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Crossing Places: A Review of Urban Youth Policy 1960s–2010s

Dirk J. Rodricks and Kathleen Gallagher
with Julius Haag and Scot Wortley;
Caroline Fusco, Amanda DeLisio and
Danielle Dicarlo; Lance McCready

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Executive Summary

This report is the product of many productive discussions within the Urban Youth Working Group of the Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership (NCRP) from November 2014 through December 2017. The working group brought together community partners from youth-serving organizations and scholars from education, criminology, recreation, and social work to examine the impacts of growing urban socio-spatial inequality and polarization on youth.

The purpose of this report is to provide a high-level overview of the history and context of policies and programs in four areas affecting urban youth at the neighbourhood level: schooling, policing, recreation, and employment. Advanced graduate students Dirk Rodricks (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education), Julius Haag (criminology and socio-legal studies), Amanda DeLisio and Danielle Dicarlo (kinesiology and physical education) worked with faculty members Kathleen Gallagher, Scot Wortley, and Caroline Fusco, respectively, while Lance McCready of OISE focused on employment. They approached each of the four key areas with two critical objectives in mind:

1. To introduce non-specialists within the working group to the key policies and programs in the four areas, and
2. To create a foundation for the development of an NCRP research proposal on youth, schooling, and criminalization using a socio-spatial lens.

Each area would be further explored through four sections: (a) history and context; (b) governance and geography; (c) policy development; and (d) implementation.

The development of these primers, as they would come to be called, led to three key discoveries that organize and structure this report:

1. Young people are imagined as key beneficiaries in the development of neighbourhood-level policies and programs.
2. Neighbourhoods are not simply where (young) people are located, but significantly shape how (young) people engage in learning, leisure, and work.
3. Critical incidents and legislative interventions (often in response to such incidents), structure policy across all four areas of schooling, crime, recreation, and social work, in overlapping but fragmented, and sometimes contradictory, ways across all levels of government.

Following these discoveries, this report then places the four primers in conversation with each other so that we can obtain a more holistic appreciation of the intersecting nature of policy in the material lives of youth. Furthermore, this report includes a comprehensive review of both critical incidents and critical legislation together with their impact on schooling, policing, recreation, and employment for youth aged 13–24 (see Appendix B).

Conclusion

This report offers an important understanding of the compounding effect of disadvantage in young people's lives when policies and programs fail to recognize social difference, differential access to opportunities, and urban mobility in the lives of contemporary youth. Simply put, the

overall impact of these policies is larger than their individual effects. And such negative overall impacts often come at the cost of access and opportunities.

Recommendations

The report concludes with seven considerations for future research:

1. Researchers and policy-makers need to reconsider conventional notions of neighbourhoods as singular and geographically bounded. Youth understandings of neighbourhood are fluid and often tied to material needs and desires. Such fluidity and mobility need to be reconciled in research and future policy development.
2. Data collected through community organizations and the government, across all levels, must interplay with interlocking systems, such as the social determinants of health. Furthermore, research studies must sufficiently interrogate the ways in which discourses of neoliberalism and liberal multiculturalism structure and shape the impacts across different groups of (young) people.
3. There should be a call for greater leveraging of research partnerships between academia, government, school boards, and communities. Community centres are especially well-positioned to partner with researchers in the study of key neighbourhood and youth development and engagement questions relative to particular demographic groups.
4. Researchers need to investigate neoliberalism as a theoretical imperative in policy development for recreation, education, policing and criminalization, and employment.
5. There is an opening for creative arts-based methods, such as drama and visual sociology (such as photo-voice research), to complement traditional qualitative and quantitative methods, while also importantly activating youth expertise.
6. Technologies such as GIS and other mapping software can offer valuable tools to spatialize the “floating” or mobile urban youth experience in new and important ways, offering insights into the layering of opportunity gaps and the clustering of risk factors in the daily lives of youth.
7. Positioning youth as co-creators from the outset, rather than simply consultative partners mid-way through policy or program development processes, is one way to engage and sustain youth participation and involvement, especially since they are the ones most directly affected by these policies and programs.

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Urban Youth Working Group

The Urban Youth Working Group brings together interdisciplinary scholars from Criminology, Education, Social Work, and Kinesiology with three community partners: WoodGreen Community Services, United Way of Toronto and York Region, and Sherbourne Community Health Centre. Members of the group are interested in issues of urban youth experience. The initial goal was to advance, for the Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership (NCRP), a better understanding of opportunities and risks for youth in Greater Toronto Area (GTA) neighbourhoods. We aimed to identify what the needs are, where the gaps exist, and to generate further research inquiries that speak to the broader NCRP objectives (see <http://neighbourhoodchange.ca>).

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1. The Process

In November 2014, the Urban Youth Working group decided to carry out a high-level overview of the history and context of policies and programs in four areas affecting urban youth at the neighbourhood level: schooling, policing, recreation, and employment. Faculty members Caroline Fusco, Kathleen Gallagher, Lance McCready, and Scot Wortley worked with advanced graduate students to supervise the preparation of brief primers in each area.

The purpose of these primers was to (1) introduce non-specialists within the working group to the key policies and programs in the four areas, and (2) create a foundation for the development of an NCRP research proposal on youth, schooling, and criminalization using a socio-spatial lens. The guiding questions for the policy analysis were organized into four groups: history and context; governance and geography; policy development; and implementation.

