

Action Plan



**Opportunities @ Home
KapusKasing and Region**

February 2002

www.fnetbcfne.on.ca/YouthForum/Youth_Forum.html

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Introduction



The Issue

Youth are leaving the North—should we worry about it? Can we do anything to stop losing our youth? The answer to both questions is yes.

First we should be clear about the nature of the problem. To provide a common statistical basis about the issue, the Far Northeast Training Board (FNETB)¹ commissioned a demographic study, 'Youth Out-Migration from the FNETB Area' released in March 2001². Our major problem in the North is declining population overall and for youth. The problem is compounded because we are not attracting a large number of youth in-migrants³. The population in NE Ontario continues to decline while the population increases in the rest of the province. Between 1981 and 1996 the overall population of the Northeast declined by 6.2% while Ontario as a whole grew by 25%, a discrepancy of more than 30%⁴. These population trends are projected to continue. In Ontario between 2001 and 2011, total and youth populations are projected to each increase by 13%. On the contrary, in the Northeast, total population is expected to decline by 1.7% and youth population by 9%⁵. The losses are compounded when youth settle and raise their families elsewhere. These losses result in a lower birth rate and the consequential detrimental effects on the Northern economy extend into the next generation. The net effect is to drive population away and reduce the likelihood of attracting in-migrants.

Demographic changes specific to the Kapuskasing area⁶ include:

Predictions are that the North Claybelt will have the second greatest population decline from 1981-2006 (-19.2%), well above the average losses for the entire FNETB region.

At 60%, the francophone population in this area is far above the provincial average of 4.5% and the FNETB average of 38%. With 5,235 francophones, the North Claybelt area is the second largest francophone community in NE Ontario (behind Timmins and ahead of Kirkland Lake). Youth in the North Claybelt area are located primarily in Kapuskasing (3,000), Iroquois Falls (1,100) and Cochrane (1,100).

The North Claybelt region shows the highest movement out of the FNETB area as compared to all other FNETB subareas.

¹The FNETB area covers Northeastern Ontario stretching from the Tri-Town area in the south to the coastal communities of James Bay in the north. It is bound by the Quebec border on the east and by the communities of Chapleau and Hornepayne on its western side.

² Available from FNETB at 1 -800-530-9176 or 705-362-5788 or on the FNETB website at www.fnetbcfne.on.ca/

³ Suthy Holler Associates, "FNETB Research Report, Youth Out-Migration from the FNETB Area", p32.

⁴ Ibid., p5.

⁵ Ibid., p9.

⁶ Corresponds to FedNor's CFDC region of the North Claybelt Community Business Development Corporation based in Kapuskasing (also serving Smooth Rock Falls).

Introduction Continued...



The stability of the francophone population is decreasing, i.e. they are becoming more mobile.

The highest level of education for francophones is a slightly below the Ontario average (13% vs. 15.5% achieving college diplomas and 3.2% vs. 4.4% achieving university degrees).

From 2001-2006, the North Claybelt region is expected to have the highest rate of youth out-migration in the 20-24 age group.

Kapuskasing jobs in the knowledge economy (considered critical for keeping up) are limited to some Business and Finance positions. Given the Kapuskasing economy, we should see more knowledge-based jobs in Senior Management and Natural and Applied Sciences. But the numbers aren't there. Similar to the other areas of the FNETB, Kapuskasing employs fewer people in new economy jobs in comparison to the rest of the province.

During 2001-2006, absolute net youth out-migration from Kapuskasing is expected to be 647. 150 youth per year need to be retained in or attracted to the Kapuskasing area to compensate for out-migration⁷.

Population loss, particularly the loss of the youth cohort, has been identified as a key issue affecting the development and economy of Northeastern Ontario. Across the Northeast, the effect of overall population loss is evident in reductions in the availability and levels of service. Obvious sectors include transportation (air, rail), health care and education. Youth understand this general economic situation and are influenced by existing trends when choosing to leave the North for educational and employment opportunities. One of these trends is a preference for urban centres even if a desired job were available in a smaller community⁸. Addressing the problem of Youth Out-Migration encompasses all aspects of Northern life in our small communities.

Background – Model Development

A Steering Committee (of representatives from the Far Northeast Training Board (FNETB) and community stakeholders from Kirkland Lake) in conjunction with a Coordinator (sponsored by the Fed Nor Internship program) developed a format for Youth Forums suitable for use across the Northeast. This approach was pilot tested and refined during the Kirkland Lake Youth Forum held in May 2001. Follow-up meetings provided a template for forum reports and action plans.

