



MAPLE RIDGE LAUNCHES RISE INITIATIVE TO PREVENT YOUTH GUN AND GANG VIOLENCE

Maple Ridge, B.C., March 8, 2024 – The City of Maple Ridge and Ridge Meadows RCMP, in collaboration with community partners, is launching RISE, a new initiative aimed at preventing youth gun and gang violence.

To mark the launch of RISE, youth and families are invited to a free Open House event being held on Tuesday, March 12, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Greg Moore Youth Centre (11995 Haney Place). Youth and families can learn more about the available programs and resources and share their input while enjoying activities, food, art, games and a chance to win prizes.

“RISE is a collaborative initiative that provides youth with the supports they need to build positive social connections and feel a sense of belonging which is fundamental to building a stronger and more resilient community,” said Mayor Ruimy. “The programs provide youth with a safe place to get together, be active and have fun. Join us on March 12 to learn more and tell us what is important to you.”

Supported by the Building Safer Communities Fund, RISE aims to prevent youth involvement in gun and gang activities by offering programs and services to youth ages 10 to 18. These include recreational activities such as basketball and sound engineering, educational workshops, and wrap around outreach and counseling supports for youth and families.

Key programs include:

- Family & Youth Resource Support Team (FYRST): Early intervention program that works with youth (ages 10 to 17 who may be demonstrating risk factors) and their families.
- School's Out: Play-based activities for pre-teens
- After School Active: Supervised drop-in program with various indoor activities for pre-teens
- Movie Night Series: Safe place to watch movies with friends and make new ones
- Girls Only Basketball: Inclusive basketball program tailored for girls
- The Studio: Podcast recording and digital media program to record, edit and mix audio
- Night Hoops Basketball: Late-night inclusive basketball programming

More information about programming dates and details can be found in the [City's Spring Program Guide](#) and at the open house.

RISE is part of a comprehensive three-year plan to support initiatives with the goal of strengthening resilience and supporting positive youth development guided by the three project pillars: community

engagement, prevention, and intervention strategies. The City is working in partnership with Ridge Meadows RCMP, School District 42 and community partners to implement the \$1.8 million in funding received in 2023 from the federal government's Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF).

The program was spearheaded in November 2023 with the Ridge Meadows RCMP's Family & Youth Resource Support Team (FYRST), an early intervention program that works with youth ages 10 to 17 and their families. The program is aimed at youth who may be demonstrating risk factors of negative decision making which could lead to a gang entrenched lifestyle and criminal activity. The team is made up of a RCMP Youth Liaison Officer, Youth & Family Counsellor, and a Youth Outreach Worker.

"The Ridge Meadows RCMP is thrilled to be partnering with the City of Maple Ridge to launch RISE," said Superintendent Wendy Mehat. "Having introduced Ridge FYRST at the end of last year, we've seen it be a great way for us to provide resources and support to youth in Maple Ridge. I am excited to see the RISE initiative create an environment where our youth can thrive and flourish. "

Other BSCF initiatives include:

Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences (PACEs) Workshop – an educational workshop facilitated by Fraser Health for youth services providers.

Community Youth Summit "YOLO" (Youth Offering Listening Opportunities) – Maple Ridge Community Services is working in partnership with RISE and a variety of young people and youth service providers to host a community youth summit initiated and led by youth.

Youth Snack and Meal Program - Friends in Need Food Bank Society provides snacks and meals at the beginning of each week during the school year based on the needs identified by participating schools.

For more information about RISE and the BSCF, visit www.mapleridge.ca/RISE

For additional information, contact:

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