

Ahousaht Community Needs Assessment

**Prepared for the
Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre Society**



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Canada 

Prepared by
Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre Society
P.O Box 141
Ahousaht B.C
V0R-1A0

Curtis Dick
Bonita A. Frank
Francine Frank
Leif Johansen
Rebecca Sanderson
Melinda Swan

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Community Needs Assessment
November 28, 2005

Introduction:

This Job Creation Partnership (JCP) was initiated by the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre Society and was funded by the HRDC, Human Resources Development Canada. The purpose for the Job Creation Partnership was to perform a needs assessment survey, a strategic plan, funding planning and business development. This report responds to the needs assessment work and will help us to improve the existing and future youth programs at Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre.

In October 2005 the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre Society conducted a community needs assessment, which focused on the West Coast community of Ahousaht. The purpose of the Community Needs Assessment was to review the needs for services in our area for youth and their families. The results covered the following areas:

- ◆ **Facility Usage:** A portion of our survey was designed to uncover people's attitudes towards the safety, staffing and hours of operation at the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre. Adult respondents reported that they would be interested in utilizing the facility for non-youth oriented activities. In the past adults utilized the facility for dances, bingo and crafts. It was suggested that we make our facility suitable for the elders and for people with a disability. Operation hours were expressed as inadequate from the youth who prefer to see the centre open 7 days a week.
- ◆ **Programs:** Each age group in the community was asked what programs they would like to see offered at the Centre, in terms of recreational, educational, and cultural activities. We also asked why people don't come to the Centre and found out that they believe there are not enough planned programs happening. Therefore there is a need for more programs and activities at the Centre.
- ◆ **Culture:** A high percentage of community members expressed the need to learn our language, arts & crafts, making drums, singing & dancing. There were others activities to choose from but these listed above were most preferred.
- ◆ **Education:** The youth reported the need to have study groups, workshops, computer training, first aid, and career development planning.
- ◆ **Recreation:** 66% of community respondents identified the need for structured sporting activities ranging from Basketball, soccer, and hockey. The highest*suggested activities were dodge ball, playing tag, & football. (6-12yr*)
- ◆ **Community Support:** Several community members reported they are interested in doing volunteer work to help improve the facility or programs offered at the youth centre.
- ◆ **Business Opportunity:** The adults responded on their surveys that they would support the youth with possible businesses, such as restaurant, gift shop, Internet café, tourism (hiking trail) and recycling depot. Most however, did not feel that the youth centre should rely on a business to support the staffing and operational costs.
- ◆ **Service providers:** This group expressed ideas on activities for youth, such as various workshops for self-esteem, life skills, coping and girls / boys groups, build a safe and healthy environment and activities to keep the children/youth busy. They also suggested we need more employees so there is no staff burnt out and that we need to have the facility open 7 days a week. It was also suggested that we need to post schedules and deliver the schedule to homes to have our community informed of planned events..

The needs assessment will now be the basis for generating our strategic plan for youth within our community and will cover the current services, as well as creating new services towards the meeting the identified needs.

1.0 Background

Ahousaht is the largest of the 14 Nuu Chah Nulth Tribes located on Flores Island, northwest of Tofino B.C. It is accessible by boat or float plane. The community has a School Kindergarten to grade 12 and a North Island Collage, other facilities which include a Medical clinic, the Lighthouse (for meeting, dinners, parties, religious gatherings) a daycare, a community hall, Holistic Centre, and a Youth Centre. The community also has an Administration office, Fire Hall (volunteer department), Fisheries office, RCMP, restaurant, convenience stores, and a guesthouse. There are approximately 609 people who live on reserve including 235 children (ages 18 and under). There are many expansions on the reserve such as the new subdivision and the new high school. Therefore, the reserve is growing.

The closest hospital is in Tofino, and dentists and specialists are in Port Alberni, Nanaimo, and Victoria. We go by boat to Tofino to the nearest hospital, bank, grocery store, and pharmacy. Therefore, to make these appointments we have to make overnight trips.

The Holistic centre offers Family care workers, Family violence worker, Alcohol and Drug Counselors, Youth counselor, Justice Worker, Health Circle project manager. They offer many programs such as parenting skills; better relationships work shops and AA meetings etc.

The building where the Ahousaht Cultural Centre is located was originally a school that opened in 1954 through to 1986. The Department of Indian affairs operated the school. The following years, the downstairs was a grocery store, then transformed into a restaurant. It is presently operating as a Youth Centre with leisure activities for the youth. The Centre operates as drop in for Ahousaht youth offering dances, movie nights, arts and crafts, internet, as well as all nites. Between 30-50 youth use the facility on a daily basis. Currently the Youth Center employs one coordinator, one youth worker and one part time bookkeeper. The store is the main source of funds for the operation of the Centre as well as some economic assistance from Social Development, Community, Human Services, and the Ahousaht Administration. The Ahousaht Cultural Centre Society has recently acquired not for profit status, which will assist the centre in gaining more funds for future youth programs and employees.

