

Celebrating the Launch of Play Streets in Vancouver

*Co-designed with kids, Play Streets will temporarily transform select streets into thriving public spaces*

This spring, the Society for Children and Youth of BC (SCY), in partnership with the City of Vancouver, is piloting a new initiative called Play Streets to increase outdoor play and connection opportunities for Vancouver youth. The Play Streets pilot comes at a crucial time in pandemic recovery and is supported by the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative, a Government of Canada investment to transform public spaces in response to COVID-19.

The Play Streets initiative will be piloted in locations throughout the city including Hastings-Sunrise, the West End, Kerrisdale, and Victoria-Fraserview. To start, the locations will work in tandem with the City of Vancouver's current [School Streets](#) program by extending the street closure time to one hour after school, once a week at four schools. SCY staff will be on site to provide creative play offerings and elements. Young people from selected neighbourhoods gave their ideas to help co-design their Play Street with the SCY team throughout the month of March, via in-person workshops and an online survey.

"The apartment complex I first lived in was full of busy streets, and cars would be always coming in and out, there was rarely an opportunity to play outside with other kids. I later moved to a different neighbourhood, which always had kids playing in the street and riding bikes with all their parents watching and chatting. It was great to finally be able to run around and socialize and enjoy all the sunny days. That's why I support SCY's Play Streets project as it would give other children the same opportunity I had." -Caroline, 15. SCY Youth Advisory Committee Member

"We want to help make it easy for young people to play out freely in their city this spring," said SCY's Operations Manager, Margie Sanderson. "We also want to inspire Vancouverites to see how we can make our city more livable and sustainable for people of all ages."

"We're pleased to partner with Society for Children and Youth of BC on the Play Streets initiative", says Lisa Parker, Director of Public Space and Street Use for the City of Vancouver. "Play Streets is an example of the kind of creative, community-oriented and partner initiated public space activation that we at the City want to enable and continue to support throughout the pandemic recovery period and beyond."

**ABOUT SCY:** SCY is a not-for-profit charity based in Vancouver that serves children province-wide. Their mission is to foster the well-being and resilience of children and youth in British Columbia by advancing their civic, political, economic, social, cultural and legal rights. Having been in operation for over 45 years, the organization has a rich history of work and a proven track record of success. Their current work includes 3 primary programs. The Child and Youth Legal Centre provides free legal assistance to people under 19, the Child Rights Public Awareness campaign promotes rights awareness for people of all ages, and the Child and Youth Friendly Communities program works with young people and municipalities to help build better communities for children and youth.

**Society for Children and Youth of BC**

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