1. History and Context
 - a. What are the most important current policy and program trends affecting youth?
 - b. What are the most significant antecedents of the current context? What have been the most important policy trends and shifts affecting youth since the 1960s?
2. Governance and Geography
 - a. At what level of government are these significant policies and programs developed and enacted: school board, municipal, provincial, or federal?
 - b. What policies and programs have a spatial component, i.e., they are aimed at the neighbourhood level or at specific neighbourhoods?
3. Policy Development
 - a. What have been the stated aspirations or purposes for the development of significant policies and programs?
 - b. What discourses are embedded in the development and marketing of policies and programs? For example, what does the policy imply about youth and neighbourhoods, and what ideas are mobilized by political actors in discussions about the policy? How do these ideas relate to the broader discussion of youth and neighbourhoods?
4. Implementation
 - a. What evidence is there about how these policies and programs are implemented?
 - b. How do they play out spatially, and in particular at the neighbourhood level?
 - c. How do they intersect, mesh, or clash structurally?
 - d. How have the discourses embedded in policies affected material conditions for youth?

- e. What is known about the varying effects of these policies and programs on different geographies and populations?
- f. What are their implications for equity, well-being, and justice for youth in specific neighbourhoods?

By structuring the research questions for each of the domains in parallel, the framework also allows for mapping of the intersections and conflicts among each of them, better reflecting the lived and messy realities of the lives of youth.

The four teams shared these preliminary primers in late February 2015. The next steps were to distil and organize the policy primers with attention to the broader questions of relevance for the NCRP project. The Urban Youth Working group developed the following framework to further develop these four primers.

NCRP is documenting trends of increasing inequality and polarization in Toronto and other Canadian cities, seeking explanations for those trends, examining their consequences, and identifying policy and program interventions that seem to make a difference. It's in that context that we are focusing on youth, especially racialized, low-income youth in neighborhoods whose economic status is steadily declining, and the intersection of schooling and criminalization in their lives. We consider trends in schooling and criminalization (and the intersecting domains of un/employment and school-based or community-based recreation) to be diagnostic of the larger socio-spatial context relating to segregation, polarization, and inequality. To what extent are current policies and programs helping to mitigate these trends, and to what extent are they reproducing them? Do policies aimed at or affecting youth help us see and understand broader trends and their causes? And what are the consequences for youth? (Urban Youth Working Group Minutes, March 6, 2015)

The Urban Working Group re-convened in April 2015 to share the distilled versions of the policy primers on schooling, policing, recreation, and employment. One of the most significant discoveries that emerged from the ensuing dialogue was that neighbourhoods were ultimately enlivened by people, rather than places, and that our domains imagined separately would limit a full appreciation of the intersecting nature of policy in the material lives of youth. Wexler and Eglington (2015) suggest that youth well-being is a fluid, dynamic, and relational process that is constituted by the spaces in which and through which youth live.

This understanding was reinforced in recent research (Gallagher 2016; Gallagher and Rodricks 2017a; Gallagher, Starkman and Rhoades 2017) examining the experiences of youth housed in a shelter who were receiving drama workshop programming and in other research on one east-end Toronto neighbourhood (Gallagher and Rodricks 2017b), examining the role of theatre-making in social economically marginalized schools. Both research projects underscore that neighbourhoods are not simply where (young) people are located, but rather influence what work, leisure, learning (young) people carry out in those spaces.

In crossing domains and spaces (where and how they live, work, go to school) many times a day, young people live the material impacts of multiple policies shaping their experiences. This is, therefore, an examination of their mobility through schooling, policing, recreation, and em-

ployment that reveals both the tensions and possibilities of neighbourhood spaces as “fluid” and “floating” for young people.

One of the other key observations that emerged from our comparison of policies across domains, historically and currently, was the emergence of an understanding of “critical incidents” that seemed to have been centrally important to policy development and implementation in all four key areas (see Appendix A for a chronological mapping of critical incidents). For example, the high levels of violent crime that marked the summer of 2005 (widely referred to as the “Summer of the Gun”) helped set in place a systematic review of existing policies and programs to address the unprecedented level of violent crime among youth in Toronto neighbourhoods. The *Review of the Roots of Violence* (McMurtry and Curling 2008), is a key outcome of this critical incident that has formed the basis of many policies and programs across the four domains.

However, it is not simply that critical incidents have fuelled policy pivot points. Legislative interventions have also been mobilized in particular ways that shape how youth experience schooling, policing, recreation, and employment. In 1984, the *Young Offenders Act* (YOA) replaced the *Juvenile Delinquents Act* (JDA) of 1908. In proclaiming the YOA, the government emphasized individual responsibility over the social-welfare perspective of the JDA, and was widely criticized for being both too punitive and too lenient.

The YOA would shape schooling, policing, and criminalization for almost two decades before it was replaced by the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* in 2003. For example, one way in which YOA shaped schooling was through the first-of-their-kind zero-tolerance policies established in the Scarborough Board of Education in 1993. This approach was further implemented across the province in 2001 with the *Safe Schools Act*, which enshrined the use of suspensions and expulsions as required and routine techniques to teach individual responsibility.

Another example of the YOA’s broad reach is the *Toronto Police Community Contacts Policy*, established in 1996. Versions of the practice of questioning and collecting information without cause were already in place, disproportionately impacting communities of colour, specifically black males. Within the last 18 months, however, many of these practices have been brought under review by multiple agencies, within and outside government purview. The 2017 release of Ontario’s three-year anti-racism strategy called *The Way Forward* (Toronto Police Transformational Taskforce 2017) together with the recent release of its Anti-Black Racism Strategy, have attempted to redress the differential and intergenerational negative impact on racialized communities.