2.0 Methodology

The Community Needs Assessment has been the initial step of the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre planning for the future. Three surveys were co-created by the JCP Community Development Research Workers, under the guidance of the Project manager and GLD Consultant. It was decided by the group to target four age demographics;

children ages 6-12, Youth 13-19 and adults 18-49¹, and elders 50-64+. The elders were separated from the rest of the adults as their teachings, and wisdom is highly respected in this community, therefore, as a group we wanted their responses to stand out. A Fifth target group that was surveyed in addition to the general community was the Community Human Services (CHS) Committee, which consists of Community Human Services Providers, including representatives from the Maaqtusiis Elementary Secondary School, Ahousaht Holistic Centre, Ahousaht Administration, Ahousaht Medical Clinic, and Ahousaht Social Development Department. This group was asked to answer the survey not as community members, but as service providers who could utilize the Youth Centre facility as part of their program delivery to the Ahousaht community. This group was also asked for their opinion separately as we feel they have a greater understanding of the community and are more in touch with the needs of the community members.

Each differing age group survey asked questions around the same themes to assist with the interpretation of the findings and create a clear picture of what the community would like to see happen at the Ahousaht Youth Cultural Centre in terms of programming, staffing and general operation.

The survey was delivered to the community in three ways. The adult survey was delivered at random by the JCP participants who went door to door, to the band office, and community meetings. The Child and Youth surveys were delivered at random by the research workers, both at the school and the Youth Centre. The research workers also surveyed the CHS committee members at their monthly meeting.

In total 317 surveys were completed consisting of; 141 adult surveys including 22 elder surveys, 52 youth surveys, 111 child surveys. This sample of surveys reflects 51% of the Ahousaht population. In addition, the Community Human service providers completed 13 surveys. The JCP participants, who also interpreted and organized the results into this document, entered all data generated from the findings into the computer database.

3.0 Facility Usage

Safety: suggestions from the community regarding safety are as follows the highest suggestions are to have more *fire exits*, presently the Centre has two exits upstairs and one down stairs. *Clutter* is mentioned as exceeding needed space; we have started on removing and cleaning the cluttered areas. *Security and supervision* is mentioned and presently the only security services offered is the Coordinator living at the Centre. *Supervision* however is covered by the youth activity worker. Since there is only one activity worker supervision is limited. *Bullying, swearing and aggression* are indicated as a safety concern from adults, which is perhaps related to the understaffing. Individuals under the influence of *Drugs and or Alcohol* are a safety concern from community respondents. The respondents reported that they are hanging around the facility and this causes a concern for the safety of their children. *Handrails and wheel chair access* are

¹ There is some over lap within the adult category, as there are some young people 18-19, who are no longer in school, and have children of their own. In these cases, the young people were surveyed as young adult parents. Similarly there are some older youth 18-19 years old who still attend high school, they were surveyed as part of the Youth age group demographic.

required for people with disabilities and elders. *Lighting* in and around the building is a great safety concern. The *Boardwalk* needs repair it is very slippery when wet. *Mold* is a concern because of the toxins released from the mold it is a health concern. *Cleanliness* is of great concern to a number of respondents in every age category including the children. The respondents reported the facility needs to be cleaner and is in need of a *janitor*, so that their place will be clean at all times. There is a requirement of a *maintenance person* to keep the facility in operable condition.

Staffing:

- 57% of respondents reported that they did not know if the staff at the youth centre is adequate.
- 26% reported that they thought the staff is adequate and
- 15% thought the staff was not adequate.

Therefore the Youth Centre needs to inform the community of staff employed. Presently the Youth Centre has one Coordinator and one Activity Worker and a Bookkeeper. There are 168 *young people* in our community (6-18yrs.), 86% (144) of those age categories utilize the Youth Centre.

Hours of Operation:

- 51% of respondents reported that they did not know the hours of operation.
- 37% reported that they thought the hours of operation are adequate.
- 15% do not think the operation hours are adequate.

The desired hours of operation respondents reported 3:30 to 10:00 pm was the highest suggestion. 2nd was the existing hours 3:30 to 9:30 pm, 3rd was 3:00 to 9:00 pm. (weekdays)

Presently the Youth Centre *hours of operation* during the week are 3:30 to 9:00 pm for elementary students and the Centre is open until 9:30 for youth/teens.

The desired hours for weekends 12:00pm to 12:00 am was the highest, 2nd 6:00 pm to 12:00am, 3rd was 7:00 pm to 12:00am. Presently the Youth Centre is open on Friday 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm closed for dinner and open from 7:00 to 12:00am. Saturday the hours are 1:00 to 5:00 pm closed for dinner and open from 8:00 to 12:00.

Facility Use:

- 32% *adults* volunteer and or use the facility for the store, dances, crafts, dinners, and work.
- The *youth/teens* 79% watch T.V, hangout/ chill, listen to music, and play board games and dances.
- The *children* 89% play games, watch TV, arts and crafts, store, read books and play foosball.
- The *elders* 31% volunteer with crafts, meetings, workshops and dances.

