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Community Action
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Youth and Youth-
Advocate
Communication
and Partnership

History:

Year 2000: the Canadian Rural Partnership initiated a dialogue involving over 7,000 rural and remote Canadians, with a Rural Youth Dialogue happening alongside in eight communities.

Year 2005-6: the Rural Team BC partnered with the BC Rural Network and undertook two more rural youth dialogues in the communities of Castlegar and Vernon. At each dialogue young people were offered the opportunity to:

- express their thoughts on what was happening in their communities, particularly around education and employment,
- connect with trades counselors and employers.

Year 2005-6: The Canadian Community Economic Development (CED) Network's Emerging Leaders initiated a Youth and CED research project across Canada, creating profiles of young people involved in their communities across the country.

Some Dialogue Results:

"While jobs are available the youth in many rural communities did not have the prerequisites or skills required to fill the available positions."

Yet - "Youth and career counselors articulated that businesses are currently not taking the time to train apprentices because for the past 30 years there has been a pool of skilled labourers to draw from."

"Rural youth out-migration is a serious issue for communities across Canada. Youth leave for jobs, post-secondary education, and social opportunities.

Yet - some youth are drawn to rural communities for jobs (resource esp.), greater recreation opportunities, and affordable housing and quality of life."



According to rural youth some of the major obstacles impeding employment are:

- Lack of career-oriented employment opportunities (few interesting jobs that pay well)
- Limited ability to gain entry into well paying permanent jobs (little turnover, seniority issues)
- Difficulty obtaining education, training or support (financial, other) for self-employment/entrepreneurial activities
- Minimal to no post-secondary educational institutions in the community - and little to no internet access for online schooling
- Limited opportunities for apprenticeship or on-the-job training

According to employers some of the major obstacles impeding the hiring of youth are:

- Lack of appropriate workplace attitude
- Frustration with apprenticeship programs
- Substance abuse
- Higher wage and work condition expectation
- Different expectation between the balance of life and work
- School system not adequately preparing students for work
- Difficulty for small business to pay top wages, or to offer high enough quality of work environment



Some Youth and CED Research Results:



"We conclude that young people can have powerful and positive effects on adults and organizations. It does not happen all the time of course. [...] But **when the right conditions are in place, involving youth in decision-making is a powerful strategy for positive change.**"

("Youth in Decision-Making", Zeldin, University of Wisconsin (2000))

"Instead [of concentrating on developing techniques to draw, retain and motivate young volunteers] **the focus is on creating a dynamic and empowering space where people of all ages can learn and grow, develop meaningful relationships, and take an active role in shaping their communities.**" (Santropol Roulant)

Creative organizations identified a gap in the system and then **"work to include people who need an alternative route to participate, learn and engage with the community."**



This is where YOU come in!

Do you see opportunity in your region to engage youth and community stakeholders in **action plans** that enhance youth employment and engagement in community economic development?

Has your youth community already created a CED action plan and is now looking to **move forward, to identify the first steps and to mobilize?!**

Contact Farrar Brodhead with the Youth CED Project for more information at fbrodhead@ccednet-rcdec.ca

And Now?...