This paper identifies both critical incidents (Appendix A) and critical legislation to assess their impact on youth aged 13–24 in schooling, policing, recreation, and employment (Appendix B). Of course, other critical incidents and legislation, such as social assistance reform or the introduction of full-day early learning programs, also have affected youth in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA); however, the focus for this work has been those for which youth are the direct subject of reforms. So while this analysis is not exhaustive, and not every incident that might be deemed critical across our 40-year time span is examined, the approach nonetheless proved fruitful in exploring policies that have affected and continue to affect the life chances for young people in the GTA.

In the next four chapters, we examine each of the key domains and highlight the significant critical incidents and legislation. The appendixes provide a chronological overview of critical incidents and the policies affecting all four – highlighting the level of government that enacted the policy, as well as its scope, impact, and relevance.

Each chapter that follows will be organized into four sections: (1) history and context; (2) government and geography; (3) policy discourses; and (4) implementation: implications and impact. History and context aims to capture the most important current policy and program trends affecting youth and schooling as well as the antecedents of the current context. Government and geography outlines the levels at which educational policies are enacted, their political undertones, and spatial impact. Discourses implied in policy development are discussed in section three. Section four focuses on implications and impact of policy implementation.

2. Schooling

Dirk Rodricks and Kathleen Gallagher

This chapter deals with the question of urban youth and schooling in Toronto from the 1970s to present. Here, we are primarily concerned with youth from kindergarten to Grade 12 (K–12), with a particular emphasis on secondary education. Certain developments in postsecondary education, as well as critical incidents shaping policy development, have been included in this review to provide further context.

2.1 History and Context

Section 93 of Canada's *Constitution Act* (1867) mandates education as a provincial responsibility. However, prior to the 1970s, the federal government was actively involved in expanding the postsecondary sector by allocating direct operating grants to universities. In the 1960s, as provincial concerns grew over Section 93, the federal government sought to modify this direct allocation to universities. The arrangement eventually evolved into unconditional transfers to the provinces through the Established Programs Financing arrangements of 1976–77 (Jones 2014). This shift resulted in more provincial control over the postsecondary sector, but also opened the door for reductions in transfer payments and support.

Much of the 1960s and 1970s focused on provincial legislation to respond to the growth of student enrolment, mainly by streamlining educational delivery and initiating reforms in response to the economic slowdown of the 1970s (characterized by rising inflation and growing unemployment). These reforms included establishing a parallel form of postsecondary education through Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATs) and the consolidation of school boards across the province. Toward the end of the 1970s, the provincial government cut costs by reducing investments in both K–12 and postsecondary education.

In 1976, the federal government passed the *Immigration Act*, a shift to a merit-based system that effectively opened Canada's doors to the world through the creation of four new classes of immigrants: refugees, families, assisted relatives, and independent immigrants. Since the 1970s, immigrants to Canada, and to Ontario and Toronto in particular, have largely been visible minorities. The growing diversity of cultures and traditions continues to challenge the way education is delivered.

The 1990s can be viewed as a decade of cuts to the education sector, both at the K–12 and the postsecondary levels. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the federal government unilaterally changed the formulas for unconditional transfers to the provinces. This move was largely viewed as an attempt at deficit reduction on the backs of the provinces. According to Jones (2014: 10), the government in Ottawa, “first reorganized its transfer arrangements to create a social transfer envelope, and then dramatically reduced the level of funds going to the provinces for health, education, and a range of other social programs.” As a result, investments in education at all levels became vulnerable to cuts.

In 1995, Mike Harris’s Progressive Conservatives electoral platform, the “Common Sense Revolution,” became the blueprint of his first term as Premier of Ontario. Positioned as a reform document, the “Common Sense Revolution” laid out plans to cut taxes, balance the budget (the government faced a \$10-billion deficit at the time), reduce the size of government, and eliminate government handouts. What followed was a series of legislative bills that restructured education funding, delivery (through the amalgamation of Metro Toronto), and management while making deep cuts to each.

In 2000, the same Progressive Conservative provincial government enacted school safety legislation that included a zero-tolerance standard for violence or threats of violence. These policies implied a discourse of *deficit*. Deficit discourses are harmful because they use race, religion, or socioeconomic status, among other social identities, to predetermine access and outcomes for members of those communities. In the case of school safety legislation and especially the zero-tolerance standard, implicit bias labels those perceived to be in “violation of the code” as the “dangerous other,” who need to be “removed” through immediate suspension or expulsion. Such measures reify the rigid school discipline codes of conduct in a “one-size-fits-all” approach without accounting for the systemic conditions that shape how it is students access and move through educational space (Dei 2008).

Implementing such “one-size-fits-all” policies disproportionately affects students with special needs and communities of colour, exacerbating ideas that minoritized black and brown bodies are inherently prone to violence. A task force convened by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) concluded in 2004 that the government should revisit the legislation. Since the Liberals took office in 2002, there has been movement away from zero tolerance towards progressive discipline with a greater emphasis on communication with all stakeholders, including parents and the community. However, a 2017 report by the TDSB confirms that racial bias and specifically anti-black bias, still exists. The report found that out of 307 students expelled from Toronto public schools between 2011 and 2016, 48 percent were black compared with 10 percent who were white students (Naccarato 2017).

In 2003, the new Liberal majority government moved to invest in education at both the K–12 and postsecondary levels to undo some of the impact of the Harris cuts, which had disproportionately affected certain communities, such as racialized and low-income families. Since then, educational policy changes have responded to critical incidents such as the “Summer of the Gun” (2005) or the shooting of student Jordan Mannors in a Toronto school in 2007. In addition, the changing nature of technology and the spread of social media has necessitated a more expansive definition of bullying and harassment to include online behaviour. This government has

also worked to increase high school graduation rates, and most recently, to eliminate postsecondary tuition for students from low-income families (see Chiose 2016).