The *adults* reported that they do not use the facility because they have no time, too busy, no reason, work, nothing for their children, not enough programs.

The *teens* responded they don't come because there is not much to do, doing their homework, seems like they just watch TV, closed most of the time, broke equipment and bum seats, not informed enough unless Leif or Becky tell me.

The *children* responded that they do not come because live too far, parents do not think it's a safe because there are a lot of people who do drugs or are drunk or drinking, not allowed not that much stuff and no reason.

The *elders* reported they are too busy, nothing interesting and their age.

As a conclusion it would appear that adults do not use the facility because they are "too busy". The youth and children however appear to be "not busy enough".

Parents' perception of their child using the facility:

- 34 % stated their child uses the facility,
- 40% stated their children do not use the facility,
- 17% stated that they are not sure,
- 7% have no children.

Adults responded that their children utilize the facility for dances, hang out with friends, internet, arts and crafts, and watch movies. Parents gave the following responses to the questions of why their children do not use the facility:

- their children do not use the facility because they are too young,
- no children,
- children are young adults now,
- activities happen too late,
- witnessing the aggression of other children causes us not to send them there
- and unaware if there are programs for preschoolers.

Non-youth oriented activities: In the survey we questioned if the community membership was interested in using the facility for *non- youth oriented activities*. The response was:

- 77% of adults are interested,
- 2 % not interested, and
- 20 % did not respond.

In response to the question about what they would like to see the centre used for the responses were as follows:

- 50% of adults are most interested in using the facility for cultural activities.
- 56% of adults are interested in educational use and
- 48% are interested for recreational use.

Other suggestions are *family events* such as mother/daughter, father/son events, grandparents' day, and meetings, music lessons, counseling sessions, and *women's group* events such as self-care and tea parties.

4.0 PROGRAMS

Each age group demographic was asked what programs they would like to see offered at the Cultural Youth Centre in terms of recreational, educational, and cultural activities. Generally speaking the following tables reflect each age group, and the top percentile of responses of desired activities offered at the Cultural Youth Centre;

4.1 CHILDREN 6-12 years old	
100% would like movies	84% would like cultural painting
94% would like PS2/XBOX	80% would like traditional arts and crafts
89% would like soccer	79% would like help with homework
88% would like basketball	53% would like buddy reading.

It is evident from these responses that the Cultural Youth Centre needs to service the young children in terms of programming. 100% of children 6-12 years old would like to see movies offered at the Cultural Youth Centre, and the Cultural Youth Centre currently offers movies and movie nights. Perhaps, their need is not being met as a majority of the movies and movie nights offered by the Cultural Youth Centre are geared to teens. The Cultural Youth Centre also does not currently have a game system, but has in the past offered game system nights where youth or

children would bring their own game system to share with others. This event has worked well in the past, and the Cultural Youth Centre has not recently offered a game system evening. Therefore, it could be discerned that it is time to revive the game system evenings, as there would be a lot of support from the children 6-12 years old. It is also interesting that the children would like to have soccer offered, as currently there is no soccer program in Ahousaht. Therefore, the children's need and desire for soccer is currently not being met. Similarly, with respect to children's basketball, there is only two nights a week where this age group can access the gym for drop in basketball. There is currently no structured little league for children 6-12 years. With respect to cultural painting and traditional arts and crafts, it is evident that there would be a lot of support from this age group, if these activities were offered. In recent preparations for a cultural exchange with Kamloops First Nation, the Cultural Youth Centre was open for traditional arts and crafts, and the 6-12 year old age group was well represented at each evening. It would also be discerned from these findings, that perhaps the Cultural Youth Centre should be involved with homework help as part of after school and evening activities, in addition to offering a buddy reading program, perhaps in conjunction with the school or as part of a reading contest. It is clear from the enthusiastic and unanimous responses from this age group that the Cultural Youth Centre could be offering more programs and activities for children 6-12 years old.

4.2 YOUTH 13-19 years old	
83% would like basketball	63% would like traditional language
75% would like PS2/XBOX	54% are interested in carving
73% would like dances	52% would like computer training
71% would like hockey	46% would like to learn First Aid

It is evident from the top responses from this age group that the Cultural Youth Centre and Ahousaht community could be doing more to meet the needs of teens. As indicated, there is a quite a lot of support for basketball, despite there being four competitive teams that benefit this age group. However there is currently no drop in or non-competitive basketball being offered in Ahousaht at the gym or Thunderbird Hall. The Cultural Youth Centre does have an outdoor court with one hoop that is well used by this age group (when weather permits), though it tends to be dominated by the most athletic and skilled 'ballers' of this age group. It could be suggested that Cultural Youth Centre staff could take a more active role in co-coordinating basketball activities on the outdoor court. Similarly, 71% of teens would like hockey programs. Currently there is a floor hockey league in Ahousaht, though it has a very short season and conflicts with the basketball season. Perhaps there is a need to share gym slot time so that the hockey players have a fair chance to enjoy their sport as well.

