



**Creating a Community WorkSafe
Resource for Youth:**

Creating a Culture of Safety



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Executive Summary

The WCB-BC continues to focus on prevention strategies for youth. Previous research and feedback has informed the WCB that the broader community, including youth groups, community groups and employment agencies, would use the WCB-developed Student WorkSafe resource outside of a classroom setting if adapted to suit their needs. To this end, the WCB sought to conduct a productive idea-generating discussion session among these community stakeholders to gather feedback on the usefulness and creation of a Community WorkSafe resource for youth. A formal discussion workshop was held with 13 representatives of community organizations on September 16th, 2004. This executive summary illustrates the most salient findings from this session.

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"The biggest reason we don't do it [address workplace health and safety issues] structurally is because we have nothing to use.

~ Ian

The creation of a Community WorkSafe resource for youth is a natural and needed extension of the Student WorkSafe Planning 10 curriculum.

Currently, an all-inclusive resource to enable community organizations to address workplace health and safety issues with youth does NOT exist, and discussions about workplace health and safety with youth in community groups are mostly reactive rather than proactive. Workplace health and safety simply isn't of paramount concern to youth or a priority in the mandate of many community organizations mainly because they do not have an adequate resource or knowledge level.

Unanimously, workshop participants affirm that they would use a Student WorkSafe resource if adapted for use in community organization settings. The current Student WorkSafe Planning 10 resource for secondary school students is needed and community groups support its concept and value. Expanded to address community groups' needs, the benefits of a Community WorkSafe resource are far-reaching. For example, it would be available for youth who do not complete a Grade 10 education; for those who take Student WorkSafe in grade 10, a version adapted for and accessible through community groups will serve as a refresher. All stakeholders would benefit from a standardized and consistent approach, and the resource would address the lack of tools available to communicate prevention messages in the community.

The foundation of a Community WorkSafe resource is already established via the Student WorkSafe Planning 10 curriculum. The incorporation of additional topic areas and activities to better enable community organizations to effectively address the needs of their youth populations will arm others to promote a culture of safety and mobilize the community to facilitate a grassroots approach to workplace health and safety.

Strike a balance between flexibility and standardization when creating the format, activities and materials for the Community WorkSafe resource.

Lesson plans can be applied in a community setting, but are preferred as interactive approaches rather than lecture-style formats. In the community setting, experiential and youth-friendly activities and materials are most valuable.

However, one size will not fit all. The Community WorkSafe resource will need to offer a variety of options for community organizations to use that best suit the needs of their clientele, including a range of learning styles, language requirements, lesson durations and sizes of youth groups participating. Also, facilitator's guides can offer a brief overview of standard approaches, as well as various adapted options to suit different environments.

In future, community groups would see value in further adapting the Student WorkSafe resource for other stakeholders, such as parents and employers, or at a minimum involving them in the youth Community WorkSafe strategies. Motivating the larger community to embrace the Program – and potentially the value of a related certificate for program completion – would enhance the value of a Community WorkSafe resource and further promote participation among youth, parents, employers and others.

Formulate a marketing and dissemination strategy that leverages existing WCB outreach and prevention strategies.

The Community WorkSafe resource will only be used if key stakeholders are successfully made aware of the importance and existence of this tool. Many community organizations are not currently aware of the array of WCB and other resources available to them regarding youth workplace health and safety issues. Marketing strategies to raise awareness of the issue and the resource will be required to ensure the appropriate implementation of this outreach prevention strategy.

Although potentially cost-prohibitive, many workshop participants would like to see a full-fledged social marketing campaign revolve around this resource to underline its importance and further create a culture of safety in society. Overall, the marketing should promote voluntary adoption strategies and should not mandate the use of Community WorkSafe resource for youth as a condition of an organization's funding.

A Community WorkSafe program should, however, offer a certificate as a reward for participation. As with the program itself, the certificate should be based on core modules, offering optional streams as required. Creating a buzz for the certificate program as the gold-plated standard sought in the workplace is a perceived motivational strategy that could further enhance the effectiveness of a Community WorkSafe resource.

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Invite feedback to continue to build upon this resource as a living and evolving tool.