2.2 Governance and Geography

Over the last five decades, education policy has been set at the provincial level, shaped largely by the politics of the political party in power and by economic performance. School boards then frame or modify their own policies and practices in line with provincial mandates, while schools are left to implement these policies. Yet at times, even well-intentioned provincial policies have led to problems in governance and implementation. For example, as in the 1990s (with the New Democrats), the Ministry of Education in 2009 released documents requiring the creation of board-wide policies on equity and inclusion, reflecting certain priorities: (1) high levels of achievement, (2) reducing the gap in student achievement, and (3) increasing public confidence in the publicly funded education system. In doing so, the directives largely ignored the differences between schools within such a large and diverse school district as the TDSB, thereby exacerbating tension between school boards and schools (Joshee 2004; Segeren and Kutsyuruba 2012) about how to uniformly and equitably deliver on the directives.

One of the spatial impacts of educational policy that connected municipal efforts with those of the school board was Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC), established by the TDSB in 2005. A Learning Opportunities Index (LOI) was developed to structure how staff and resources would be allocated across the TDSB in ways that would be conscious of socio-economic disparities across such a large school district of diverse neighbourhoods. The index would serve as “a method for rating school neighbourhoods on the basis of educational ‘needs’” (Parekh, Flessa, and Smaller 2016: 76). The LOI is determined by a series of indicators specific to the students’ neighbourhood demographics. These include “median income; percentage of families whose income is below the low income measure (before tax); percentage of families receiving social assistance; adults with low education; adults with university degrees; and lone-parent families” (77). Schools are then ranked. A higher ranking indicates the greatest degree of external challenges to learning with schools across the system and a lower ranking indicates relative privilege in teaching and learning. The LOI has been used by the TDSB in some version for over 30 years but its methodology is reviewed every two years with variables being adjusted based on current research (Toronto District School Board 2014).

Such a recognition of inequities in access and success for certain students from certain neighbourhoods led to one of the main programmatic strategies to mitigate the growing income inequality within Toronto’s neighbourhoods (as described in Hulchanski 2010). The TDSB identifies model schools (MSIC) using the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI) – an index that links student performance to external factors such as poverty, and aims to provide resources to support the neediest students. This measure has spatial implications, because a school’s ranking on the LOI determines additional financial resources for programs and services. For example, the lowest 150 on the LOI are automatically included in the MSIC program and then grouped administratively.

TDSB piloted the Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) program with seven elementary schools that had a large concentration of students living in poverty. Through an investment of \$7 million, the schools were able to support innovative teaching practices, emotional and social

supports for students, and facilitated more parent and community engagement (Anderson 2007). *Putting Inner City Students First*, a report by Gallagher and Rivière (2011) from OISE's Centre for Urban Schooling, used six case studies drawn from the initial seven model schools to illustrate several valuable features of the model at the pedagogical, administrative, and institutional levels, including culturally responsive pedagogy, school leadership, and collaborative strategies to focus funding to enhance the physical, social, cultural, and emotional health of schools. As of 2016, the MSIC program has been expanded to include 150 schools across the TDSB (Toronto District School Board 2016).

More recently in 2014, the City of Toronto identified Priority Investment Neighbourhoods (PINs) using a Neighbourhood Equity Index that evaluates neighbourhoods using 15 indicators that include health, economics, political participation, and education. The creation of these 15 indicators was a collaborative effort between the Centre for Research on Inner City Health at St. Michaels Hospital, the United Way, and other partner organizations. Thus, there is some overlap between the indicators.

At a macro level, one of the impacts of “reducing big government” is that the cost of a program or service deemed “inessential” ultimately shifts to those who need it most. Most often, such “austerity measures” enacted by those in power implicate those at the lower end of the bureaucratic hierarchy, such as the municipal level, with direct spatial impacts on low-income and racialized citizens and neighbourhoods. Mike Harris’s “Common Sense Revolution” reflected such a goal of reduced governance and the *New City of Toronto Act* reflected the impact.

The 1997 *New City of Toronto Act* sought to reduce provincial and municipal government expenditures through the amalgamation of seven constituent municipalities of Metropolitan Toronto into one, single-tier municipality. Critics asserted that such a move actually downloaded the costs of what had previously been provincially supported services onto local city and municipal governments and that such a move would transfer wealth and refocus services away from the urban to the (growing) suburban areas. Scholars such as James (2004) and Daniel (2010) argue that this movement of resources that began in the 1990s has changed Toronto so that ethnically diverse populations are no longer concentrated in the inner city, but in a series of concentric rings around the centre (Daniel 2010). Both Bourne (1993) and Walks (2001) examined concentrations of poverty in these “inner suburbs” and research on this trend began in 1979 with the *Metro’s Suburbs in Transition* report (Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto 1979). These trends were further recognized by the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force in its 2005 report *A Call to Action* (City of Toronto and United Way of Greater Toronto 2005).

2.3 Policy Development

Since the 1990s, educational policy in Ontario has reflected neoliberal values that range from aggressive to collaborative. The transition largely reflects shifts in the governing party where “political ideology and electoral platform...produce qualitative differences in approaches to governance structures and implementation of accountability measures” (Sattler 2012: 21). Sattler specifically traces how educational policy over a 20-year period from 1993 to 2009, across three distinct governments (New Democrats 1990–1995, Progressive Conservatives 1995–2002; Liberals 2002–2018), have reflected and embraced neoliberal paradigms to varying degrees.