⁷Presentation by Chris Rees, Suthey Holler Associates. Also see Suthey Holler Associates, "FNETB Research Report (Companion Volume), Youth Out-Migration from the FNETB Area".

⁸ Suthey Holler Associates, "FNETB Report, Youth Out-Migration from the FNETB area", p32.

Introduction Continued...



Local Forum

A local Steering Committee was formed with representatives from FNETB, Collège Boréal, Connexion emploi, Université de Hearst in Kapuskasing, local high schools, Kapuskasing Chamber of Commerce, the North Claybelt Community Futures and the Kapuskasing District Labour Council to plan Kapuskasing's forum. In February 2002, a Youth Forum held at the Centre de Loisirs considered the issues around youth out-migration for the Kapuskasing region. The event was attended by 116 participants (67 francophone and 49 anglophone) from Kapuskasing and Cochrane. 90 participants represented youth aged 15-29 while 26 others were community stakeholders from industry, small business and municipal government.

During the day, participants learned about the problem of Youth Out-Migration from the area and identified strategies that could help keep youth in the community of Kapuskasing in Northeastern Ontario. The Kapuskasing forum was organized into two concurrent groups—English and French. The intent was to identify recommendations common and unique to the linguistic groups. Results showed that both groups emphasized access to English and French opportunities and proposed similar recommendations. Consequently, input from both groups was integrated to form the substance of this report.

Outcomes

Forum planning has endeavoured to assure that recommendations to address Youth Out-Migration will move forward. Recommendations will be moved as closely as possible towards implementation on two levels.

Seven similar forums are either complete or planned by the FNETB across Northeastern Ontario—in Kirkland Lake, Timmins, Kapuskasing, Haileybury, Hearst, Moose Factory and Chapleau. From each of these Forums will come more information and ideas, some local and specific in nature, others with a more regional focus. The cumulative effect of this regional activity will be sets of statistical data which are comparable and can be updated. From this comes the potential, perhaps for the first time, to develop coordinated strategies based on a common factual basis. The Northeast will be able to speak authoritatively about solutions to the issue of youth out-migration.

Most important, though, is the response of communities at the local level. Following each local forum, the project will continue with dissemination of the recommendations and action plan to community constituents. Youth and stakeholders from the community, who developed the recommendations in this report, will play a critical role in transferring responsibility for action to the local level. If each small community implements a small portion of the recommendations, momentum will build and drive actions at the regional level.

By better understanding this issue and by finding the common ground for our geographically dispersed communities, we can keep more of our youth here and happy in the North East.

Recommendations



The strategies brought forth by Youth Forum participants have been grouped into eleven recommendations as follows:

1. Offer more post-secondary education
2. Promote local jobs
3. Promote Northern lifestyle
4. Offer social and cultural activities
5. Develop a local youth committee linked to town council
6. Diversify and modernize businesses
7. Improve opportunities for the disabled
8. Offer incentives to work and study in the North

Each recommendation is explained under four headings:

- ▶ Issue
- ▶ Opportunities @ Home
- ▶ Challenges.
- ▶ Summary

Opportunities @ Home is the theme for the Youth Forum and therefore a suitable heading for the positive potential of each recommendation.

These recommendations are based on the discussions of participants at the Kapuskasing Youth Forum. A complete list of the discussion statements is in Appendix I. Full participant analysis of each statement is available from the Far Northeast Training Board at 1-800-530-9176 or 705-362-5788.

"I had to go away to see how much I missed the North. Kap is on its way up!"

– Government Employee Panelist

1 - Offer more post-secondary education



The Issue

Post-secondary education in the area offers few opportunities to remain in the North Claybelt area and complete a field of study. Courses are primarily in French offered by Collège Boréal's Centre for Excellence in Forestry of Northern Ontario (CEFNO) and Université de Hearst's General Arts programs. Northern College has only a storefront operation with no on-site courses. Students continuing their studies beyond high school must relocate to complete programs or to take courses in other fields. This means leaving their families along with additional moving and living costs. Their money is lost to the Kapuskasing community as well as access to their skills as graduates, if they continue to work where they studied.