A Community WorkSafe resource does not have to be limited to the initial scope of lessons and activities developed. Sharing ideas and experiences in using the resource materials can only help to continually enhance and improve prevention efforts over time. Adaptations for other target audiences such as parents, employers or younger children can also apply to future prevention strategies. The possibilities are truly remarkable and appreciated by workshop participants representing community groups. Creating a mechanism through which feedback can be gleaned and internalized on an ongoing basis will allow this resource to reach more and more stakeholders in ever-increasingly effective manners.

Background and Methodology

The WCB-BC has gathered feedback from key stakeholders regarding the Student WorkSafe educational resource used in classroom settings (Planning 10 curriculum). Previous research and feedback has informed the WCB that the broader community, including youth groups, community groups and employment agencies, would use such resources outside of a classroom setting if adapted to suit their needs. To this end, the WCB sought to conduct a productive idea generating discussion session among these community stakeholders to gather feedback on:

- Whether these community groups would use such a resource;
- How they might use it;
- What they may need from the WCB or others in order to use it;
- How it might best be adapted to meet their particular needs;
- How they would prefer to receive this resource (downloading);
- How the WCB could best reach and engage them and their peers to use it;
- Adapting the language/terminology to the broader community; and
- Any other relevant items related to a facilitator's guide to better enable others to use this material.

To this end, Ipsos-Reid worked with the WCB-BC to recruit individuals representing youth groups, community groups, employment agencies, disenfranchised groups, and which are provincially and community-based. In total, 13 community organization representatives showed to participate in this workshop that was held in Vancouver at WCB's Richmond location on Thursday, September 16, 2004 from 9:00am to 12:00noon. Each participant received an honorarium of \$60 for his or her time and opinions.

In collaboration with the WCB-BC, Ipsos-Reid developed a facilitator's guide of discussion themes to administer during the workshop. Three WCB representatives observed the workshop and twelve of the thirteen participants provided written consent for the WCB to use their names to cite the source of verbatim comments presented during this session. In this report, only first names are associated with quotations used to illustrate points made in the workshop, where appropriate and possible.

This report presents the feedback collected in this workshop.

Workplace Safety Activities/Resources Used with Youth

Discussions about workplace health and safety need to become proactive rather than reactive.

Few community organizations incorporate structured programs or activities focused on informing youth about workplace health and safety issues. Rather, discussions about workplace health and safety typically take place after an incident occurs or when a young worker has a question about a workplace setting. For some, the assumption remains that employers will provide proper workplace health and safety training and that community organizations are not the ultimate responsible body for delivering such information. Waiting for this conversation to occur, however, bodes the risk of allowing an injury to happen before preventative efforts can be applied.

"It comes up, but we have to force the issue on the floor. Most folks don't want to pay attention to the safety gear and staying within the lines. ~ Bob

"A lot of the discussions are experience-based. It's more like reality training for them." ~ Ian

Help community organizations overcome barriers to make workplace health and safety issues a priority.

For youth, workplace health and safety issues are not of paramount concern. This finding is not surprising based on many other studies that reveal this same sentiment. Workshop participants mention the following factors as reasons why workplace health and safety issues are not as mainstream as other social issues such as drinking and driving, for example:

- Invincibility;
- Vanity (to wear safety equipment);
- A lack of assertiveness to ask questions;
- A fear of losing their job;
- Youth having short-term versus long-term focus; and
- A general lack of awareness of worker rights and responsibilities.

Community groups find it challenging to overcome these barriers, particularly those dealing with at-risk or disenfranchised youth. Workshop participants would appreciate suggestions about innovative approaches to engage youth on issues related to workplace health and safety to raise the importance of the issue, even if through covert means such as promoting workshops about employment financial issues that lead to discussions about safety matters.

"They really need to learn assertive skills, how to say 'I am not OK with this'." ~ Patty

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"They have a bullet-proof mentality – it won't happen to me." ~ Ron

"We have modules, like 'Boss from hell', to attract youth to sessions. They don't want to hear about workplace safety. They want to hear about paycheques and holidays. We have to sneak it in; we have to work it in. We do this by talking about money. It has been effective." ~ Rod

The creation of a resource for community organizations will facilitate proactive discussions about workplace health and safety.

