



Building healthy communities for children and youth.

Planet Youth Timiskaming is a 5-year pilot project based on the Icelandic Prevention Model, a proven approach to reduce alcohol and drug use among young people. Planet Youth empowers communities to work together to address the root causes of early substance use. The approach focuses on strengthening key protective factors like relationships with family and friends, involvement in extracurricular activities, and school engagement. Using the Planet Youth approach, our communities will gain valuable insights into the health and wellbeing of young people, implement effective local solutions, and track changes over time.

# PLANET YOUTH TIMISKAMING UPDATE

January 2024

## ACTIVATING PLANET YOUTH TIMISKAMING

### Planet Youth Agreement Signed

In September 2023, Timiskaming Health Unit signed an agreement with the Planet Youth Guidance Program to officially launch Planet Youth Timiskaming. This agreement marked the start of our district's journey of adapting and implementing the Icelandic Prevention Model. The approach is an important part of the Timiskaming Drug and Alcohol Strategy's effort to prevent high-risk substance use.



Erika Aelterman, Timiskaming Health Unit, Jon Sigfusson, Planet Youth-Chair of the Board, Robin Katrick, Planet Youth-Regional Director North America, and Kim Peters, Timiskaming Health Unit

**16** countries are actively implementing Planet Youth

**5** Timiskaming District is the 5<sup>th</sup> location in Canada to sign on with Planet Youth

## BUILDING A COALITION OF ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT YOUTH

The first step of the Planet Youth process was to build a coalition of organizations to guide the approach.

### Local Learning Session

In February 2023, community partners from across the district came together to explore Planet Youth as a local strategy to improve outcomes for children and youth. Planet Youth representatives Jon Sigfusson and Robin Katrick presented how the approach has reduced teen substance use in Iceland from 42% in 1997 to 5% in 2022. The event recording is available on YouTube: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#).



Jon Sigfusson presenting an introduction to the Planet Youth Guidance Program

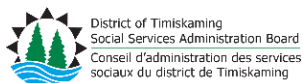


Community partners participate in learning session hosted by the Timiskaming Drug and Alcohol Strategy at Riverside Place

**37** community partners engaged at local learning session

## Establishing the Steering Committee

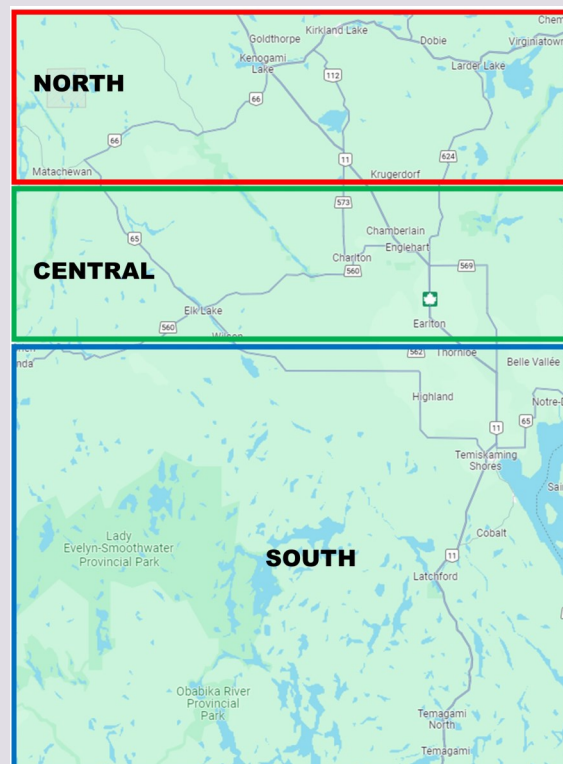
Over the summer months we established a Steering Committee to build a strong foundation for this work in Timiskaming District. This multi-sectoral group has been instrumental in shaping the project structure, ensuring a district-wide approach. Crucial to this project has been centering the voice and experiences of our district's youth, and to this end, a bi-annual youth survey and ongoing youth engagement will inform the plans.



## DETERMINING PROJECT STRUCTURE

Timiskaming district and Temagami have been divided into three zones – North, Central, and South. Each zone will receive a local data report, providing valuable insight into the health and wellbeing of the young people that live there.

Our strategy envisions the creation of a Local Action Team within each zone that will be tasked with creating and monitoring progress through action plans. Local teams are being formed, and anyone is welcome to join a team and contribute to solutions that will improve the lives of children and youth.



## WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO:

### Youth Survey

We are thrilled to share that the first round of youth surveys was completed in November 2023! The data from the Planet Youth Survey will help our communities understand what life is like for teenagers in the North, Central, and South parts of Timiskaming District.

Once the data reports are ready, the Local Action Teams will review the survey findings, share with their communities, and make an action plan for what they see as the best responses to the findings. Stay tuned for more information on what the data says!