Opportunities @ Home

- ▶ Focus on attracting students to bilingual programs.
- ▶ Offer complete college and university programs in English and French such as Business, Technology, Teacher Education, Law, Arts.
- ▶ Offer bilingual entrepreneurial education at all levels.
- ▶ Offer courses for people to improve their French and/or English.
- ▶ Build a post-secondary/graduate school in English and French.
- ▶ Build a residence.
- ▶ Offer on-line courses.
- ▶ Promote programs extensively.
- ▶ Offer different branches of a subject, e.g. European, Scottish and Canadian history.
- ▶ Emphasize courses that are not presently available here.
- ▶ Offer study abroad programs.
- ▶ Include more co-op opportunities.
- ▶ Affiliate with large universities to be able to take advantage of additional opportunities.
- ▶ Survey youth to find out their interests and to ensure programs are specific to their needs.
- ▶ Specialize in the health sector.
- ▶ Provide career and vocational guidance into new, local programs.

Challenges

- ▶ If people don't leave, they may continue to take the North for granted because individuals don't appreciate what they have until it's gone.
- ▶ Setting up new programs will require additional funding.
- ▶ Ensuring adequate enrollment in a course to warrant hiring more professors.
- ▶ Finding jobs to keep graduates here.

1 - Offer more post-secondary education cont'd



Summary

Living at home while studying reduces the cost of college or university education. Staying in Kapuskasing also makes it easier for students to build a network within the community and increases chances they will continue to work in the North once their studies are completed.

Kapusksasing area youth are looking for educational opportunities in both French and English that can be completed without leaving the community. A focus for post-secondary offerings needs to be determined as a basis for expanding existing education facilities (Northern College, Collège Boréal, Université de Hearst, Contact North) consistent with youth interests and the local job market of Northeastern Ontario. Although partnerships with industry, education and government will be needed to access additional funding, forum participants felt developing more post-secondary educational opportunities had the most potential to keep youth in the North.

“Youth workers are needed as 18 Northern municipalities work together to establish Destination Nord. Get to know your community, its history and culture. Get involved in ecotourism activities such as rafting, skiing, kayaking, white water rescue.” – Tourism Panelist

“It was hard to come back North because of my friends, apartment and credit card debt but I kept my priorities straight. In Kap, I can have a job and a life, too. I saw Kap's good points and got into the Northern lifestyle, e.g. I bought a German shepherd and dog sled.” – Entrepreneur Panelist

“Multi-trades personnel are in demand. Small companies are looking for a broad base of skills, team players and skilled communicators.” – Mining Industry Panelist

2 - Promote local jobs



The Issue

Because of limited career information and practical experience, youth are often unsure what career to pursue. On top of this, youth don't know what local jobs are available. They are convinced that they must leave the area to find employment and, too often, see no compelling reasons to return after graduation.

Opportunities @ Home

- ▶ Require mandatory work placements to obtain diploma, specifying the number of hours in each chosen career or profession.
- ▶ Offer co-ops and work placements to give students experience so they can determine if they are making the right career choice.
- ▶ From the employers' perspective, require work placements before hiring.
- ▶ Provide more flexibility in co-ops, e.g. schedule during non-academic high school semesters and find ways to address lack of time in the curriculum.
- ▶ Provide a listing of potential employment opportunities (EMPLO) using the Web. This site will provide information to high school students about potential careers found locally and to graduates from post secondary institutions. EMPLO stations “open a door” for youth, who left the area to complete their education, to return, work and remain in the North.
- ▶ Devote certain times to promoting different professions, e.g. one profession per week.
- ▶ Present all aspects of jobs and professions.
- ▶ Offer information about professions earlier, i.e. in elementary and secondary school.
- ▶ Schools should offer presentations of all career levels, e.g. skills, technology, degree.
- ▶ Provide access to different educational establishments, e.g. university, college, even though not a student's first choice.
- ▶ Disseminate more information about jobs occupied by youth.
- ▶ Provide youth with more information on youth out-migration.
- ▶ At the elementary school level, include educational trips, e.g. to MNR, Agrium Mine, Fire Department, Tembec. Visit different industry sectors.
- ▶ Support improved guidance services by high school teachers.
- ▶ Increase advertising of educational programs, jobs and career opportunities.
- ▶ Employers need to communicate with students in the early years of high school.
- ▶ Local employers should promote careers available in the area including advantages and wages.
- ▶ Employers should be more visible, e.g. identify themselves in job advertisements.