Similar to the children, the teen group would also like to see PS2/XBOX offered at the Cultural Youth Centre, which strengthens support for the revival for game system nights at the Centre. With respect to cultural activities, this age group would like to learn more traditional language, which supports the Cultural Youth Centre's endeavor to become more involved with emerging "Living the Ahousaht Language" initiative. Also the teen group would like to learn carving, which supports the Cultural Youth Centre's plans of building a carving shed at the rear of the facility. It is clear that this age group would support a carving program once it is up and running.

In terms of educational programs, the teens would like to have a computer-training program offered at the Centre; this is on par with the Cultural Youth Centre's plans of establishing a C.A.P (Community Access Program) site in the facility. This would increase the number of computers that the Centre would offer for community use, in addition to establishing a computer training program geared to teens. Offering a First Aid course would also be a program that the Cultural

Youth Centre could look into offering as it would be of great benefit to this age group, with respect to training youth to be of assistance in emergency situations and for future employment possibilities for teens.

4.3 ADULTS 18-49 years old	
79% would like First Aid	70% would like traditional language
78% would like computer training	62% would like movies
75% would like family fun night	62% would like basketball
71% would like drum making	58% would like weightlifting

The adults would also like to see a First Aid course offered to the youth. There is also further support for a youth computer-training program at the Centre. The adult group indicated the desire for Family Fun Nights at the Centre, which is an activity that occurred here in the past. It is clear from the high percentage of support for this activity that there is a need for the Cultural Youth Centre to offer more family oriented activities. The adults would also like the Centre to offer drum making, and traditional language programs, which is on par with what the Cultural Youth Centre is planning to offer in the near future. We have recently acquired deerskins for drum making, and are endeavoring to become more closely tied with the Ahousaht Language initiative, which was previously mentioned. There was also support from the adults for movies, basketball, and weightlifting programs.

The adult survey group offered additional suggestions for the Cultural Youth Centre to consider for future programming, these include:

- *“Offer youth and adult activities, and fitness oriented activities”*
- *“Any activities as long as they are inexpensive to play would be great”*
- *“Have you considered offering boy/girl activities?”*
- *“How come you guys don’t alternate workers so that centre is open everyday for youth?”*
- *“Need to post an activity chart to let the community know what is happening there.”*
- *“Have appropriate material for each age, that way you’re not losing interest from kids.”*
- *“More things for different ages.”*
- *“Get a playground out front... and play area for small kids out of the weather”.*

These suggestions are of great benefit to the Cultural Youth Centre, as they indicate a need for stronger organizational structure in the overall programming of the Cultural Youth Centre. Currently the Cultural Youth Centre does not offer gender separate activities, or activities that are age specific, (aside from teen movies, and teen dances). The Cultural Youth Centre also does not currently have an activity chart or community newsletter to let people know what is happening there, which would be helpful in increasing participation in activities and programs. In addition, the Centre is only open five days a week, due to understaffing. Clearly, there is a need indicated by the adult community for increased age appropriate programs, better community communication concerning activities, and increased staffing at the Centre to better service the children and youth of Ahousaht.

4.4 ELDERS 50-64+ years old	
100% would like sewing	77% would like weaving
100% would like dinners	73% would like storytelling
100% would like cooking	73% would like computer training
100% would like family fun nights	68% would like First Aid
100% would like crafts	54% would like basketball
100% would like birthday parties	54% would like floor hockey

It is interesting that the Elders group unanimously supported to wide variety of leisure activities for the Cultural Youth Centre to offer. This suggests that this age group views the Cultural Youth Centre as providing more leisure oriented activities as opposed to recreational or sporting activities. Similarly the percentages for cultural activities such as weaving and storytelling were also quite high for this age group. In addition, the Elders are in support of computer training, and First Aid training for the youth at the Centre, which is on par with the youth themselves and the adult group. There was low support for both basketball and floor hockey, which suggests that the Elders group are not in support of the Cultural Youth Centre becoming involved with sporting activities as they being offered by both the school and the Band Recreation worker. Therefore the need for recreational activities for children youth is being met.

5.0 Cultural

Top percentile by age group

5.1 Children (6-12yrs)

Interest in learning our culture	91%
Painting	76%
Arts and crafts	72%
Carving	70%
Language	68%
Canoeing	60%

Other suggestions that the children made were making fish, Indian games, picking cedar, making cedar roses, joining the singing group, and hunting. This is interesting that the kids would like to go hunting, perhaps we could ask the adult volunteers to take the kids out hunting. This will teach the kids how hunting is done well.

