal youth (68%) felt their contributions to the community were valued compared to non-Aboriginal youth (57%). This could possibly be explained on the manner in which Aboriginal peoples put community first and foremost. Aboriginal people strongly believe in the importance of the inclusion of their young people. The Aboriginal worldview is one in which the individual is part of all creation, living life as one system and not in separate units that are objectively relating with each other (Duran & Duran, 1995). Because the Aboriginal approach believes in the importance of living as one unit, Aboriginal youth may feel their contributions are more valued within their own communities than non-Aboriginal youth. According to

Lerner et al. (2002), young people whose contributions to their communities are valued will thrive and become healthy and productive adults. One Aboriginal youth stated,

*The children in this community are able to interact with their elders, and respect them because they were taught to respect. Overall everyone in this community are able to express feelings, love and not be shy. This reserve is one of the greatest reserves I've lived on!! I'm glad that I live here.*

Young woman, age 15

Fewer Aboriginal youth rated themselves above average in reading skills compared to non-Aboriginal youth. It is difficult, however, to fully understand whether this result is consistent with performance findings for both school districts because reading comprehension is not assessed at the secondary school level, only at the grade 4 and 7 level. An additional factor is that many Aboriginal students drop out in secondary school, therefore, lower percentages would be evaluated. I would conclude, however, that Aboriginal youth are reading at lower levels than non-Aboriginal youth. According to the District Performance Reports for both school districts from 1999 to 2004 (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2005), at the grade 7 level, Aboriginal students in the Prince Rupert School District are reading at the 52 percentile (performance in reading comprehension, 2004) and at the 48 percentile in the Vancouver Island North School District.

This present study indicated a much larger percentage of younger youth (65%) indicating they were more satisfied with school than older youth (35%). This is in

contrast to the Satisfaction Survey completed by the Ministry of Education (2004)<sup>9</sup>. Outcomes for items in the School Environment section of this survey, in which school satisfaction was a part, showed that results were similar between younger and older grades. In fact in some instances, the older students had slightly higher percentages than younger students.

There were some differences between youth living on the North Island and the North Coast. Youth living on the North Coast scored higher in “coping self-efficacy” than North Island youth and fewer North Island youth believe there are enough opportunities for young people to stay in the area compared to youth from the North Coast. This could be a result of community size. Prince Rupert (15,000), the largest community on the North Coast and Port Hardy (5,300) the largest community on the north Island, have different tax bases to draw on. Prince Rupert likely generates more tax dollars which may translate into more municipal, provincial and federal tax dollars are generated into Prince Rupert, therefore, youth may be seeing more changes in growth to the North Coast communities than on the North Island. There also may be more optimism in the Prince Rupert area as this community has recently received a large contract to have cruise ships stop in their community. One youth from Prince Rupert stated it this way:

*Since the mill shut down the ‘economic’ money went low.*

*Many moved to the South or Alberta. There aren’t many*

*jobs offered any more, now that the cruise ship comes its*

*getting are town up there somewhat. Young woman, age 17*

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<sup>9</sup> There are limitations to the Satisfaction Survey results. Participation rates for all schools in both regions used in this survey was approximately 40%. Participation of at least 50% is recommended for a reasonably representative sample.

In addition, because Prince Rupert possibly has more money generated into their community than communities on the North Island due to its larger size, there may be more of a variety of recreational activities and job opportunities for young people living on the North Coast hence the higher outcome of coping self-efficacy. Nevertheless, what has become evident within this study is the importance of a wide range of activities and support services for young people and their families in order for youth in coastal communities to thrive.

### *Summary*

In Chapter Five the research questions for this study were discussed. Major issues identified by coastal youth include substance use, lack of leisure activities, employment, teen pregnancy, family conflict, and lack of support services. Supports consist of family and community connections, community identity, resilient spirit, and supportive adults. The majority of youth do not report family difficulties with finances and employment. Most youth have a high level of self-efficacy but are not optimistic about future opportunities in their communities. Overall, they have a positive feeling about the quality of life in their communities but are very concerned about substance use which is consistent with the findings of Phase One. Chapter Six will provide an overall summary, limitations and implications for practice.

