

YOUTH IN CUSTODY AND ASSOCIATED RISK BEHAVIOURS

C. Chambers^{1,2}, D. Taylor², G. Ogilvie², and J. Buxton^{1,2}

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¹ School of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC

² BC Centre for Disease Control, Vancouver, BC

Background¹

- In 2004/05, BC youth custody rate 4.8 per 10,000
- Youth who have been in custody are at high-risk for poor health outcomes, including sexually-transmitted infections, HIV and HCV infection, suicide, addiction, and other adverse events

Purpose

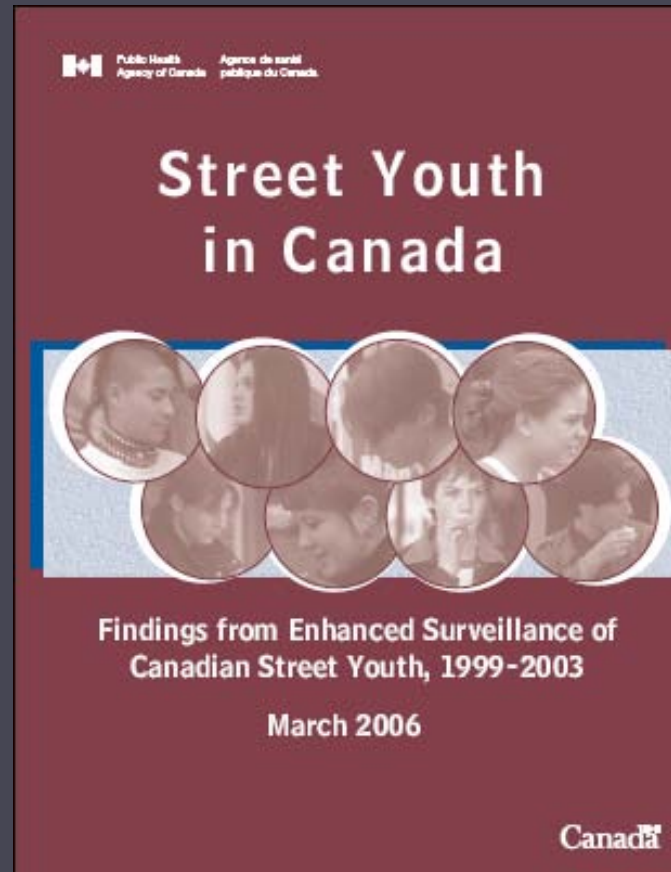
- We sought to identify associations between placement in custody and sexual and drug use risk behaviours reported by street-involved youth in Vancouver, BC

¹ Murphy, A., Chittenden, M., & The McCreary Centre Society (2005). *Time Out II: A Profile of BC Youth in Custody*. Vancouver, BC. The McCreary Centre Society.

Data Source:

► Enhanced Surveillance of Canadian Street Youth Survey (E-SYS)

- ◉ Phase V
- ◉ Collected data from Jan. – Nov. 2006
- ◉ Restricted to data collected from sites in Vancouver
- ◉ Recruitment through outreach workers, drop-in centres, and snowball sampling