5.2 Youth (13-19yrs)

Interest in learning our culture	87%
Language	63%
Carving	54%
Painting	46%
Dancing/canoeing	37%

Other suggestions that the youth made were shawl making and oosimch (learning traditional rituals). Through all this, we learned that our culture is at best interest to our children and our youth. It is remarkable that the youth would like to oosimch as it is a unique tradition, it would be interesting to bring this back to our people.

5.3 Adults (19 -49yrs)

Drum making	71%
Language	70%
Weaving	69%
Story telling	65%
Carving	63%

Other suggestions from the adults were treat deer hides, family trees, youth potlatches, Tribal journey, carve canoes, teach youth meaning of songs and dances, spirituality, and inviting the elders to teach language so we can speak our language instead of English. It is exciting that the adults are interested in learning our language to speak it fluently. It is dying out in our people; this would keep our language alive for now and our future generations.

5.4 Elders (50 yrs and up)

Weaving	77%
Story telling	73%
Drum making/history	68%
Tradition/language/carving	64%
Dancing/preparing traditional food	59%

Other suggestions that the elders made were listen to Indian songs, watch potlatch/history videos, teach youth meaning of songs & dances, (who they belong to and what it is for fun dances, shawl dances etc.) It is fascinating that the elders would want to watch potlatch/history videos to bring back our history from long ago.

All the age groups have high interest in learning our culture. There is a great need to learn our language with all ages. Painting and arts & crafts were also a high percentage in the children and the youth surveys. The adult and the elders had lots of interest in story telling, weaving, carving and drum making. Using the upstairs of the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre would be a great location for such courses to take place. There are plans in making a carving shed beside the youth centre that could be used to facilitate some of these activities.

6.0 Education

Top percentile by age group

6.1 Children (6-12 yrs.)

Help with homework	71%
Buddy Reading	53%
Library	40%

6.2 Youth (13-19 yrs.)

Computer training	52%
First Aid	46%
Fire Safety	44%
Study Group	42%
Food Safe	38%

The need for more educational activities was a result of the survey with 71% of children 6-12 supporting the idea of help with homework. Other educational activities were emphasized, buddy

reading, and a library. Youth are more interested in computer training, fire safety, study group, and food safe being in the top percentile. Other suggestions were bingo and super host workshop. There is moderate interest among youth in emergency preparedness, workshops, and communication skills. There is also some interest in tutoring, buddy reading, reading, and career development.

6.3 Adult (19-50 yrs.)

First Aid	79%
Computer Training	78%
Emergency Preparedness	64%
Food Safe	64%
Fire Safety	63%

As for Adult Education, First Aid is a priority with a lot of young people to look after in the community; emergency preparedness, food safe and fire safety are also valuable. Other suggestions are drama/acting, babysitting course, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome workshop, Drug & Alcohol workshop, cancer and diabetes information, trades, planned parenting, money management, life skills, Search and Rescue, Cooking/baking lessons, big brother/big sister mentoring, DARE training. Currently there is a parenting program at the Holistic Centre and we can work together with the Community & Human Services Committee to make the others happen as well in the community.

6.4 Elders (50 yrs. and up)

Computer training	73%
First Aid	68%
Reading	64%
Food safe/fire safety/communication skills	59%

Computer training is a priority for youth, adults and elders. The Ahousaht Cultural Centre Society has signed up to be the Community Access Program site in Ahousaht, which is a Government program that provides funding for innovative computer training programs. First Aid is also a priority for youth, adults, and elders. The upstairs function room at the Cultural Youth Centre would be a great location to teach such courses. Reading is important for elders; perhaps there can be a quiet space for such an activity in Ahousaht. Food safe and fire safety is a priority for all age groups. There is moderate interest in other areas of education (see appendix).

7.0 Recreational

Top percentile by age group

7.1 Children (6-12yrs)

Soccer	80%
Basketball	79%
Floor hockey	73%
Boxing	60%
Volleyball	55%

Other suggestions made by the children were dodge ball, football, tennis, badminton, foosball, apple tennis, climb trees, Frisbee, ping pong, hide n' seek, tag, freeze tag, bike ride, trampoline, new movies, golf, swimming, and red rover. The spare time that the children have, they are

interested in out door activities. These require a person(s) to organize and supervise the activities.

7.2 Youth (13-18yrs)

Movies	85%
PS2/XBOX	75%
Dances	73%
Pool table	65%
Kayaking/camping	46%

Other suggestions made by the youth were boxing, boogie board, casino night, and sleepovers. It is interesting that the youth would mention boxing, because it would get stress and frustrations out in a safe controlled environment instead of taking it out in other areas.

7.3 Adults (19-49yrs)

Family fun night	75%
Basketball/movie	62%
Crafts	61%
Canoeing	60%
Cooking/weightlifting	58%

Other suggestions made by the adults were Tae-bo, badminton, field trips (skiing, swimming and ice-skating), ballet, Indian wrestling, canoe races, and duck hunting. Others mentioned boys/girls groups, naturalist club; clothes give away, orchard, and scuba intro. It is exciting that they mention taking children who do not go to town for field trips. There is so much to offer to the children and the youth such as previously listed.