5

high schools participated

561

grade 10 and 11 students have told us about their lives growing up in Timiskaming District

83%

overall response rate achieved

2

promotion videos (bilingual) created by local students



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMdtAzcYgxc&t=1s>

## Student engagement

The Planet Youth team held booths at each high school to collect input from students on what would make their communities better places for young people. Some of the themes raised by youth include their need for safe spaces, wanting more things to do, and a desire to feel like a valued member of the community.

The Local Action Teams will use the results from these engagement sessions to inform action plans.

**5** high schools engaged



Youth engagement at École secondaire catholique Sainte-Marie, Kirkland Lake District Composite School, and Timiskaming District Secondary School

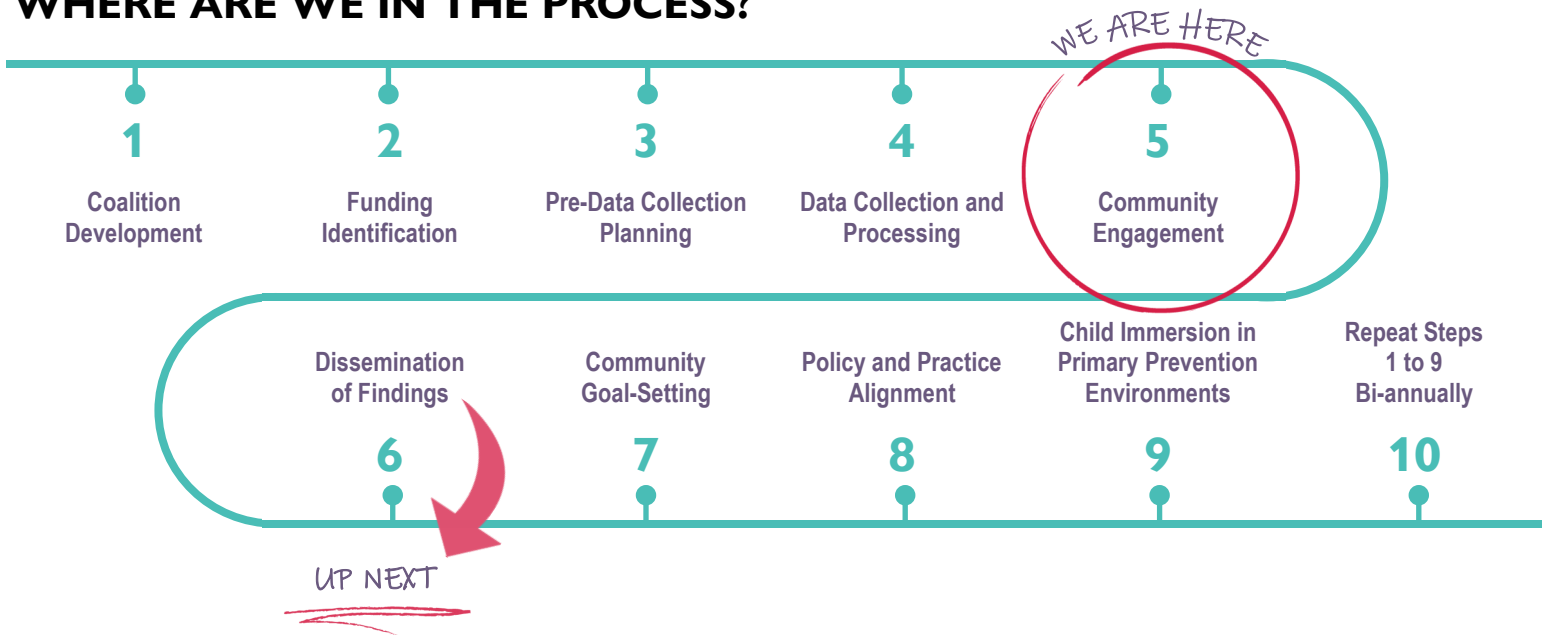
**40** community members and agencies participated in Action Team Building

**11** school staff participated in the survey training

## Workshops

Planet Youth Timiskaming participated in a series of workshops in the fall. The first focused on how to build effective Local Action Teams while the second workshop was designed to educate local teachers on how to administer the Planet Youth survey in their classrooms.

## WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?



## LOOKING FORWARD: PLANS FOR 2024

As we look forward, our activities will focus on activating the three zones within our district. This will include:

Further community and youth engagement

Developing the Local Action Teams

Sharing the results of the youth surveys

Holding community goal-setting workshops

Designing evidence-based and community-informed solutions



### Vision

We want all youth in Timiskaming District to have a sense of belonging, optimism, and resilience through caring relationships and meaningful engagement within their community.

### Mission

To dramatically delay and decrease use of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and other drugs by youth in Timiskaming District.

**For more information  
or to join an action team,  
please contact:**



TIMISKAMING  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY  
STRATÉGIE CONTRE LES DROGUES ET  
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