2 - Promote local jobs cont'd



Challenges

- ▶ Creating awareness of the EMPLO website as well as securing development funds, overcoming language barriers, providing security and ensuring self-sufficiency.
- ▶ Finding the right people to make presentations.
- ▶ Little time for co-ops in the new curriculum.
- ▶ Businesses and organizations may not be open to having learners due to small size, lack of supervisors, union guidelines, concerns about workplace security and work hours.
- ▶ Lack of work placement opportunities in specific fields, e.g. naturopath.
- ▶ Lack of transportation and the cost of work uniforms may prevent some students from taking advantage of certain work placements.
- ▶ The school system has undergone so many changes that personnel may not be open to more changes.
- ▶ Obtaining government funding to support co-ops and work placements.

Summary

Employers and schools need to work together to ensure youth know what is available locally and the educational requirements to enter these fields. Comprehensive, realistic career information in combination with practical co-op and work placement experiences will help youth make the best career choices. Most forum participants felt promoting local opportunities has great potential for retaining youth in the area.

“The environment can be seen as an obstacle or stepping stone in coming back. When you come back, everyone knows you—your contacts and background are already there. You will already be comfortable in your environment and know what's here and what people want. You can make your own opportunities in Northern Ontario.” — Entrepreneur Panelist

3 - Promote Northern lifestyle



The Issue

Many Northerners don't recognize the value of their North lifestyle. Beautiful surroundings close to nature and outdoor activities, opportunities to work and live in French or English, friendly people that know each other by name and the comfort of safe neighbourhoods are not available elsewhere. Youth who have not lived in the city may not realize the costs of hectic city life where traveling eats up several hours per day.

Opportunities @ Home

- ▶ Use technology to access to resources outside the region.
- ▶ Promote community life in small, northern towns, e.g. close contact with family, neighbourhoods for raising families, job opportunities, and recreational activities.
- ▶ Market other incentives besides eco-tourism such as arts and cultural events.
- ▶ Promote the benefits of Northern lifestyle such as close to nature, clean, safe, convenient and spacious.
- ▶ Promote existing community spirit and small town values, e.g. friendliness of the people of the North.
- ▶ Take advantage of the excellent community facility, Centre de Loisirs, in Kapuskasing to offer more activities.
- ▶ Less competition means room for innovation and creativity, e.g. to start-up businesses.
- ▶ Promote combining both worlds: experiences in larger centres and other parts of the world are available by visits without moving from the North.

Challenges

- ▶ Must also address the disadvantages of living in the North, e.g. fewer training options, fewer stores, fewer activities, fewer specialized services, less cultural diversity, necessity to travel for services only available in larger centres, fewer opportunities for personal and professional advancement, fewer jobs, smaller markets because of sparse population.
- ▶ Regulations for other interest groups can interfere with enjoyment of outdoor activities, e.g. cancellation of spring bear hunt has resulted in more incidents with bears and people.
- ▶ Need to have a variety of activities to appeal to different preferences.

Summary

Promotion of Northern lifestyle needs to highlight the advantages of small Northern communities that are unavailable in bigger, southern cities. It needs to focus on all-season outdoor activities to build pride in our Northern heritage so that our Youth will decide to stay or come back.

4 - Offer social and cultural activities



The Issue

Youth are looking for fun and activities to do with their friends. Being involved in their community encourages youth to stay while at the same time keeps them out of trouble. The Kapuskasing area offers few youth groups and family-oriented activities.

Opportunities @ Home

- ▶ Offer circuses, shows, dances to support tourism; have performances in the schools, too.
- ▶ Provide experiences found in larger centres such as trips organized by Voyage Lacroix.
- ▶ Establish organizations for youth, clubs, competitions and sports.
- ▶ Organize evenings with themes, e.g. rave, disco, 80's, 70's.
- ▶ Provide age-specific clubs or modern hang-outs in Kapuskasing, e.g. a club for young teens who are underage for the bars, a coffee house for high school, college and university youth.
- ▶ Provide a variety of entertainment, e.g. offer plays, dinner theatres, big band concerts.
- ▶ Feature a "Wonderland" for Northern Ontario with attractions that will draw worldwide attention.
- ▶ Offer fun activities such as parties and male beauty pageants.
- ▶ Build sidewalks for roller bladers or paths for long walks in the bush.

Challenges

- ▶ The community doesn't have much money to cover the high cost of establishing more activities.
- ▶ Not all youth will want to participate.
- ▶ Locating a facility to house youth-oriented activities.
- ▶ Need to determine the market for activities and how to attract people from outside the area.
- ▶ Short summer season.
- ▶ Need people to provide support services for attractions.

Summary

Youth want more activities for all ages. They also recognize the need to create more youth organizations to build commitment to youth who in turn will use the organizations to become more involved in their community. A wider variety of social and cultural activities will help retain youth and improve community participation by the population in general. If our youth are satisfied while growing up here, as adults, they are more likely to return or stay in Kapuskasing.