7.4 Elders (50yrs and up)

Family fun night	100%
Sewing/crafts	100%
Birthday parties/dinners/Cooking	100%
Basketball	55%
Volleyball/track & field	50%

Other suggestions that the elders made were kneading bread, card making, scrapbooks, and dinners to honor the youth. It would be motivating to get the dinners to honor the youth started up monthly.

The children had a high percentage in sporting activities and the youth have high interest in leisure activities (movies, video games, dances, pool table, kayaking, and camping). The adult and the elders have high percentage in family fun night, crafts and basketball for their children. It would be quite exciting to get these programs started for the children and the youth of Ahousaht. The Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre is in the process of getting funding to offer more programs for the people of Ahousaht.

8.0 Community Support

8.1 Children (age 6-12 yrs.) interested in

Helping the youth Centre.	82%
Not interested in helping	6%

Maybe 2%

The children's ideas to help the facility are clean up, the store (packing freight and stocking shelf/cooler serve customers), set up for gambling nights, put the wood stove on, stop people from swearing, fundraise, gather wood and pile, and help with dances.

8.2 Youth/teens (age 13-19 years) interested in

Fundraising	60%
Chaperone	42%
Store	40%
Clean up	31%
Maintenance	15%
Youth Council/ Board of Directors	12%

Other youth suggestions were getting information from our elders when needed and helping keep our Centre safe and one responds that he/she would do anything on weekends to stay sober.

8.3 Adult and Elders

Electrician	16%
Fire Safety Inspector	18%
Painter	39%
Plumber	16%
Carpenter	28%

60% of *adult* respondents reported that they are interested in volunteering time to improve the facility or programs offered at the Youth Centre. Fundraising, rebuilding the centre, donating money, and clean up are some of services offered from all adult categories.

44 adults are interested in fundraising, 33 people in chaperoning, 27 -host events, 19 -clean up, 17 store and board of directors, 11 for maintenance.

The *adult* respondents reported that 80% are willing to contribute financially towards their children's activities. 15% reported they are not interested in contributing financially, and 3% responded maybe. Other comments were depends on activity, when possible, pastries, donate beads and needles, can offer a bingo night towards the youth centre, artifact donations. The financial contributions would go directly toward youth activities unless otherwise specified.

9.0 Business Opportunity

The Cultural Youth Centre presently operates by the support of a small confectionary store, and Ahousaht Administration, Social Development, and Service Canada. These sources of funding support the Youth Coordinator, Youth Activity Worker, Bookkeeper, Utilities, telephone, internet and youth activities, as well as the JCP project. We are looking into new business opportunities to support the non-profit operations of the Ahousaht Cultural Centre Society.

Children's suggestions for fundraising are to sell tickets, have more casino nights, arcade games, buy more chumas to sell, have a bigger store, sell juice fruit cups, clean windows for people, and have more dances. These are all good suggestions.

For the adult survey we asked an open-ended question for ideas to help generate revenue. There are many suggestions; sell more healthy foods, which we have done through purchasing more

juices and granola bars instead of chocolate bars; dances, all nites which we occasionally provide; community BBQ, 50/50. Afternoon bingo, selling hot dogs/hamburgers, let kids make crafts to sell/auction, and restaurant is suggested numerous times. Other suggestions are flea market, sport tournaments, activity fees, carnivals, sell chicken pot pie, get arcade going, rent upstairs, \$1000 draw, luncheons, sell vegetable/fruit/garden, membership fees, dues, fashion show, cater AGM, bottle drives, cigarettes, ask local businesses for funding, sell seasonal decorations, catering, bake sales, loonie toonie auction, sell cd's of kids music, community/youth involvement in fundraisers, weekend specials, expand store, meat pack draw, seek funds through non-for profit status, pool table, ask band office to support, auction youth as slaves, truck trips, youth business, coffee and doughnut shop, bakery with pastries, computer games, benefit dinners, and put a bounty on the bootleggers and reward the youth for turning them in.

We also asked the adults if they would support the Cultural Youth Centre being involved with business ideas that have come up already without too much follow up as of yet.

Restaurant	52%
Internet Café	52%
Recycling Depot	43%
Gift shop	40%
Tourism (hiking trails)	32%

There is moderate support for the Centre exploring these business opportunities. This will be looked at more closely with business plans, and feasibility study. We will also do a small survey to see hear the youth's thought on this matter. The final question on the Adult survey asked for people's comments and suggestions. This elicited valuable information for the present and future operations of the Centre. A few people would like to see the Centre operating solely as a Youth Centre, and not a store. Another suggestion was to set up an employment centre to help youth get work/resume help or to run their own business. We have been working with the West Coast Career Centre and posting job opportunities on our bulletin board; perhaps we could share skills, and she could come to Ahousaht once every two weeks or once per month. We will be doing workshops with Youth Entrepreneurship with Nuuchahnulth Economic Development Corporation.