Representatives of community organizations are aware of specific resources from a few sources, but explain that they are not aware of an all-inclusive source of information about workplace health and safety. Strapped for time to actively search out or create materials on their own, they do without such tools. Therefore, valuable discussions about workplace health and safety do not take place – or are not as extensive or effective as they could be.

Examples of resources/sources currently used include:

- Partnering with unions to help with hands-on health and safety training (construction);
- Formal training sessions on WHMIS;
- Mentorship programs;
- HRSDC materials;
- Provincial government guidelines for workplace violence;
- Canadian Injured Workers Alliance (research, videos, website); and
- WCB handouts and posters, especially the ones with "blood and gore".

"The biggest reason we don't do it structurally is because we have nothing to use." ~ Ian

"They can try everything out and do it first-hand before going out on a construction site." ~ Ron

Further promote existing WCB resources.

Few workshop participants are aware of the array of resources currently available from the WCB to enable them to promote messages related to workplace health and safety with youth. However, those who are aware of specific resources, such as the *Lost Youth* video, strongly endorse obtaining such resources and their effectiveness with youth.

"I have just started using it [Lost Youth video]. It's really powerful." ~ Patty

Reactions to Student WorkSafe Materials

All workshop participants were sent an electronic copy of the Student WorkSafe Planning 10 materials prior to the session. When asked, all participants acknowledged that they had at least briefly reviewed the document.

Student WorkSafe is a needed and effective resource.

Participating representatives from community organizations state that all-inclusive resources addressing workplace health and safety issues for youth do NOT exist. Upon reviewing these materials, they felt that the Student WorkSafe resource addressed this information gap in a meaningful fashion. While meant for a classroom setting, workshop participants felt that the Student WorkSafe resource provided a structured approach for educators to use with youth that covered relevant topic areas and provided valuable tips for how to best deliver messages and assess learner outcomes.

"This is very inclusive. I just have bits and pieces." ~ Mary

"I was really pleased because of the cooperative methodology that seems to be the foundation of the program. It allows for people to explore with the instructor being the guide, rather than the sage. Experiential learning is great. Whomever did it really knew what they were doing." ~ Bob

Leverage the sentiment that prevention strategies are fully supported in the community.

Although community organizations are not all proactively adopting prevention strategies related to workplace health and safety with youth, they do support and appreciate the importance of prevention efforts about this issue. Whether spearheaded from educational institutions, industry, or the WCB, community organizations will rally behind and adopt prevention initiatives such as the Student WorkSafe resource if made aware of its existence and benefits.

"Any form of prevention is really important. Prevention is the key." ~ Patty

The benefits of adapting the Student WorkSafe resource lend support to moving forward with this initiative.

Unanimously, workshop participants affirm that they would use a Student WorkSafe resource if adapted for use in community organization settings. These individuals feel such a resource is needed and support its concept and value. Using the existing Student WorkSafe materials as a foundation, workshop participants believe that the benefits associated with its adaptation for community organizations could encompass, but not be limited to, the following:

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- Not all youth complete a Grade 10 education (particularly those who are considered to be at-risk youth) and would not receive the benefits of this instruction from an education institution. Thus, offering such education via community organizations would include this disenfranchised target audience in prevention strategies.

"We deal with youth who have missed this training at school [drop-outs]. They are the ones who have gone into these kinds of jobs." ~ Michael

- Not all youth receiving this education in the Planning 10 curriculum will actually immediately use their learning. Reviewing workplace health and safety issues at the time they enter the workforce will refresh their memories to the information they may have not retained since Grade 10.

"I think it's really important. If they get their first job at the age of 19, employers are just going to assume that they know this."

- A credible resource would provide standardization for all stakeholders to use, establishing measurable outcomes and instilling consistency in the information provided.
- An established community resource would eliminate the need for community organizations to search for and/or develop tools and materials on their own limited time.

"I developed my own materials because nothing existed." ~ Patty

Lesson plans can be applied in community settings.

The existing Student WorkSafe resource is based on providing lesson plans for educators to use in classroom settings. Lesson plans are also used in community settings for a variety of purposes, such as for family counseling, life planning, life skills and career development situations. As such, the use of lesson plans in educating youth about workplace health and safety issues is perceived as a natural extension of other lesson plans currently in place.