## Chapter Six: Conclusion and Implications

*I feel that the economy is not well enough to support my needs to live and work here after I graduate.*

Young woman, age 17

This study sought to gain insights into youth perceptions of the impact of social and economic restructuring on youth and families living on the west coast of British Columbia. This chapter will present an overall summary, limitations of the study, and implications including recommendations for future research and suggestions for practice and decision-making.

### *Overall Summary*

This quantitative inquiry expanded and supported the findings from Phase One of the “Life-Career Development and Planning for Adolescents” study (Marshall). This survey is significant because it revealed many of the issues facing youth living in coastal communities impacted by restructuring. The findings indicate that interventions are needed in order to support youth while they make life-career decisions. Declining enrollments in schools, out-migration, and fewer support services for youth, direct results of economic restructuring, has impacted our young people, their quality of life and their future prospects.

This inquiry provided specific data relating to family, school, work, behaviour and activities, youth issues, and neighbourhood and community. Additional item cluster analyses were conducted to better understand youth coping self-efficacy, quality of life, future outlook and substance use. Sub-samples of gender, Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, age, and the North Island and North Coast were compared. It was clearly evident to

youth that there are not enough extra-curricular activities for them. Several respondents connected this lack of youth-friendly activities to high rates of substance use, teen pregnancies, juvenile crime, and youth depression.

Findings from this study revealed a sense of personal self-efficacy in youth but low optimism for the future. The majority of coastal youth believe there is usually a way they can solve the problems they have, can do anything they set their mind to, and are looking forward to the years ahead. It is unfortunate, however, that most of these young people do not believe that the economic outlook for their communities is bright and they are not satisfied with employment opportunities. Therefore, the majority of the youth do not feel they can stay in the place they grew up and would not encourage their children to live in these communities.

The outcomes of this research provide insights into the issues facing youth and families living in coastal communities impacted by restructuring on the west coast of British Columbia. No other study of coastal youth's perceptions about these specific factors with the large sample has occurred before. Findings from this study also contribute to the larger Coasts Under Stress project by including a youth focus

With respect to theory, the present findings are consistent with constructivist approaches to life and career development. The communities in this research have been impacted by social and economic restructuring and, as a result, are experiencing social transformations. Counsellors must appreciate how these transformations affect each client they work with. Peavy (1995), would focus on the importance of "self-construction", "self-as-narrative", and "life-planning" in this process. The stories or narratives can be used to make meaning in the lives of coastal youth in order to construct

their lives. It was evident in this research that youth are aware of the significant changes occurring in their communities. Although they were optimistic about their own futures, they did not believe that staying in their own communities would benefit them. In understanding and making meaning of the contexts in which they live, these young people can become agents in determining their futures.

SCCT relies heavily on the premise of personal self-efficacy (Lent et al., 2000). In relation to the difficulties that communities impacted by restructuring are facing, an expanded definition using “coping” might seem relevant here. Coping self-efficacy is “a person's subjective appraisal of his/her ability to cope with the environmental demands of a stressful situation” (Benight, 1996, <http://www.colorado.edu/hazards/qr/qr87.html>). In other words, the person, environment and behaviour factors are all interrelated and play an important role in life-career planning (Lent et al., 1994). It is important for counsellors to be aware that opportunities, resources and barriers are often subjective and that assisting the client to consider the positive and negative influences of their environment will help them in making future decisions.

### *Limitations*

Several limitations were identified in this study that may affect interpretation and application of the results. First, there is a large discrepancy in sample sizes between the North Island and North Coast. Seventy-five percent of the respondents were from the North Coast and 25% from the North Island. A larger sample from the North Island would have provided more data for comparison. It should be noted, however, that the samples were proportionate to the population size of each community. The North Coast population is more than twice the North Island area population. Also, related to sample limitations, was the lack of representation of grade eights from the North Island.