The provincial Progressive Conservatives introduced measures to standardize education expenditures across the province. Their argument was that a rich local tax base should not lead to a rich local school system. They amalgamated school boards and centralized funding (Bill 104 1997), and increased accountability through a new standardized curriculum and the implementation of standardized testing that ushered in outcomes-based education (Jafaar and Anderson 2007; Sattler 2012). The Liberals that followed at Queen's Park reversed some of the more contentious educational policies while keeping others in place (such as standardized testing), making investments that would help “build local capacity [in schools] to support improvement in student learning” (Sattler 2012: 16), especially in terms of literacy and numeracy.

In 1995, the Ministry of Education released its Royal Commission on Learning, which identified four key initiatives (“engines of change”) in the report *For the Love of Learning*, with 167 recommendations intended to turn around the vast educational enterprise (Government of Ontario 1995). These were (1) early childhood education, (2) new school-community alliances, (3) information technology, and (4) the professionalization of teaching. The report constituted a wide ranging evaluation of education policy and practice in Ontario – “a political attempt by the New Democratic Party government to engage the public in mapping the future of Ontario education” (Gulson and Webb 2017: 105). After the NDP lost the election in 1995 to the Progressive Conservatives, the recommendations of the commission (e.g., recognition of differential education for different groups) were left untouched, or as Kalervo Gulson and Taylor Webb (2017) argue, later re-packaged through neoliberal ideologies (e.g., educational choice and self-separation).

In 2002, the Ontario Education Equality Task Force issued its report entitled *Investing in Public Education* (also known as the Rozanski report). This report provided a comprehensive review of Ontario's education funding formula with 33 recommendations to improve the adequacy and structure of education funding. Many of the recommendations addressed ways in which the provincial government could fund renewal and deferred maintenance of public school buildings. Unfortunately, here too, recommendations have yet to be fully realized. The provincial government has failed to provide solutions that address the ballooning costs of deferred maintenance of school properties. In 2002, the amount of deferred maintenance was \$5.6 billion. In 2017, the amount stands at approximately \$15-billion (Fix Our Schools 2017).

The establishment of the Education Partnership Roundtable in 2004 offered all education stakeholders (students, parents, trustees, teachers, principals, support staff) an opportunity to contribute to the government's policy development process. This consultative process was replicated at the school-board level (TDSB) as new initiatives were discussed. The Model Schools for Inner Cities program reflects this consultative approach, despite its neoliberal undertones, expressed through an increased emphasis on accountability, standardization, meritocracy, and competition for resources, revealing the “political-economic imperative” (Chan, Fisher, and Rubenson 2007: 221) of neoliberalism in the formation of educational policy.

Meanwhile, federal legislation on multiculturalism and liberalism has shaped how provinces develop and implement policies related to diversity and inclusion (Joshee 2004). In Ontario, over the past 10 years, despite a movement towards equity, liberal multiculturalism continues not only to influence educational equity policy development, but also its implementation at the level of school boards and schools (Segeren and Katsyuruba 2012).

Liberal multiculturalism acknowledges the diversity of cultures only superficially by embracing notions of tolerance while ignoring differences within groups. As a result, there is a disconnect between policy goals and lived experiences within schools (Dei 2003). According to Agyepong (2010), the lack of a systemic and structural dimension to these policies explains their reproduction of the status quo. Furthermore, with the *Accepting Schools Act*, which replaced the *Safe Schools Act* in 2012, issues of equity and specifically anti-racism have been subsumed under the banner of school safety, bullying, harassment, and progressive discipline.

Within the TDSB, there is a growing consciousness of diversity and culture through the intersections of different social identities, especially given the growing racial and ethnic diversity of its approximately 245,000 students across nearly 600 schools (Toronto District School Board 2014). It is estimated that almost 70 percent of the students in the TDSB come from an immigrant family in which at least one parent was born outside Canada. In 2007, the TDSB moved towards recognizing alternative schools for historically marginalized populations. Policy *P-062 Alternative Schools*, adopted by the TDSB in 2007, approved the formation of an Afrocentric Alternative School for elementary students that opened in September 2009.

The decision was controversial. Anti-racism scholars such as Dei (2008) and James (2009) contended that criticisms of these schools were rooted in discourses of liberal multiculturalism. To its critics, Afrocentric schooling constitutes segregation, which is contrary to (multicultural) Canadian values. It is worth noting that the Alternative Schools policy was predated by TDSB's Optional Attendance policy, which allowed students to attend schools and programs outside their school catchment area as defined by their home address. The Alternative Schools policy, adopted in 2007, built on this framework (in place to varying degrees since amalgamation) to encourage movement based on access to culturally responsive learning. Hence, some schools are designated as "Open" or "Closed" in terms of attendance.

In 2008, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) followed the *Alternative Schools Act* by launching its speciality high schools initiative, offering focused programs in dance, drama, science, and sport, as well as the International Baccalaureate program. One consequence of these specialty programs is that students are no longer limited to their local school and can apply to attend these specialized schools wherever they are located. Many young people now live in one area, attend school in another area, and may take a part-time job in a third area. This phenomenon is consistent with Qadeer and Kumar's (2006) research on neighbourhoods and social cohesion, in which they contend that the "typical urbanite" moves among multiple neighbourhoods to engage in life's different functions. This movement of youth across a wide variety of distinct neighbourhoods in Toronto includes designated priority neighbourhoods, as well as gentrifying or affluent ones.

2.4 Implementation

The education policies enacted at the provincial level have often been out of touch with the reality of schools, especially within a diverse board like the TDSB. One such example is the evolution of school safety policies in Ontario.

In 2000, the Mike Harris government legislated the *Safe Schools Act*, which mandated zero-tolerance policies for violence, resulting in suspensions and expulsions for infractions. The bill was criticized for using a one-size-fits-all approach rather than giving schools the flexibility to

discipline students on a case-by-case basis, effectively removing school principals' discretion. A 2004 TDSB Task Force on Safe and Compassionate Schools concluded that the provincial mandate disproportionately impacted students from racialized and marginalized communities, but its recommendations were not evenly adopted and implemented.