5 - Develop a local youth committee linked to town council



The Issue

Few opportunities exist for youth to express their views and to become valuable contributors to the community. With no direct links between youth and town council, adult and youth opinions continue to diverge with each group having little appreciation for the other's perspectives.

Opportunities @ Home

- ▶ Representatives from each high school, college and university will bring youth's views and interests.
- ▶ Elect a new committee each year to provide a forum for differing opinions and ideas.
- ▶ Appoint a representative from the college or university on the town council to improve the voice of youth.
- ▶ Organize visits within the region before going elsewhere, e.g. to beaches, excursions.
- ▶ Give youth a greater sense of responsibility and involve them in the community.
- ▶ Increase youth's awareness of what is going on in town, e.g. volunteer activities, dances, contests.
- ▶ Do surveys to determine youth opinions. Publish interviews in the media.

Challenges

- ▶ Finding youth who will dedicate time to this committee.
- ▶ Building acceptance of the youth committee by adults.
- ▶ Finding start-up funding, followed by ongoing fund raising.
- ▶ Overcoming biases about youth.
- ▶ Fostering a youth orientation by gaining support for youth's ideas and trends.

Summary

Establishing a Youth Committee connected with the town council will help develop Kapuskasing's leaders of tomorrow. This committee will bring youth and adults closer together providing opportunities for improved understanding and for greater success in meeting varied needs. Youth will feel like they are part of the community and that they can make a difference.

6 - Diversify and modernize businesses



The Issue

Historically, the Kapuskasing economy has been based on forestry. To expand, the community needs to move away from the wastable resource economy and dependency on natural resources. Like many other small Northern communities, Kapuskasing is having difficulty maintaining its existing infrastructure for transportation and health care. Diversification into service and knowledge based industries will expand employment opportunities, improve health care and commercial services and create spin-offs in other industries such as tourism.

Opportunities @ Home

- ▶ Survey local residents to find out what they are looking for or want.
- ▶ Develop a Northern Ontario amusement park.
- ▶ Combine summer and winter activities in promotional materials, e.g. ice hotel.
- ▶ Base modernization on franchises that have successful reputations, e.g. Wal-Mart, Your Independent Grocer, for guaranteed success.
- ▶ Open up service industries, e.g. military base, university.
- ▶ Bring information services to the North built on improved telecommunications infrastructure.
- ▶ For better health care, offer more clinics and bring specialists to the North.
- ▶ Encourage youth to obtain higher education to prepare for the demands of jobs in the service and information sectors.

Challenges

- ▶ Some services have negative stigma, e.g. military, prisons.
- ▶ Initial capital investment and maintenance funding will be needed.
- ▶ The required updates to telecommunications infrastructure are very expensive.
- ▶ Guaranteeing sufficient "market" for prospective industries/businesses.
- ▶ Overcoming the limitations of Northern weather.
- ▶ Determining locations for tourist attractions and industry sites.

Summary

Youth, like other residents, want modern community services to make them feel that Kapuskasing will continue to be a good place to live, work and raise their families. Although forestry will likely continue to be Kapuskasing's primary economic driver, youth need to know that the industry is progressively requiring more highly skilled workers. Long term goals to diversify into service and technology based industries have the potential to build a stronger economic base for the community and attract or retain youth by the increased variety of available jobs. Financial support from government is definitely needed to make this transition.

7 - Improve opportunities for the disabled



The Issue

With very few businesses in Kapuskasing being accessible to the disabled, it is no surprise that job opportunities for local disabled youth are very limited.

Opportunities @ Home

- ▶ Increased accessibility for the disabled will also overcome mobility restrictions for an aging population.
- ▶ The lower cost of living in the North has advantages for everyone including the disabled.
- ▶ Personal transportation devices have increased the visibility of the disabled and encourage others to face up to issues.
- ▶ Appreciating a disabled person's perspective provides a basis for creating opportunities and opening doors.

Challenges

- ▶ The cost is too high to change all buildings to make them more accessible.
- ▶ Finding careers for the disabled from limited choices.
- ▶ It is extremely difficult to overcome judgmental attitudes.

Summary

Meeting the needs of the disabled adds value to all in the community. Increasing accessibility to buildings is a small first step—full time local employment as the ultimate goal. Both will require highly motivated and committed individuals in the Kapuskasing community.