For those who do not currently use lesson plans, it is more a function of not having a lesson plan than a result of resistance to using such an approach. If adapting the Student WorkSafe resource for effective use in community organizations, many workshop participants suggest incorporating lesson plans to be administered before and after the work experience has begun, rather than implementing all lessons prior to entering the workforce to address their realistic needs with the youth they serve.

Adaptation of Student WorkSafe Resources for Community Organizations

How do representatives of community organizations suggest adapting the current Student WorkSafe resource to best suit their needs? Positively, the WCB does not need to 'start from scratch', but rather expand upon and/or adapt as appropriate the foundation of the Student WorkSafe Planning 10 curriculum that already exists.

Topic Areas

Incorporate additional topic areas to better enable community organizations to effectively address the needs of their youth populations.

Workshop participants believe that all six lessons included in the current Student WorkSafe curriculum are relevant and appropriate for their purposes. They suggest keeping these topic areas, but expanding upon them to address issues such as youth needing:

- Sources of advice and support regarding questions they may have about workplace health and safety issues;
- Violence in the workforce, including power struggles between management and staff;
- Sexual harassment; and
- Assertiveness training to equip youth with the courage and skills to ask questions and make comments about workplace health and safety.

"Sometimes people get into a dynamic at work because they want that job. It's a piece people deal with a lot more than we think." ~ Patty

Further, encouraging youth to attend education workshops about workplace health and safety may require the promotion of more appealing topics to optimally motivate youth participation. For example, one participant indicated having promoted a session about employment financial issues to draw youth to a session and then subtly incorporated lessons about workplace health and safety.

Target Audiences

Adapting the Student WorkSafe resource can create a culture of safety among many stakeholders.

Adapting the Student WorkSafe resource for community organizations is perceived as a natural expansion to further engrain the importance of workplace health and safety among youth. However, workshop participants also believe that adapting this resource to administer to other stakeholder groups would also prove valuable to the overall workplace health and safety prevention strategy. The key target audiences mentioned as also requiring this type of education involve new workers, parents, younger children and employers.

“Some parents are concerned and it creates a culture of safety.” ~ Dave

“I would like to see something that starts earlier. Grade 10 is too late. It should be targeted to younger youth in preschools and kindergarten. ~ Mary

“Employers should be responsible for the same material. If the employers themselves don’t know, then it kind of defeats the purpose. The employers should talk to youth about what their expectations for safety are.” ~ Dawn

Activities/Materials

Add experiential activities and graphic or youth-friendly visual/auditory materials to the existing arsenal of resources.

Clearly, many existing materials and activities developed for the Student WorkSafe resource will also be applicable to an adapted Community WorkSafe resource for youth. When citing ideas about effective activities and materials to include, three categories emerge, as follows:

Existing Activities	New Activities	Expanded Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Lost Youth</i> Video ➤ Posters ➤ Handouts ➤ Speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussing actual work experiences ➤ Reality situations: interviewing employers, visiting worksites ➤ Collateral materials: plastic severed hand for shock value ➤ Music CD or video ➤ Comic book designed to deliver workplace health and safety messages ➤ Contact list of employers willing to allow site tours, interviews ➤ Reinforcement activities following completion of the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Peer-to-peer activities: skits, role plays ➤ Websites, CD-Roms ➤ Digital business cards ➤ Observations ➤ Hands-on training (trying on safety equipment)

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Handouts are not perceived as a particularly valuable resource for the community organization settings. On the other hand, visuals and reality-based activities and materials are perceived to be most useful for a Community WorkSafe resource for youth.

Resource Format

Provide a variety of options for community organizations to use to best suit the needs of their clientele.

One size will not fit all in the context of a Community WorkSafe resource for youth. Each community organization is structured in a different manner, has varied resources available, and serves specific youth audiences. Thus, workshop participants underline the need for a Community WorkSafe resource to remain flexible to meet these varied situations. They suggest including options to address a range of youth learning styles, language requirements, lesson durations, and size of youth groups participating in the program.

"We need a variety of options. We need to take the units and adapt it to our programs, to our timeframes. What works for some may not work for others."

"It needs to accommodate a diversity of learning styles."