10.0 Other Suggestions

The final question of our adult survey was an open-ended question asking them for their comments, questions or general feedback. All of the following comments will be taken into consideration in planning for the future of the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre.

Safety Concerns

- *“It's a good thing when a youth swears/hits etc. They are kicked out for a period of time.”*
- *“Parents more involved in the hours of operation so kids are not out on the street all hours of the night.”*
- *“Set up rules, guidelines, policies, and responsibility for youth, staff and Board.”*
- *“Need to be stern with youth trespassing under the influence, automatic jail, and no re-entry after 3rd offence.”*

These comments reflect the need for the Cultural Youth Centre to become more accountable to the community with respect to clear rules and boundaries for youth and children who use the facility. The need for clear and consistent consequences, rules, policies and guidelines for children, youth, staff, and volunteers are also being suggested.

Operational Feedback

- *“More workers, part-time student workers.”*
- *“More activities for our youth.”*
- *“Monthly newsletter to inform the community.”*
- *“Get a playground out there.”*
- *“Alternate the workers so that Centre is open everyday for the youth.”*
- *“I like dances, but I don’t agree with them playing music that is inappropriate, (swearing, racial and degrading.)*
- *“It would be great if there was another building to do traditional work, arts and crafts, dancing and potlatches.”*

The operational feedback that we received from the adults also reflects the “need” for more to be offered by the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre. More staff, more activities are sentiments that have been echoed throughout this survey by children adults and youth. Clearly, the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre Society needs to provide more activities for the young people of the Ahousaht community, including a monthly newsletter, or community information board, and being open seven days a week. With respect to music at dances, Youth Centre staff currently does their best to censor the music being played at dances, to decrease the swearing, violence and hate that is being promoted in certain music genres. It is also the aim of the Society to establish a carving shed at the rear of the building to provide space for traditional work to be created.

Program Suggestions

- *“Some kind of class for youth to learn respect and obedience.”*
- *“Youth exchange.”*
- *“Have appropriate material for each age, that way you are not losing interest from the kids.”*
- *“I am concerned that the Centre is becoming too commercial. Store activities consume a large part of meeting time and distracted the group from providing activities.”*
- *“Don’t really need a store just be a youth centre.”*

It is illustrated again, the need for age appropriate programming and additional activities for youth such as a youth exchange and a life skills program. It is also suggested the Ahousaht Cultural Youth Centre shift its focus from relying on the store to cover the operational costs and staffing costs of Centre. In essence it is an urging from the adult community to move forward from the past and forge a new future for the Ahousaht Cultural Centre, with the clear focus of offering programs and services more for a growing Ahousaht community.

11.0 Service Providers

As a group we elected to separate the Service Providers of our community, as we wanted their opinions, suggestions, and ideas to stand out. As a group we feel they are more in touch with the

community needs of Ahousaht as they work directly with community members. Each service provider was given the same adult survey that was delivered to the community, however they were asked to answer from the perspective of the employment position, versus from the perspective of a community member. In total 13 *Service Provider* surveys were completed from representatives of the Community Humans Services committee. This included representatives from the Maaqtusiis School, Ahousaht Holistic Centre, Ahousaht Medical Clinic, Ahousaht Administration, and the Social Development Department. The following section highlights the findings illicit from this group.

11.1 Facility Usage

The service providers surveyed indicated a variety of safety concerns that Cultural Youth Centre should address, these include;

- *“The place is too dark for fine work such as beading, knitting, and crocheting.”*
- *“No fire exit door.”*
- *“Need more lighting around the building”.*
- *“Health inspection, I could get an environmental officer to do a mould assessment.”*
- *“Need a new building.”*
- *“Fire safety and upkeep of the building.”*
- *“Wheelchair access for disability and elders.”*
- *“Criminal record check for all staff and volunteers.”*

In terms of current staffing for the Youth Centre, 30% felt the staffing is adequate, 15% felt that it is not adequate, and 54% did not know if the staffing was adequate. This finding again suggests that the Cultural Centre staff need to communicate with the service providers about staffing needs at the Centre. In addition, 35% of service providers did not know the hours of operation and 35% did know the hours of operation. In terms, of when the Centre should be open, one person felt that the Centre should work with Community Curfew hours, and one person felt the Centre should be open from after school until 10pm on weekdays. Two people indicated that the hours should be separated for different ages, in which case 3-9pm would be for children 0-12 years old and 10pm for the 13+ teens.

Of the service providers surveyed 62% currently use the Youth Centre facility. The activities this group is involved with include potluck dinners, crafts, workshops (HIV/AIDS, food safe), looking at funding proposal, making funding contributions (i.e.; National Child Benefit money currently funds the Healthy Snack program at the Centre.), and social reasons, including checking in to see who is there. Interestingly, 38% of service providers do not currently use the Ahousaht Cultural Centre facilities as they are either too busy with work, or there are usually no activities happening during school hours. In the past 68% of service providers used the Centre facility. Activities they were involved with in years previous include organizing sober dances, cooking for meals, sponsoring pizza dinners to update youth on Treaty developments, and helping to organize youth “Celebration of Life”.