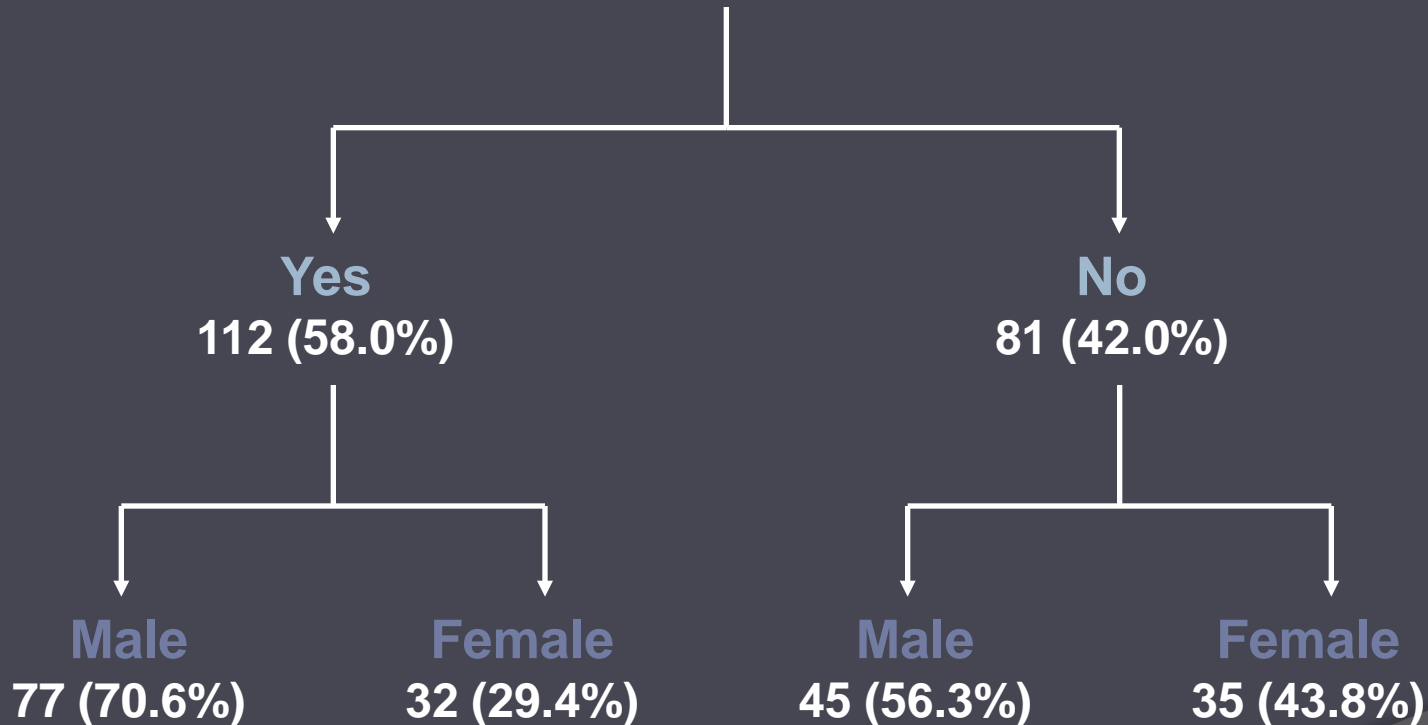


Eligibility

- ⦿ Youth were eligible to participate if they were:
 - 14-25 years old
 - Able to understand spoken English or French
 - Able to understand and recognize purpose of study
- ⦿ In order to be considered street-involved, youth must have, in the past 6 months:
 - Run away from home for ≥ 3 days
 - Been thrown out of home for ≥ 3 days
 - Been without a fixed address for ≥ 3 days

Study Sample

Have you ever been to a detention facility, youth detention centre, prison or jail, overnight or longer? (n=193)



Study Sample

Have you ever had a probation/parole officer? (n=194)

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Yes

103 (52.8%)

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For what offence did you have a probation/parole officer?

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Break and enter/Stealing	48 (46.6%)
Fighting/Assault	22 (21.4%)
Selling or buying drugs	19 (18.4%)
Loitering	1 (1.0%)
Prostitution	0 (0.0%)
Other	12 (11.7%)

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	No Custody n (%)	Custody n (%)	p-value
Age, mean [sd]	19.7 [2.0]	20.5 [2.2]	0.019
Gender			
Male	45 (56.3)	77 (70.6)	0.041
Female	35 (43.8)	32 (29.4)	
Ethnic origin			
Aboriginal	18 (22.5)	28 (25.0)	0.689
Non-Aboriginal	62 (77.5)	84 (75.0)	
Place of birth			
In Canada	71 (87.7)	101 (90.2)	0.578
Outside Canada	10 (12.3)	11 (9.8)	
Type of recruitment			
Outreach	24 (29.6)	29 (26.4)	0.618
Drop-in centre	57 (70.4)	81 (73.6)	

Table 2. Adjusted Odds Ratios (OR)

Variable	No Custody %	Custody %	Adjusted OR ¹ (95% CI)
Ever had a social worker	61.7	75.9	2.15 (1.09-4.27)
Ever been in a group home	35.8	53.6	2.42 (1.25-4.68)
Ever been kicked out of school	64.9	85.5	2.72 (1.31-5.67)
Ever lived on the streets	78.8	91.1	2.50 (1.04-5.97)
Use non-injection drugs more than daily	49.3	74.1	3.54 (1.81-6.92)
Use injection drugs	17.3	35.7	2.91 (1.35-6.26)
Age (years) at first sexual experience, mean	14.0 yrs	12.9 yrs	0.80 (0.69-0.92)
Ever traded sex	11.3	28.6	3.50 (1.47-8.34)
Ever been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant	30.8	54.5	3.38 (1.70-6.69)
Mother ever use injection drugs	5.6	25.5	6.90 (2.16-22.08)

¹ Odds ratios adjusted for age, gender, and Aboriginal ethnicity

Discussion

- ④ Youth who have been in custody report multiple drug use and sexual risk behaviours
- ④ Consequently, youth in custody may be at higher risk for sexually-transmitted infections, HIV and HCV infection
- ④ Time spent in custody may provide an opportunity for interventions aimed at these high-risk youth for education, prevention, harm reduction and testing

Limitations

- Cross-sectional survey
- Self-reported data
- Recruitment may bias sample to youth who are engaging health system

Ways Forward

- We plan to perform qualitative work with at-risk youth to investigate the temporal and causal relationships between placement in custody and risk behaviours

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- ◉ Elaine Jones and Meaghan Thumath for recruiting youth and conducting interviews

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