"It's good to leave the North to see and experience other people, things and ideas. When you come back, you will have ideas to share with others in Kap."

— Dentistry Panelist

8 - Offer incentives to work and study in the North



The Issue

Although youth in the North remain with their parents longer than in other parts of the province, they still want to become independent while avoiding a huge debt load often associated with post secondary education. Two problems exist—providing additional financial support so that students can take advantage of post-secondary programs offered in the North and secondly, for the students that must leave, encouraging them to return after completion of studies. Different incentives are needed to address each.

Opportunities @ Home

- ▶ Offer promotions, salary bonuses, tourist attractions, family activities, further education.
- ▶ Guarantee jobs in the North.
- ▶ Offer competitive wages and bonuses for the educated to return after completing their schooling.
- ▶ Provide more high paying employment opportunities.
- ▶ Offer more bursaries so that educated people return to the North.
- ▶ Offer bursaries to support pursuing post-secondary education in the North.
- ▶ Use bursaries to create links between students and businesses.
- ▶ Involve the community with schools in setting up bursaries. Recognize contributors.
- ▶ The bursary should go directly to tuition fees and the rest, if any, given to the student.
- ▶ Bursaries should be distributed at the beginning of the school year so that students can decide whether or not they can afford to continue with their studies.

Challenges

- ▶ Community businesses and individuals may not want to fund bursaries.
- ▶ Bursary awards may not be spent on schooling.
- ▶ Education is already heavily funded by government; chances of getting additional support are slim.
- ▶ If everything is paid for, then students may lose sight of the importance of school. It is important that a certain amount be the student's responsibility so he/she understands the importance of school and money.
- ▶ Targeting those who really need assistance to receive bursaries.
- ▶ Fulfilling the requirements of a bursary may become an obligation and not what the individual wants. People must come back to the North of their own free will.

8 - Offer incentives to work and study in the North cont'd



Summary

A coordinated program of post-secondary education incentives needs to be developed by government and industry to invest in the youth of the North. These programs need to provide the financial support necessary to enable more students to attend post-secondary institutions in the Kapuskasing area. Industry incentives such as scholarships and guaranteed employment will help to maintain connections with students who leave for college or university and make it more attractive for them to return to the North after graduation.

“Don't expect a company or the government to make a job for you. You have to learn an entrepreneurial approach and want to be an entrepreneur.” – Entrepreneur Panelist

“A big town means big competition. Here, a professional doesn't have to work 5 days per week as in the city to make ends meet. You can decide your work hours in the North.” – Dentistry Panelist

“Local recruiters lean toward Northerners because they know the North and realize the North is a good place to stay.” – Forest Industry Panelist

Action Plan for Implementation



The purpose of the Action Plan is to identify initiatives that will facilitate the transfer of responsibility for implementing Youth Forum recommendations to appropriate local organizations.

The Action Plan for the Recommendations consists of four strategies, each of which is described below:

- A.** Get Back Into Communities
- B.** Inform Community Groups about Youth Forum Recommendations
- C.** Build Momentum of Local Support to Address Youth Out-Migration
- D.** Build Bridges to Develop Regional Strategies to Address Youth Out-Migration

A. Get Back into Communities

Informing the general public is the first step in implementing the recommendations. The entire community of Kapuskasing needs to know that the implementation phase of the project is now under way because awareness of the results creates motivation for change.

Action

The release of the Action Plan will take place during a press conference attended by the sponsors and participants of the Youth Forum as well as members of the general public.

An advertising campaign will take place to support the release of the Action Plan. This will ensure that the citizens of Kapuskasing are aware that the implementation phase of the project is underway.

B. Inform Community Groups about Youth Forum Recommendations

Informing community groups about the Youth Forum recommendations is another key step in the implementing results of this project. Youth and community players will need to work together with youth and community players who are committed to making changes needed to attract or keep youth in the community.

Action

The report will be sent to all interested or affected local and regional community leaders, organizations and municipalities. Doing this, will raise awareness of the recommendations brought forth during Youth Forum. This report, together with the reports from the other Youth Forums being held in the Northeast, will ultimately be posted on the Youth Forum web site in PDF format for any individuals or organizations wishing to download the document. The Forum web site can be found at www.fnetbcfne.on.ca/YouthForum/Youth_Forum.html.

C. Build Momentum of Local Support to Address Youth Out-Migration

The recommendations cannot be implemented without local participation. Steps will be taken to get key community members involved to build local support for actions which address youth out-migration.