61% of service providers’ children currently use the Centre facility, 30% children do not, and 8% do not have kids. Of those whose children or grandchildren do use the facility, they participate in “nearly all the activities offered”, field trips, workshops, dinners, dances, and computers. Of the 30% whose children do not participate their reasons include; “no activities for younger children”, and “already participating in school extra curricular activities or with family”.

In terms of using the Cultural Youth Centre facility for non-youth oriented activities, 92% of service providers supported the idea. 85% would like to see the facility used for educational activities. An additional 80% would like to see the facility used for cultural activities. One

person felt that the facility “should be youth focused, so that nothing takes time or resources away from the youth.”

11.2 Programs-Culture

For cultural activities, 92% of service providers indicated they would like to see weaving offered at the Cultural Youth Centre. 85% would like to see drum making and history to be taught. 77% of service providers surveyed supported the idea of traditional teaching, beading, storytelling, carving, and language being offered at the Centre. An additional suggestion for a cultural activity that the Cultural Youth Centre could offer is family trees.

11.3 Education

In terms of educational activities that service providers would like to see offered 85% would like reading and a study group offered at the Cultural Youth Centre. Similarly 77% supported the idea of First Aid, tutoring, and communication skills being offered by the Centre. Other suggestions for educational activities from the service providers were; “peer support, and on going buddy or big brother/sister program”. One service provider felt that traditional teachings by not just elders, but also someone over 30+ that the kids respect”, would be helpful.

11.4 Recreation

In terms of recreational program the Youth Cultural Centre could be offering, the service providers had very different responses than those of community members. Generally speaking, more fitness-oriented activities were supported by this group, which includes 85% in support of gymnastics, 69% in support of aerobics, and 61% in support of wrestling and track and field. This group by 61% of service providers also supported basketball. Other suggestions from the service providers for recreational programs for youth: “activities such as boxing or wrestling etc may help youth get their frustrations and stress out.” “Fitness and conditioning for all ages, weekend camps and variety would be great!”

With respect to Leisure activities, 92% of service providers supported the idea of family fun nights at the Centre, 85% supported the idea of sewing. 77% of service providers’ survey indicated they would like to see dinners, hiking, cooking and crafts offered at the Cultural Youth Centre. Additional suggestions for leisure activities included pottery, silk screening own Ahousaht flags and t-shirts.

11.5 Community Support

The service providers were also asked how much they would be willing to contribute financially towards events or activities offered by Centre, 54% were willing, and 46% were not willing. Generally speaking, 23% were willing to contribute \$6-\$10, 15% were willing to contribute \$1-\$5, and 7% were willing to contribute \$11-\$15, or \$20 per month. The service providers also suggested that the Centre tier their costs for activities to suit what is best for individual families, and charge more for special events or trips. Once service provider indicated they would be able to donate condoms to the Centre, and another service provider was willing to help fundraise.

11.6 Business Opportunity

The service providers surveyed were asked if they had any ideas to help generate revenue towards the Youth Center’s operation. Their suggestions were to sell or auction off crafts that the kids make at the Centre, sell dinners BBQ’s, hotdogs to fundraise, and also selling dairy products eggs, milk, butter. Also mentioned was to have small fees for adults to use the facilities, membership fee, and to utilize the kitchen as a coffee shop, sell t-shirts, seek grants from the government to fund some activities.

They were also asked if they would support the youth being involved with a restaurant 54% of them were in support, Recycling Depot 54% were in support, Internet Café 46% were in support, Tourism (hiking trails) 62% were in support, and a Gift shop 69% were in support of the youth being involved with these services. Another suggestion was to help the elders and the widows where they need help, and own product being produced.

11.7 Suggestions

The service providers were also asked if there was anything else that they would like us to know about the Youth Centre, and they suggested that there be programs offered such as life skills, way to cope, self esteem, and building activities. They said that it is important to have a safe and healthy environment and activities for the kids to keep them busy, so that they know that there are other options other than drinking, parting and having sex. Have boys/girls group, brownies, scouts, possibly having the centre open 7 days a week, more adequate board, and advise the community of the events going on at the centre. Also mentioned was “continue to do the best you can and not what other people think you should do, only you can do it, you are all doing a good job”.

12.0

Thank you for reading the needs assessment we hope this will lead to actions on many fronts to meet the needs of the Ahousaht community. The outstanding remarks from the reports stated that, the Cultural Youth Centre needs to consider, planning more activities, having the Centre open everyday, hire more staff to carry out the communities suggestions and circulate a community newsletter to inform the community of planned events. See appendix A or B for further information.

We also invite you to participate in the fundraising plan, strategic planning session, and business plan development sessions with the A.C.C.S. Ahousaht Cultural Center Society) which will take place in the near future.