Therefore results should be interpreted cautiously for grade eight students. Aboriginal representation was lower for the North Coast than the North Island. When asked about the proportionately lower number of Aboriginal youth respondents, educators in Prince Rupert suggested possible explanations for this. Survey completion was voluntary and Aboriginal youth may have been less interested in or willing to complete the survey. The amount of text in the questionnaire was suggested as another possible deterrent.

Some parts of the survey instrument deserve mention with regard to limitations. The Family section of the survey seemed to be confusing for many of the respondents. This section was divided into two parts: 1) how often they experienced a particular family problem and 2) whether or not they found help for this difficulty. The frequency of how often they experienced a problem was broken down into choices of Doesn't Apply, Never, Less than Monthly, Monthly or Weekly. Although respondents were asked to choose one, many youth circled both Doesn't Apply and Never. A recommendation would be to leave out the Doesn't Apply option as the meaning of this response is unclear. Some respondents completed either section one or section two rather than both and a number of participants left the whole Family section blank. One option would be to leave out the Found Help section altogether or have a separate scale below the first section to determine whether help was found for specific family difficulties. Another would be to reword the response categories.

Other areas of difficulty in the survey instrument were in the Youth Issues and Neighbourhood and Community sections. In both categories, an option of No Opinion was given and placed at the end of the alternate responses of Strongly Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree and Strongly Agree. When given the option of No

Opinion several youth selected this option for the entire Youth Issues and Neighbourhood and Community sections. In addition, it is unclear exactly what No Opinion meant. A suggestion would be to leave out the No Opinion choice and add Neither Disagree or Agree between Somewhat Disagree and Somewhat Agree. It was intended to use the same format as other questionnaires for comparison, however, the confusion indicates rewording is needed. The confusing wording of these sections means that results must be interpreted with caution.

Feedback from two teachers administering the survey was that it was too difficult for grade eights and took longer than expected. It was not the intention originally for grade eights to complete the survey, however, because the North Coast schools wished to include all secondary grades, it was decided to include this grade in the analysis. Future administration of the survey should include only grades 9 – 12, unless survey items can be simplified.

A further limitation in the survey instrument was the inadvertent omission of an item directly related to alcohol use. Specific items relating to tobacco and drug use were included, however, it was an oversight that alcohol was not. An item to gain insight on the amount of alcohol use by coastal youth would have strengthened and broadened the results for substance use.

Timing was another limitation of this study. Due to scheduling difficulties, data collection in the North Island took place in the Spring while participants from the North Coast completed the survey in the Fall. Timing of survey distribution should be consistent to prevent discrepancies in responses due to external factors. For example, if surveys were administered to one group during or near exam time and not in another,

responses could vary due to lack of focus. It is difficult to conclude whether or not this had any bearing on the responses, however administering surveys at similar times of the year is preferable.

### *Implications*

There are several possibilities for future research as a result of this study. Extending this study longitudinally would identify changes that may occur for youth in individual coastal communities impacted by restructuring over the long term. In addition, a longitudinal study could assess the effectiveness of any services put in place as a result of this survey.

Further research into specific topics such as substance use, employment opportunities, and career barriers is required to develop a broader picture of implications for theory and community policy and practice and to further understand the social consequences of economic restructuring in coastal communities.

Further research that studied specific survey outcomes that were significant or unexpected would be advantageous. For example, only 34% of coastal youth agreed that there were enough opportunities for them to stay in their communities. Studying the reasons behind this would benefit the policy and decision-makers in planning for the future.

Another option for research would be to explore youths' beliefs or perceptions about barriers and how they relate to coping self-efficacy. Although they often occur together, it would be beneficial to understand whether events or conditions that are considered barriers are intrapersonal or contextual. When considering the effects of restructuring on the west coast, youth could, directly or indirectly, be affected by aspects

of the objective and perceived events within their communities. A clearer understanding would allow youth and the professionals who work with them to deal directly with those challenges in order to overcome them.

