



# Youth, Mental Health & The Justice System

Presented by  
Insp. Brian Ford



# Youth Criminal Justice Act

- Youth Criminal Justice Act, 2003
  - Protect Canadians
  - Prevent Crime
  - Promote Accountability, Responsibility & Respect
  - Ensure meaningful consequences for young people



# Youth Criminal Justice Act

- FPF has provided Extrajudicial Measures for the last 6 years by way of:
  - Warnings
  - Cautions
  - Conferences
- Formal sanctions completed by other Public Safety Departments such as Probation Services



# Strategic Changes

- 2006 FPF introduced a new Crime Reduction Strategy
- Proactive plan developed to engage police and community partners
- Service gap identified Youth at Risk whom were dealing either directly or indirectly with mental health issues



# Youth @ Risk Coordinator

- Youth at Risk Intervention Strategy designed to provide comprehensive police services to Y@R
- Focus placed on education, prevention, intervention and reintegration
- Attention given to youth who have or are at risk of coming into contact with the law



# Responsibilities Y@R Coordinator

- Become a critical link with youth
- Build community partnerships as a means to meet the needs of the youth with a focus on crime reduction
  - Community Youth Action Team (CYAT)



# Youth @ Risk Coordinator

- June 2009 implemented a full time Youth@Risk Coordinator to ensure a consistent and collaborative approach in the community involving;
  - Individuals
  - Families
  - Professional and Community Partners



# Risk & Protective Factors

- Action plans for intervention must consider the risk and protective factors
- Intervention strategies must be appropriate and relevant to the needs of the youth and society





# Risk & Protective Factors

- Numerous factors can contribute and influence a range of behaviours defined as youth violence or anti-social
- Important to consider these factors to understand the nature of the problem
- Important to understand factors that build resiliency and potentially protect youth



# Risk & Protective Factors

- A single risk factor does not by itself cause anti-social or violent behaviour
- Believed multiple factors combine to shape an adolescents behaviour



# Risk & Protective Factors

- Studies suggest the confluence of certain “risk” factors contribute to violent or anti-social behaviour
- The existence of certain “protective factors” create resiliency
- Effective intervention should take these factors into account



# Risk & Protective Factors

- Understanding the dynamic between risk and protective factors is to view them through a frame work
- Each person functions within a complex network that impacts their capacity to avoid risk
- Past practise was to focus on the individual not the relationship to their surroundings



# Education / Prevention

- The Fredericton Police Force has always supported good education as part of a prevention program
- The School Safety Program from K-5 is entrenched in our elementary local schools and our High School Resource Officers in each of our High Schools.



# Education / Prevention

- Research and experience show that high risk and troubled youth often come to the attention of school officials, teachers and the police at a very young age.
- Youth ranging from middle school to age 17 tend to be offenders and or victims of crime at a higher rate than the average population
- Risk is greater in First Nation's Youth.



# Community Youth Action Team

- FPF recognized a gap in service implementing intervention programs
- Intervention programs do exist with existing community partners
- CYAT formed to seek solutions and implement a multi-disciplinary solution that may involve the family, informal supports and the community



# Questions?