In 2008, *The Road to Health: A Final Report on School Safety* (also known as The Falconer Report), commissioned in response to the fatal shooting of 15-year-old Grade 9 student Jordan Manners in a Jane-Finch neighbourhood high school, made 126 recommendations, including locker searches, gun-sniffing dogs, and more counselling staff. Falconer, a civil rights lawyer who chaired the School Community Safety Advisory Panel that produced the report, specifically argued against the use of suspensions, and zero-tolerance policies as effective ways to deal with violence in schools (Rushowy and Brown 2008). Shortly thereafter, the TDSB, in consultation with the Toronto Police Service, launched a School Resource Officer program in 2008 that allowed for armed, uniformed police officers stationed in schools.

Dei (2008) argues that it becomes important to consider issues of differential impact with respect to zero-tolerance policies and surveillance in schools. The School Resource Officer (SRO) program has garnered particular attention over the last two years. The program, first introduced in 2008, included 30 officers assigned to 30 Toronto high schools. This number has since expanded to 75 high schools. But, the program has disproportionately targeted racialized communities, particularly young men of colour, and especially black youth (James and Turner 2017). In June 2017, the Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) voted to conduct an external review of the SRO program. Soon after, the TDSB voted to conduct its own internal review of the SRO program, which was completed in August 2017. The TDSB voted to accept its internal report and temporarily suspend the program during the TPSB review. The suspension was made permanent by TDSB trustees in November 2017.

The Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS) has been subject to similar criticisms. This program has also been under review with a desire to see it restructured to focus on community-based crime prevention and youth engagement programming (Gillis 2015a). Few details are available about what such youth engagement programming will look like. The following chapter on policing offers a closer review of the impacts of such policies on young people.

Another example of implementation is the use of the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI) by the TDSB to determine how resources should be allocated to support the “neediest” students. A 2007–2008 consultative process yielded the current factors used to compute the index: median income, percentage of families with income below the Low Income Measure, percentage of families receiving social assistance, adults with low education, adults with university degrees, lone-parent families. In 2009, the LOI dropped “less predictive measures” such as crime, crowding, average income, housing type, and immigration status from its measures and included new variables such as “families on social assistance.”

Critics assert that dropping “immigrant status” from factors used in the calculation ignores important scholarship on the impact of race and racism on student access and success (Dyson 2009b). Dyson (2009a) contends that given Toronto’s unique context, in which “visible minority status and low income are so closely correlated,” the current list of factors effectively “captures many of the same students that a race variable would” making race “a fair proxy for poverty” (para. 12). It is expected that the next re-evaluation of factors will take up the issue of race and

racism and study the feasibility of its inclusion in the list of factors used to calculate this all-important index for allocating resources in the TDSB (noting that funding for English as a Second Language and for Special Education are generated by separate calculations).

2.5 Conclusion: Looking Forward

It is clear that over the last 40 years the Toronto District School Board has aimed to address its increasingly socio-economically diverse school system by making strategic financial interventions intended to create a more equitable schooling environment for all children. Programs such as the Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) have met with some success in terms of student attendance, student engagement, student achievement, school readiness, and student learning climates. It is notable that such interventions have been developed and delivered from within the TDSB at a time where many other global cities seek to adopt neoliberal interventions (such as charter schools), infusing competition, imagined as beneficial to their struggling public systems. Despite this less universalist policy approach within the TDSB, Parekh, Flessa, and Smaller (2016) have also pointed out that many of these interventions primarily cater to elementary schools and do not address the ongoing structural issues of inequity and educational streaming at the secondary level.

Since 2015, a growing body of research has explored more deeply the persistent issues of marginalization within schooling. In April 2017, Professor Carl James of York University released a report called *Towards Race Equity in Education: The Schooling of Black Students in the Greater Toronto Area*. The report drew on consultations with 324 parents, educators, administrators, and students in Toronto and the surrounding regions of Peel, York, and Durham. Using data from the TDSB, the report found that educational streaming – a policy that was supposed to have ended in 1999 – is still negatively shaping the futures of Black students. Black students continue to be disproportionately streamed into applied rather than academic courses, ultimately restricting their pathways to postsecondary education. The report also found that 42 percent of all Black students had been suspended at least once by the time they graduate from high school. Parekh, Flessa, and Smaller (2016) note that such practices of streaming remain popular, especially because a large majority (almost two-thirds) of secondary schools benefit from these practices. Such benefits include greater quantity and quality of instruction, increased self-confidence and motivation, and simply greater access to resources and opportunities in higher streams (Hallinan 1994; Oakes 1985).

Thus, while there may be public support for interventions such as the MSIC which bring much-needed investment to the “neediest” students and schools, such support falls far short of tackling structural change and practices that continue to disadvantage students of colour. Parekh, Flessa, and Smaller (2016: 78) argue for a sustainable equity by “re-envisioning how constructs of ability are shaped by extrinsic characteristics (race, immigration, language, class), and subsequently organized across academic opportunities,” especially the growing gap between secondary school programming and access to postsecondary opportunities. This will require coordination between the provincial ministries, the city government, and the local school districts in a manner that transcends partisan politics.