Action

Partners will be recruited to help build community buy-in for the recommendations outlined in this report. Partners may be community participants of the Forum, youth participants, as well as members of the general public.

Furthermore, community leaders, organizations and municipalities will be presented with an opportunity to do their part in ensuring the implementation of recommendations. During presentations, key community players will be invited to involve themselves in effecting change.

The cumulative effect of individuals and organizations taking small actions across the Kapuskasing area and ultimately across the Northeast will lend credibility and substance to efforts to attract and retain youth.

D. Build Bridges to Develop Regional Strategies to Address Youth Out-Migration

The Kapuskasing forum is one of seven taking place across Northeastern Ontario. All forums will be looking at ways to address youth out-migration. The FNETB steering committee has taken steps throughout this project to develop regional strategies that will help all of Northeastern Ontario achieve its objective of alleviating the out-migration of youth.

Action

In order to help build bridges and develop regional strategies across Northeastern Ontario on how to address youth out-migration, the FNETB steering committee has developed the format and process for a regional report. The regional report will consist of the findings and recommendations from all seven forums.

Furthermore, the recommendations from all seven forums will be distributed to all pertinent regional stakeholders in an attempt to prepare them for possible future regional presentations and requests.

Conclusion



Conclusion

The goal of the Kapuskasing Youth Forum is to create an Action Plan to help the Kapuskasing area deal with the out-migration of its youth. The recommendations outlined in this report identify specific actions for the Kapuskasing region.

The responsibility now shifts to the Kapuskasing community to implement these recommendations. Effective change will require full support from all community levels: government (municipal, regional, provincial, and federal), business, industry, education, volunteer groups and individuals. By working together to make small, incremental changes, the community can make a difference to keep our most valuable natural resource of the future our youth.

"If you want a job in health care,. there is opportunity for you here." – Health Care Panelist

"Volunteer and get involved. From your guidance counselor, find out market trends



Process for Developing Recommendations

Participants worked in groups to develop statements proposing a specific action which could be taken to encourage youth to stay in or return to the North. Each statement began with “We can retain/attract youth by ...” and was completed by an action intended to create opportunities at home for youth. Each group was mixed, with both youth and stakeholder participants, and generated 5 statements which were transcribed onto sheets. Back in plenary, the statements were posted, with similar ideas grouped together, and explained so that the larger group could understand the intent of each proposal.

Once all ideas were posted, participants signed up for discussion groups. Discussion was based on generating the 'plus', 'minus', and 'interesting' (PMI) points as well as background information about the propositions.

PMI results were presented to the large group and then posted for participants to add additional information. In plenary, the group identified ideas which were 1) the most effective in the long term 2) the most likely to get buy-in and 3) the easiest or quickest to implement. The discussion statements selected by the participants became Recommendations that form the basis of the Action Plan.

The detailed analysis for each of the following discussion statements is available from the Far Northeast Training Board, 1-800-530-9176 or 705-362-5788.

Discussion Statements (in random order)

WE CAN RETAIN OR ATTRACT YOUTH BY . . .

- ▶ Opening up service industries, e.g. military base, universities.
- ▶ Bringing tertiary/quaternary industries such as service and information to the North.
- ▶ Offering University courses in English and French and/or Teachers' College in the North.
- ▶ Building a post secondary/graduate school in English and French.
- ▶ Offering Bilingual post secondary education and be able to complete it here.
- ▶ Providing educational programs, e.g. co-op, College, University.
- ▶ Providing English post secondary courses.
- ▶ More College programs, e.g. Business, Teacher Training, Technology, Law, Arts.
- ▶ Offering bilingual concrete entrepreneurship education at all levels.
- ▶ Courses for people to improve French/English.
- ▶ Having more post secondary courses available in Kapuskasing.
- ▶ Need incentives, e.g. promotions, salary bonus, tourist attractions, town activities for family and kids, further education.
- ▶ Emphasizing the lower cost of living in a small town.
- ▶ Guaranteeing jobs in the North.
- ▶ Competitive wages/bonuses for the educated to come back after school.
- ▶ More employment opportunities.
- ▶ More jobs—more opportunities, higher paying.
- ▶ Increasing community spending to increase jobs, etc.
- ▶ More advertisement for educational programs, jobs, career opportunities.
- ▶ Having employers communicate with students in the early years of high school to let them know of employment possibilities.
- ▶ Local employers promoting long term employment availability in the area and its advantages and earnings.
- ▶ Employers being more visible, i.e. identify themselves rather than responding to ads in paper to P.O. Box #.