A further suggestion for research comes from the written comments expressing frustration on the part of many of the youth. For example, it would be useful to expand further on the relationship between substance use and activities and/or recreational opportunities for youth or lack thereof. Many of the youth stated that the reason for the high levels of substance use was a result of the shortage of activities for youth. If youth could be part of the process of determining the types of recreational opportunities they wanted in their communities, they would more likely use these activities or programs.

Administering a survey to parents and the professionals who work with youth would provide data to help understand the issues, challenges, barriers or supports they face. The data collected in Phase One, through individual interviews with parents, teachers, and community leaders could be validated and expanded by quantitative means.

This study also highlights the need for youth and service providers, employers, educators, government, and community partners to come together to make decisions and policies that will assist, support, and retain youth in these communities. For example, results revealed a low level of optimism for future opportunities in coastal communities, especially in older youth. Community-based interventions that include social support may be beneficial here. Wolkow and Ferguson (2001) state that “social support can be introduced at any stage of a child’s life and may compensate for a lack of other protective forces” (p. 494). In older children, social support can benefit those who are already feeling pessimistic about their futures and who are susceptible to depression, by

preventing further opportunities for high risk behaviours or situations. This support can be a collaborative approach involving schools and community agencies. Social support can also assist youth by encouraging self-efficacy in relation to making important life decisions.

Schools, counsellors, and employers working together to provide programs that involve youth in the transition from school to work would be beneficial. Opportunities for work experience early on in adolescence and continuing on through to adulthood through mentorship programs would allow youth to gain experience and confidence. If youth could experience different jobs in a variety of different settings with skilled mentors, the job world would begin to feel like a comfortable place to be which is important in developing self-efficacy. With confidence, youth would be more apt to try out new areas of employment. From these experiences, youth may gain a clearer understanding of what career path they are best suited for. It would also be beneficial for professionals to help young people identify the transferable skills achieved in different work settings in order for them to gain future employment. Programming that brings awareness to local work options and future projections for employment would also assist these young people to attain the necessary skills or education needed for specific employment opportunities.

The outcomes of this research indicate that youth and parents or guardians should be part of the dialogue and decision process in areas affecting their lives and future. If youth and their families are given a “voice”, they may feel more invested in the futures of their communities. This is important as they have the largest stake in the future of their communities. There is an opportunity for youth and service providers, employers,

educators, government, and community partners to have interactive and constructive discussion relating to the issues facing youth living in these communities in future programming. In addition, having opportunities for service providers and policy decision-makers to collaborate can avoid duplication of service. It is important for all of the parties to have access to the results in order for policy decision-making and programming to occur. This can be accomplished through community workshops, web sites, printed materials, and information sessions.

The findings from this study indicated significant risk behaviour trends for substance use, teen pregnancy and juvenile crime. This illustrates the importance of prevention services focusing on health-enhancing behaviours and the reduction of health-compromising behaviours at an early age. The inclusion of all community partners, including youth, is essential in developing a plan consisting of a set of outcomes and strategies to achieve the outcomes. This could take into account the recent work completed by the Search Institute for asset-based community capacity building (Mannes et. al, 2005). Their model looks at cultivating community readiness, energy and commitment, creating an operational infrastructure and building community capacity. Youth consistently voiced throughout this survey their belief that the lack of activities for youth in their communities attributed to the high levels of substance use. Increased services and programming that provide a good variety of activities for youth is especially important.

Aboriginal youth and communities have particular priorities to be addressed. Aboriginal youth assessed themselves much lower than non-Aboriginal youth in reading skills and grade levels. The low academic assessment is also verified in the Ministry of

Education graduation statistics for Aboriginal youth. Just over half of Aboriginal students in the two school districts, selected for this study, graduated in 2003/2004. Educational and community programming must take into account the unique challenges faced by Aboriginal youth. Programming, however, must first address cultural issues and barriers. Because a significant percentage of Aboriginal youth live in the coastal communities selected in this survey, it will be fortunate to have such a rich cultural base available to work with.