Academic research and community advocacy continue to exert pressure on public systems to respond to the challenges experienced by diverse communities. Developments in Toronto have

a tendency to have a ripple effect. For example, the debate over the presence of police officers in schools has been felt in surrounding school districts, such as Peel, York, and Durham (Bas-caramurty and Alphonso 2017). An advocacy coalition including the United Way, called F.A.C.E.S. of Peel Collaborative (2015) report called, *Fighting an Uphill Battle*, documents that many Black youth feel unwanted, devalued, and socially isolated while facing racism in everyday life – from being streamed in high school to being frequently stopped for questioning by police. A 2016 report called *Perspectives of Black Male Students in Secondary Schools* carried out by the Peel District School Board (PDSB) supports the 2015 *Fighting an Uphill Battle* report: Black male youth report that their non-Black peers fear them and also that they experience lower expectations in classrooms (Peel District School Board 2016).

The PDSB's November 2016 unanimous decision to collect student race-based data beginning in fall 2018 is a start to better understanding its diverse communities. It will allow for a disaggregation of important data in order to mobilize specific interventions to deal with particular issues that disproportionately affect certain groups.

Given the growing diversity of student demographics in the Greater Toronto Area, a one-size-fits-all reactive approach is no longer sustainable. Large-scale data sets must be accompanied by micro-case study analyses that can support, as well as counter, findings so that interventions, moving forward, might begin to redress the most intractable issues of inequality of opportunities and outcomes that school boards face.

3. Policing

Julius Haag and Scot Wortley

This chapter covers the program and policy trends related to policing, youth crime, and criminalization in Toronto's neighbourhoods.

The enactment of the *Young Offenders Act* in 1984 marked a major shift in youth justice policy in Canada, with far-reaching implications. It is therefore used as a marker from which we draw connections to how program and policy trends have developed over time. Furthermore, while “youth” includes the ages of 13 to 24, for this review, legally, a young offender refers to persons aged 12 to 17.

While a variety of criminal justice issues relate to youth, gun violence and gangs have come to represent the focus of public concern, media attention, and policy. The 2005 “Summer of the Gun” in Toronto proved to be a catalyst for a variety of programming and policy initiatives designed to address these issues.

3.1 History and Context

The 1984 *Young Offenders Act* was widely criticized for being too punitive on one hand and too lenient on the other, while containing a broad array of competing principles, without a clear mechanism to reconcile them (Caputo and Vallée 2008). Critics alleged that the overuse of incarceration to reduce crime had a counterproductive effect, as incarceration did little to prevent recidivism; indeed, it had the opposite effect. While the average per-capita rate of police reported crime under the *Young Offenders Act* remained similar to levels seen during the period of the *Juvenile Delinquents Act* that preceded it, the average rate of police charges under the act increased by 21 percent. As a result, youth incarceration rates in Canada were higher than those of many other western nations (Carrington and Moyer 1994).

At the provincial level, the Conservative government of Premier Mike Harris adopted a “tough on crime” approach to issues such as youth crime, gangs, and gun violence (Alvi 2012; Green and Healy 2003). Concern over youth homelessness, aggressive panhandling, and so-called “squeegee kids” led to the enactment of the *Ontario Safe Streets Act* in 1999, which further contributed to the criminalization and alienation of an already marginalized population (Gaetz and O’Grady 2002).

In the context of schooling, the enactment of *Ontario Safe Schools Act* in 2001 reflects a “zero-tolerance” approach to managing perceptions of increasing violence and disorder in Ontario schools. Its enactment was publicly framed as a means of ensuring safety and equity within schools, but it has had a discriminatory impact on students from racialized backgrounds and students with disabilities (Daniel and Bondy 2008; Ontario Human Rights Commission 2003).

In 2003, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) replaced the *Young Offenders Act* with the stated goal of decreasing the use of police charging, court processing, and incarceration of youth, while better responding to serious youth crime and violent offenders (Bala, Carrington, and Roberts 2009). The enactment of the YCJA led to a restructuring of the youth justice system in Ontario, with a stated focus on alternatives to custody and the development of an evidence-based body of community-based programs to address the social and structural determinants of crime; programs of this nature have also been used to prevent and intervene in the lives of young people at risk for involvement in criminal behaviour.

Provincially, the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services has adopted a more holistic approach to addressing youth crime, including funding community-based programs and services and focusing on extrajudicial measures and extrajudicial sanctions (Caputo and Vallée 2008). However, the legacy of the *Young Offenders Act* lives on in the ways in which youth, particularly from racialized and impoverished backgrounds, continue to be criminalized.

Following several high-profile violent incidents, including the 2005 “Summer of the Gun,” during which gun-related homicides doubled in Toronto relative to the previous year, the issue of gun violence, gangs, and youth crime in Toronto emerged as a key area of political, public, and media concern (Royal Canadian Mounted Police 2006). Program and policy responses to the events of 2005 included aggressive police suppression strategies, neighbourhood capacity-building initiatives, and programming specifically targeting so-called “at-risk” youth, including youth from racialized backgrounds, unemployed youth, and youth living in areas characterized by high levels of crime and disorder.

These initiatives included the City of Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, which identified 13 initial “Priority Neighbourhood” areas (revised from an initial recommendation of nine) targeted for investments and programming to address violence. In 2006, the Toronto Police Service’s Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS) was launched. The primary strategy of TAVIS was roving groups of officers called Rapid Response Teams. Officers in groups of 18 were sent to high-crime neighbourhoods to engage in aggressive stop-question-and-search activities. In 2008 the Toronto Police Service, the Toronto District School Board, and the Toronto Catholic District School Board entered into an agreement to have police officers in schools through the School Resource Officer (SRO) program in 2008.

The SRO program has been officially portrayed as a means of building relationships with youth, assisting in investigations and engaging in crime prevention and threat assessment (Toronto Police Service 2011). In January 2012 the Toronto Police Service, the United Way Toronto and the City of Toronto launched the FOCUS Rexdale (Furthering Our Communities, Uniting Our Service) program, designed to adapt the Community Mobilization Hub Model from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan to various communities in Toronto.