- ▶ Promoting community life, e.g. raise a family, activity, recreation, creating jobs, festivals, schools.
- ▶ Marketing other incentives besides eco-tourism, e.g. arts, culture.
- ▶ More leisure activities, e.g. community activities, groups and clubs.
- ▶ Promoting the Northern lifestyle and its benefits (nature, safety and convenience).
- ▶ Emphasizing benefits of a small community such as cleaner, safer and less overcrowding.
- ▶ Promoting small town values, e.g. friendliness of the people of the North.
- ▶ Creating/developing recreational programs for Youth.
- ▶ Organizing more youth oriented activities.
- ▶ Less discrimination, e.g. women vs. men, bilingualism, cultural.
- ▶ Being less judgmental.
- ▶ Bring specialists to the North for better health care.
- ▶ Entertainment, e.g. plays, dinner theatre, big bands.
- ▶ Featuring a “Wonderland” for Northern Ontario–Tourism.
- ▶ More parties and attractive men.
- ▶ More employment opportunities and diversification of facilities for physically disabled persons.
- ▶ EMPLO–employment potential listings and opportunities.
- ▶ Increase local public awareness (stores), so we can keep the businesses that we have.
- ▶ Modernize!!!
- ▶ Encourage guidance counselors to promote careers available in the community.
- ▶ Open more businesses to create jobs.
- ▶ Because small towns are quiet, it is an ideal place to raise a family safely, a model town.
Offer a wider variety of courses, e.g. welder, mechanic, nursing–complete programs.
- ▶ Encourage post-secondary institutions to offer programs that are in demand.
- ▶ Colleges in the North should offer complete courses/programs (diploma).
- ▶ Have complete college and university programs in our community.
- ▶ Offer courses that other Boréal colleges do not offer.
- ▶

- ▶ Have a bigger campus with a pub, a residence for the University and for the College, and have more scholarships.
- ▶ Have more career choices with the education offered in the North. Maybe through Université de Hearst, Collège Boréal or Northern College. Also have another college or university that would offer courses that are not being offered now.
- ▶ Have a wider choice for training.
- ▶ Have more complete courses and more course options.
- ▶ Offer more post-secondary programs.
- ▶ Easy to get people to know us and start a small business.
- ▶ Personalize services offered by the university and the college, e.g. study abroad, be more flexible—the town is small.
- ▶ Offer more financial support to study in the North.
- ▶ Offer more bursaries.
- ▶ Form a youth committee so that Kapuskasing council could hear youths opinions.
- ▶ Integrate youth in the community with more hands-on, in the social and cultural life of the town.
- ▶ Have more presentations like today (in the schools, etc.) because it certainly influenced me.
- ▶ Have forums with more people.
- ▶ Promote the jobs available.
- ▶ Create new businesses more jobs.
- ▶ Offer presentations made by professionals who would come and explain their trade that they practice in the North.
- ▶ Create apprenticeship types of jobs in the summer.
- ▶ Involve employers in primary and secondary schools.
- ▶ Offer better guidance services (prior learning) and have students who attended college or university share their experiences.
- ▶ Prepare youth for the Northern labour market.

- ▶ Revise hiring criteria with potential employers, e.g. hire qualified workers and not based on seniority.
- ▶ Develop partnerships with local enterprises so that they could guarantee jobs for youth who come out of university or college.
- ▶ Continue to promote the tourism sector.
- ▶ Promote tourism at the provincial level.
- ▶ Offer more government programs (placements, co-ops, programs for young graduates, volunteerism).
- ▶ Develop partnerships with employers through co-op placements, days at work, etc.
- ▶ Have diverse activities geared to youth, e.g. circuses, shows.
- ▶ Have more cultural activities, e.g. dances for youth, amateur concerts.
- ▶ Have more activities for youth/teens (e.g. dances, clubs, competitions, lumberjack for youth, evenings with themes such as rave, disco, 80's) in their own building with more marketing.
- ▶ Have an organization that would allow youth to get involved in the community and inform youth of that organization.
- ▶ Inform youth of activities that are offered in the community because we always say that there is nothing to do; make presentations in the schools.
- ▶ From the North, offer us the same opportunities and experiences as in large centers, e.g. Voyage Lacroix.
- ▶ Offer a variety of opportunities and activities (cultural and social) so that youth can discover their potential.
- ▶ Publish literature on community activities and sports.
- ▶ Offer more free activities and more often (every week), e.g. ski hills, roller blade park, etc.
- ▶ Offer more tourist attractions.