In conclusion, skilled and empowered youth are the key to productive citizenry in this challenging and evolving world. If we are to help young people in a way that is empowering and promotes personal growth, it is important that youth, employers, service providers and community residents understand the issues youth face while living in coastal communities.

*I enjoy this community. If there was something here for me I would probably stay but everything is going downhill from here. Everything is cutting back. I know I wouldn't have a problem with raising children here cause everyone knows each other and respects each other.*

Young man, age 17

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Wylie, F. (1979). *The self-concept*. Vol. 2. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

APPENDIX A

University of Victoria - Human Research Ethics Committee  
Certificate of Approval



University of Victoria

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of the Vice-President, Research
University of Victoria
Room 425 Business and Economics Building
Tel (250) 472-4545 Fax (250) 721-8960
Email ovprhe@uvic.ca Web www.research.uvic.ca

Human Research Ethics Committee
Certificate of Approval

Principal Investigator: Kathy Harrison, Graduate Student
Department/School: EPLS
Supervisor: Dr. Anne Marshall
Co-Investigator(s): Anne Marshall, PhD, University of Victoria; Blythe Shepard, PhD, University of Victoria; Hartley Bay First Nations Band; Namgis First Nations Band; School District #85 Port Hardy; School District #52 Prince Rupert
Project Title: Life-Career Development and Planning for Coastal Youth
Protocol No.: 141-04, Approval Date: 13-May-04, Start Date: 13-May-04, End Date: 12-May-05

Certification

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Committee has examined this research protocol and concludes that, in all respects, the proposed research meets appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Subjects.

[Handwritten signature of Dr. Martin Taylor]

Dr. Martin Taylor
Vice-President, Research

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the procedures. Extensions or minor amendments may be granted upon receipt of "Request for Continuing Review or Amendment of an Approved Project" form.

141-04 Harrison, Kathy

APPENDIX B

Letter of Approval

**LETTER OF APPROVAL FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT**

(on "Coasts Under Stress" letterhead)

(date)

Dear School District:

My name is Kathy Harrison and I am a Master's student in Counselling Psychology at the University of Victoria. My supervisor is Dr. Anne Marshall in Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, a co-investigator with the Coasts Under Stress research project. Their website is <[www.coastunderstress.ca](http://www.coastunderstress.ca)> I am conducting research about the life career needs and aspirations of coastal youth in British Columbia. We need youth input in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the challenges coastal youth face in planning for their futures, and the information and resources available to them.

You have previously given Dr. Marshall permission to interview several individuals and groups on this topic. Using the information from those interviews we have developed a survey which we would like to give to a larger number of coastal youth. This survey includes questions about family, school, and work activities. A copy is attached. The survey will take approximately twenty minutes to complete. We would like as many youth as possible in the communities of Alert Bay, Port McNeill, Port Hardy, Hartley Bay, and Prince Rupert to participate and I hope to have your assistance for this phase of the research project. With your approval, I would like to contact teachers in order to identify youth who are willing to participate.

A summary of the thesis results will be provided to all partners and to individuals if they request it. The summary will be posted on the Coasts Under Stress research website. Research findings will also be communicated to coastal residents, parents, and interested professionals through interactive workshops. The results of the study will be published in a peer-reviewed journal, in Coasts Under Stress publications, and may also be presented at professional and/or scholarly conferences.

I will contact you regarding your approval. If you have any questions, please contact myself at (250) 721-7784 or <[kharriso@uvic.ca](mailto:kharriso@uvic.ca)> or Dr. Anne Marshall at (250) 721-7815 or <[amarshal@uvic.ca](mailto:amarshal@uvic.ca)> Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathy Harrison

APPENDIX C  
Recruitment Letter

**RECRUITMENT LETTER**  
(on "Coasts Under Stress" letterhead)

(date)

Dear teacher:

My name is Kathy Harrison and I am a Master's student in Counselling Psychology at the University of Victoria. My supervisor is Dr. Anne Marshall in Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, a co-investigator with the Coasts Under Stress research project. Their website is <[www.coastunderstress.ca](http://www.coastunderstress.ca) .> I am conducting research about the life career needs and aspirations of coastal youth in British Columbia. We need youth input in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the challenges coastal youth face in planning for their futures, and the information and resources available to them.