"We could do the entire curriculum in a one-day workshop, but it's likely not the best approach for retention strategies."

In comparison to a more theoretical or lecture-style format administered in a classroom setting, workshop participants ultimately encourage a Community WorkSafe resource for youth to focus on interactive methods that engage youth to actively participate and take ownership of the lessons.

Facilitator's Guides

Include brief facilitator's guides with the Community WorkSafe resource.

Creating facilitator's guides to accompany the Community WorkSafe resource for youth is not a "must have" for community organizations, but is certainly seen as a "value-add" for those ultimately using the tool. The benefits of including a facilitator's guide include promoting consistency of the delivery of the program (or at least core elements of the program), enabling those with less experience to administer the program with confidence, and providing options for activities that could work in various settings. Any such facilitator's guides should remain brief in nature as to not overwhelm those delivering the program. Overall, "train-the-trainer" sessions would be constructive, but not used by all involved.

"I was impressed that there was a step-by-step direction for even a really inexperienced instructor. You've made it very easy for an instructor." ~ Bob

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"This is a little daunting and I would like to see it cut down a bit."

"If you were handing out certificates based on this, you would like to have some guidelines. You don't want just anyone to be able to sign the certificate." ~ Ian

Learner Assessments

The most useful style of learner assessments conducted via community organizations is competency-based.

Outside of a classroom setting, youth exposed to a Community WorkSafe program would respond most effectively to competency-based learner assessments rather than to clinical measurements administered via quizzes or tests. To this end, suggested learner assessments involve having youth create skits, posters, or presentations on what they have learned to prove their retention of lessons learned. A more practical learner assessment strategy is clearly perceived as more appropriate for community groups' use.

"Most of my curriculum is competency-based. Show me what you have learned." ~ Bob

Supporting Social Marketing

Enabling community organizations to create a culture of safety would be made easier if social marketing supported the initiative.

Many workshop participants believe that a social marketing campaign supporting the importance of workplace health and safety prevention initiatives would be beneficial to the success of community promotions, use of this resource, and buy-in among other community organizations and youth. Such strategies would ideally involve a multi-media campaign (TV, radio, movie theatres, posters, websites, print advertising, etc.). Although recognizing that this supporting social marketing would be costly, workshop participants believe that there would be value in monies spent in this area.

Mandatory Use of the Resource Linked to Funding

Do not mandate the use of a Community WorkSafe resource for youth as a condition of receiving HRSDC funding.

There is a definite willingness to use a Community WorkSafe resource if made available. However, if community organizations are instructed to use this resource as a requirement of their funding model from HRSDC, this will impede the interest and enthusiasm initially shown towards the tool. Workshop participants are eager to adopt community strategies with the assistance of WCB's creation of resource tools, but would not appreciate being "dictated to" by government funders.

"I think that HRSDC is involved in too much micro-management as it is. I think this needs to be left to community development." ~ Bob

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Although HRSDC could potentially mandate the delivery of a Community WorkSafe program, many workshop participants identify a challenge in ensuring that youth will attend the sessions. Nonetheless, the idea of standardization and consistency is very much encouraged. Having the program mandated rather than created from the grassroots, however, detracts from the sense of ownership and pride that community organizations could build with this program.

WorkSafe Certificate Program

A Community WorkSafe program should offer a certificate as a reward for participation.

Not knowing that a young worker certificate program has been discussed by the WCB in recent years, the issue of associating a certification process with the Community WorkSafe program arose spontaneously in the course of discussing the resource's use in community settings. Workshop participants believe that a certificate would offer tangible benefits, such as:

- Acting as a positive element to help build youth resumes;
- Offering a source of pride, especially to at-risk youth who may never have received a certificate of any kind for their efforts;
- Standardization of expected knowledge about workplace health and safety; and
- The creation of a culture of safety based on having completed the program.

"With the certificate, there is standardization and the employer will know what they are getting when they hire someone." ~ Rod

A WorkSafe Certificate should be based on core modules, offering optional streams.

A Community WorkSafe program could potentially involve numerous topic areas and activities based on the appropriateness of the lesson and/or activity for the youth in the program. To this end, workshop participants propose that a certificate be based on core competencies that are standardized for everyone, followed by options to upgrade their certificate should youth wish to pursue additional specific learning modules. In this sense, accreditation is an ongoing process – one that youth can continually strive to achieve.