In an earlier part of this study, several individuals and groups in your community participated in interviews related to this topic. Using the information from those interviews we have developed a survey which we would like to give to a larger number of coastal youth. This survey includes questions about family, school, and work activities. We would like as many youth as possible in the communities of Alert Bay, Port McNeill, Port Hardy, Hartley Bay, and Prince Rupert to participate.

Your School District has approved this research. We are asking for your help to obtain participants in your classroom or agency. Please ask whether your students are willing to complete the enclosed survey. It takes about twenty minutes. Their participation must be voluntary. First read the consent form aloud or have the students/clients read it themselves. Completion of the survey is taken as consent to participate. If anyone decides to withdraw after beginning the survey, they do not need to hand it back. There will be no consequences.

Please put completed surveys in the envelope provided, seal it and return it to your school office. I will arrange to pick them up.

A summary of the thesis results will be provided to all partners and to individuals if they request it. The summary will be posted on the Coasts Under Stress research website. Research findings will also be communicated to coastal residents, parents, and interested professionals through interactive workshops. The results of the study will be published in a peer-reviewed journal, in Coasts Under Stress publications, and may also be presented at professional and/or scholarly conferences.

I will contact you regarding your approval. If you have any questions, please contact myself at (250) 721-7784 or <[kharriso@uvic.ca](mailto:kharriso@uvic.ca)> or Dr. Anne Marshall at (250) 721-7815 or <[amarshal@uvic.ca](mailto:amarshal@uvic.ca) .> Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathy Harrison

APPENDIX D

Life-Career Development and Planning Survey



9. What is the highest level of education completed by your father/male parent/guardian (if known)?

- Did not finish high school
- Finished high school
- Vocational training (e.g., trade school, welding course, computer course, etc.)
- Some college/university courses
- Finished college/university
- Don't know

10. Is he currently working in a paid job?

- Yes       No      What does he do? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother/female parent/guardian (if known)?

- Did not finish high school
- Finished high school
- Vocational training (e.g., trade school, hairdressing, secretarial training, etc.)
- Some college/university courses
- Finished college/university
- Don't know

12. Is she currently working in a paid job?

- Yes       No      What does she do? \_\_\_\_\_

13. How many years have you lived at your current home? \_\_\_\_\_

14. How many times do you remember moving to a different home in your life: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Do you have a health condition or disability that keeps you from doing things other young people your age do (such as school, sports, getting together with friends)? *(Mark all that apply)*

- No
- Yes, a physical disability (such as deafness, cerebral palsy, wheelchair, etc.)
- Yes, a long term illness (such as diabetes, asthma, etc.)
- Yes, a mental, emotional or learning condition (such as depression, eating disorder, ADHD, learning disability, etc.)

16. Are you currently dating? (By dating we mean seeing someone or going out with someone who is more than just a friend [could be a boyfriend or girlfriend].)

- Yes       No

17. When was your last family vacation away from home (month and year)? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you go and for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B: FAMILY**

Most families experience difficulties at some time or another. Over the past 12 months, on average, how often did your family experience these difficulties and did you find help?

	How often experienced?					Found Help?	
	Doesn't Apply	Never	Less Than Monthly	Monthly	Weekly	No	Yes
18. Financial difficulties	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
19. Employment problems	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
20. Parenting problems	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
21. Conflict with family members	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
22. Lack of support from family or friends	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
23. Lack of family or personal time	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
24. Problem meeting basic needs (such as food, heat, or clothing)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
25. Transportation problems	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
26. Problem finding satisfactory affordable housing	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
27. Worries about suicide	1	2	3	4	5	1	2
28. Other (Specify: _____)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2

**SECTION C: SCHOOL**

29. Starting in Kindergarten, how many different schools have you ever gone to? \_\_\_\_\_

30. Compared to other people your age, how would you describe your reading skills?

- Above average       Average       Below Average

31. In general, what are your grades right now?

- Mostly A's  
 Mostly B's  
 Mostly C's  
 Mostly D's  
 Mostly F's

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements: (circle one response for each statement)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
32. My teachers care about how I'm doing	1	2	3	4	5
33. Most teachers like me	1	2	3	4	5
34. I care what most of my teachers think of me	1	2	3	4	5
35. I feel satisfied with school because I am learning a lot	1	2	3	4	5

<b>SECTION D: WORK</b>
------------------------

36. Since September, 2003, how many full months have you worked for pay?

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

37. For the months you worked, how many hours per week have you worked on average?

- None  
 Less than 5 hours per week  
 5 to 9 hours per week  
 10 to 14 hours per week  
 15 to 19 hours per week  
 20 hours per week or more

38. For the months you worked, what type(s) of work have you done? (*mark all that apply*)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant/food work<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sales (retail, convenience store, gas station)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Construction<br><input type="checkbox"/> Office work (clerical/computer/telemarketing)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Factory/Manufacturing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Parks/Landscaping/Tree Planting<br><input type="checkbox"/> Recreation (amusement parks, pools etc) | <input type="checkbox"/> Babysitting/child care<br><input type="checkbox"/> Paper route/delivering flyers<br><input type="checkbox"/> Warehousing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Farm<br><input type="checkbox"/> Travel/Tourism<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |
|---|---|

<b>SECTION E: BEHAVIOUR AND ACTIVITIES</b>
--

Below are some examples of things that some people your age deal with. Please indicate whether each is "NEVER true", "SOMETIMES true", or "OFTEN true" of you.

Do you notice that you...	Never True	Sometimes True	Often True
39. generally have a cheerful mood?	1	2	3
40. feel hopeless?	1	2	3
41. get no pleasure from your usual activities?	1	2	3
42. have trouble enjoying yourself?	1	2	3
43. are defiant, or that you talk back to people?	1	2	3
44. jump from one activity to the other?	1	2	3
45. worry about your past behaviour?	1	2	3
46. worry about doing the wrong thing?	1	2	3
47. are easily annoyed by others?	1	2	3
48. worry about doing better at things?	1	2	3
49. are unhappy, sad or depressed?	1	2	3

Do you notice that you...	Never True	Sometimes True	Often True
50. become overly upset while away from someone you are close to?	1	2	3
51. fail to finish things you start?	1	2	3
52. are cranky?	1	2	3
53. are impulsive, or that you act without stopping to think?	1	2	3
54. have difficulty knowing directions or instructions?	1	2	3
55. are full of energy?	1	2	3

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree
56. I have a lot of control over the things that happen to me.	1	2	3
57. My work, in general, is at least as good as the work of most others.	1	2	3
58. There is usually a way I can solve the problems I have.	1	2	3
59. There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life.	1	2	3
60. I often feel confident in dealing with problems of life.	1	2	3
61. I am looking forward to the years ahead.	1	2	3
62. Sometimes I feel that I am being pushed about in life.	1	2	3
63. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me.	1	2	3
64. I can do just about anything I really set my mind to.	1	2	3

## SECTION F: YOUTH ISSUES

To what extent do you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statements about youth issues in your community? For the purpose of this survey, youth means young people between the ages of 15 and 24.