Delivery mechanisms need to be reviewed prior to implementing the program.

Should certificates be issued to those who have completed a Community WorkSafe program, the curriculum delivered and completed should attempt to be standardized. To this end, encouraging community organizations to use facilitator's guides prepared by the WCB, and setting parameters regarding the methods of delivering the information should be reviewed. The obvious delivery method for most community organizations is to hold workshops wherein youth participate in-person. However, online mechanisms could also be beneficial, especially to those in rural settings that do not have easy access to community organization locations. Workshop participants note, however, that the WCB would need to address how they can confirm that the person signed up for an online Community WorkSafe program is the actual person completing the activities online.

Motivating the entire community to embrace a certificate program would enhance its value and promote participation.

Previous research conducted by the WCB has identified motivational strategies to promote a young worker certificate program to youth, and has addressed challenges in the promotion and implementation of such a program. In this workshop, participants also mention that it would be beneficial to promote the certificate program to employers who can in turn offer preferences to those with a certificate. Creating a buzz for the certificate program as the gold-plated standard sought in the workplace is a perceived motivational strategy that could further enhance the effectiveness of a Community WorkSafe resource.

*"It would be more powerful if businesses supported it and endorsed it like WHMIS." ~
Bob*

Promoting Student WorkSafe to the Community

Develop a marketing strategy to raise awareness and disseminate the Community WorkSafe resource.

The merits of a Community WorkSafe resource are undisputed. The merits, however, cannot be fully realized if community organizations are not first made aware of the existence of such a valued resource. As with many other WCB resources currently available, few workshop participants are aware of the existence of tools and materials created by the WCB for stakeholders involved with youth prevention strategies. These participants are not all actively seeking out information on their own and would rely upon the WCB to inform them of what is available and how to access the resource.

Suggestions for the marketing of a Community WorkSafe resource include, but are not limited to:

- Use statistics to explain the importance of the resource;
- Carefully target the individuals stakeholders who would actually use these materials;
- Make the resource easily accessible online;
- Stress the variety of formats available to suit everyone's needs;
- Promote the WorkSafe Certificate (if possible); and
- Piggy-back on existing efforts to promote this new resource (via community dialogue sessions, via speakers, via BCCPAC representatives, etc.).

Draft Bookmark Evaluation

At the completion of the workshop, participants were asked to review a bookmark that would be printed and given away to stakeholders (youth, teachers, community groups, etc.). Participants were informed that its purpose would be to promote awareness of young worker health and safety and to encourage them to visit the WCB website for more information. Participants were also informed that this bookmark was in draft format and that it would include visuals and colour in its final form.

<p><i>Young workers have the highest on-the-job injury rates in B.C.</i></p> <h1>BE A SURVIVOR</h1> <p>Find out how at http://youngworker.healthandsafetycentre.org</p>	<p>BOOKMARK OUR WEB SITE IF YOU'RE A...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Young worker◆ Parent◆ Employer or supervisor◆ Teacher◆ Union representative◆ Health and safety advocate◆ Organizer for a youth or community group <p>WE'LL GIVE YOU THE LATEST ON KEEPING YOUNG WORKERS SAFE.</p> <p>[INSERT WORKSAFE LOGO / WCB NAME]</p>
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The draft bookmark is not overly appealing as a hook to encourage website visitation.

All workshop participants expressed a desire to receive additional collateral materials to use in promoting workplace health and safety issues to youth. However, the draft bookmark presented to workshop participants did not resonate strongly as a motivational tool to drive stakeholders to the website for more information. Participants do not feel that the draft bookmark would detract from prevention strategies; rather, they feel that it would not greatly complement efforts.

Why is the draft bookmark not more appealing? Workshop participants mention the following reasons for not perceiving this draft bookmark as an effective tool:

- Some community organizations deal with youth with low literacy levels;
- The website address is too long;
- Many feel that the word 'survivor' is inappropriate; and
- Bookmarks are not perceived as youth friendly tools (use CDs, digital business cards instead).

*"I don't like the word 'survivor'. The word sounds like how you will survive the day."
Ian*