My community ...	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
65. Has a good variety of activities for youth	1	2	3	4	5
66. Has too much tobacco use among its youth	1	2	3	4	5
67. Has a problem with youth using drugs (other than alcohol)	1	2	3	4	5
68. Needs a wider variety of recreational activities for youth	1	2	3	4	5
69. Has too many teen pregnancies	1	2	3	4	5
70. Is having a problem with juvenile crime	1	2	3	4	5
71. Has good parental involvement with youth	1	2	3	4	5
72. Needs conflict resolution education for youth	1	2	3	4	5

My community ...	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
73. Has a problem with youth poverty	1	2	3	4	5
74. Is experiencing a problem with youth depression	1	2	3	4	5
75. Has a problem with young people feeling angry	1	2	3	4	5
76. Has adequate services for youth who may be considering suicide	1	2	3	4	5
77. Has a problem with youth violence	1	2	3	4	5
78. Makes its young people feel that their contributions to the community are valued	1	2	3	4	5
79. Has good opportunities for youth to be involved in the life of the community	1	2	3	4	5
80. Has good options for youth to work part-time while they are in school	1	2	3	4	5
81. Has enough opportunities to get young people to stay in the area	1	2	3	4	5
82. Other (Specify: _____)	1	2	3	4	5

### SECTION G: NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY

Please indicate the extent to which you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statements about life in your community:

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion
83. The economic outlook for my community appears bright	1	2	3	4	5
84. Housing is reasonably priced in my community	1	2	3	4	5
85. I am satisfied with employment opportunities in my community	1	2	3	4	5
86. People living in my community are willing to accept people from different ethnic groups	1	2	3	4	5
87. There are enough recreation areas (e.g. parks, conservation areas)	1	2	3	4	5
88. The crime rate in my community is low	1	2	3	4	5
89. I feel safe living in my community	1	2	3	4	5
90. My community does a good job of planning for the future	1	2	3	4	5
91. If I have children, I would encourage them to live in this community	1	2	3	4	5
92. The quality of life in this community is good	1	2	3	4	5
93. Pollution in my community is low	1	2	3	4	5



APPENDIX E

Participants' Information and Consent Form

## **“Life-Career Development and Planning Survey”**

### **Participants’ Information and Consent Form**

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled “Life-Career Development and Planning for Coastal Youth.” The study is being conducted by Kathy Harrison, a graduate student in Counselling Psychology at the University of Victoria. If you have any questions or concerns about the project, you may contact Kathy Harrison at (250) 721-7784 or <kharriso@uvic.ca.> This research is part of the Coasts Under Stress project, and is being funded by Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in a Master of Arts. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Anne Marshall. You may contact her at (250) 721-7815 or <amarshal@uvic.ca.>

The purpose of this research project is to obtain a comprehensive picture of the supports and challenges coastal youth face in planning for their futures, and the information and resources available to them. As you are currently living in one of the coastal communities being investigated in this study, your input is important to our study. I have asked teachers and community agency workers for their help to obtain participants in their classroom or agency and to ask whether there are students or clients that are willing to complete the survey. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include contributing to the knowledge and development of partnership practices in career development. Your participation will provide new information on the career development process of coastal youth. In addition, you may benefit from thinking about your future and you may discover overlooked support systems in your community.

Your participation is anonymous and completely voluntary. **Completion of the survey is taken as agreement to participate.** Your name will not be recorded. Only your birth month and year will be used. If you wish to withdraw after beginning the survey, do not hand it back. There will be no consequences.

There are no known or anticipated risks to you through participating in this research as the topic being explored is what youth think and talk about on a daily basis, for example your current life, decisions, and possibilities for the future.

Your confidentiality will be protected by a data summarizing process and by storing completed surveys in a locked filing cabinet. Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data. Surveys will be shredded at the end of two years.

The data obtained from the surveys will form part of a Master’s thesis. A summary of the thesis results will be provided to your school or community agency and to individuals on request. The summary will be posted on the Coasts Under Stress research website at <www.coastunderstress.ca>. Research findings will also be communicated to coastal residents and interested professionals through interactive workshops. The summarized results of the study will be published in a peer-reviewed journal, in Coasts Under Stress publications, and may also be presented at professional and/or scholarly conferences.

***This is your copy of the information about this research and can be taken home to parents/guardians to inform them about the study.***