3.2 Governance and Geography

Policies and programs have been enacted at all three levels of government. Changes in federal youth crime legislation affected the ways in which the provincial government address young offenders, youth crime prevention, and intervention.

The provincial changes to the *Police Services Act*, the formation of the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate, the Independent Review of Police Oversight, the rights-based legislation governing carding, and the Black Youth Action Plan – all of these developments have had impacts that extend to all of Ontario.

The federal Action for Neighbourhood Change Program, the City of Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, TAVIS, the Youth Challenge Fund, the Summer Safety Initiative, FOCUS Rexdale, and the Youth in Policing Initiative are neighbourhood-focused. Many youth report a geographic dimension to police harassment, with certain areas of the community being treated as inherently suspicious by police, or black youth in predominantly white neighbourhoods being the subject of suspicion (Logical Outcomes 2014; Ollner, Sekharan, Truong and Vig 2011; Owusu-Bempah 2014; Rankin and Winsa 2012).

The securitization of schools through the School Resource Officer (SRO) program is one example of the geographic dimension of policing. Not every school has a designated SRO and the criteria for how SROs are assigned have not been clearly articulated. Another example of the geographic dimensions of policing is that of public recreational spaces. While Toronto has spent \$38 million on 26 infrastructure projects in the original 13 Priority Neighbourhoods, including playgrounds and sports facilities, youth access to these investments and spaces continues to be hindered by targeted police operations, curfews, and “move-along” laws, which grant police the authority to compel people to disperse for any reason if they deem the activity suspicious (Gaertz, O’Grady, and Buccieri 2010). Low-income, racialized and homeless youth are particularly vulnerable to these forms of regulation because of the persistence of negative stereotypes and cultural representations that position them as being “troublemakers,” “at-risk” or “up to no good” (Gaertz, O’Grady, and Buccieri 2010; James 2012; Mosher 2008)

3.3 Policy Development

The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) introduced a new focus for youth crime legislation in Canada, taking a social-welfare approach (similar to the *Juvenile Delinquents Act* of 1908) to young offenders by seeking to decrease the use of courts and custody, while simultaneously taking a more punitive turn in regards to serious youth crime and violent offenders (Alvi 2012; Bala, Carrington, and Roberts 2009). A focus has also been the management of “risky” individuals and populations. The YCJA emphasizes the need for early intervention in the lives of young people who are considered “at-risk” for criminal behaviour as possibly the most effective measure in the long-term reduction of youth crime. However, youth crime remains politically contentious.

Changes to the YCJA were made in the federal (Progressive Conservative) government’s controversial Bill C10, passed in 2012. The bill shifts the focus of the YCJA from rehabilitation to the “protection of society,” by taking a more repressive stance to young offenders through measures such as tougher sentences. Bill C-10 has been widely criticized for being a politically

expedient solution to a problem that does not exist, as the severity of crimes involving youth has declined by 37 percent since the enactment of the YJCA, while violent crimes have also been in decline in every province (Handren 2014).

While overall youth crime remains an issue, the particular focus of the political discourse over youth crime in Toronto has been gun violence and gang activity in the city's Priority Neighbourhoods. Over the past 15 years, the provincial government, no matter which political party is in power, has publicly touted its comprehensive gun violence strategy, including increased spending on the policing of youth crime and gangs (Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General 2008).

The current focus of the Toronto Police Service has been intelligence-led policing and community relations. To serve this purpose, the practice of street checks or “carding” and the TAVIS program have been employed. The practice of carding involves documenting personal information about individuals involved in police-citizen interactions that typically do not involve an arrest or the laying of a charge. This information can include the time and location of the stop, the reason for the stop, and the individual's race. The Toronto Police Services have engaged in tactics similar to carding since 1957, but the practice became most prevalent under former Chief Bill Blair and, at one time, was included in the performance evaluations of individual officers (Rankin 2015). Carding practices are also used by various police forces across Ontario, including by Peel Regional Police and the Hamilton Police Service (Bennett 2015).

Carding has been publicly lauded by the police as a valuable investigative tool, while TAVIS's officially stated focus is community empowerment and relationship building. The police have claimed that these initiatives have improved public safety and reduced crime (Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services 2011; Toronto Police Service 2013).

The 2008 *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence*, drafted in the wake of the 2005 “Summer of the Gun,” identified the social and structural determinants of youth crime and advocated for an integrated policy approach to these issues (McMurtry and Curling 2008). The Ontario Youth Action Plan was designed to implement the recommendations in the *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* report and address the structural determinants of youth crime (Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services and Ministry of Community, Safety and Correctional Services 2012). The focus of these programs has been to improve programming and outreach, increase access to employment, and improve reintegration services for youth in conflict with the law.

The Action Plan also led to the establishment of the Ontario Youth Employment Fund, a job creation fund for at-risk youth, and to “Stepping Up,” a strategic framework designed to improve youth outcomes, with a specific focus on the needs of specific groups such as racialized youth. The municipally focused *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy* also seeks to implement the *Roots of Youth Violence* recommendations, with a specific focus on violence among at-risk youth. Through this Equity Strategy, the City is aiming to address the root causes of youth violence, increase youth resiliency and improve support systems. Actions under the strategy include improvement employment services for “at-risk” youth, increasing access to educational resources, increased mental health services, expanding the “FOCUS Rexdale” project and enhanced restorative justice and non-criminalizing diversion programs (Winsa 2014).

More recently, high-profile incidents of police violence, including the killings of black men by officers from the Toronto Police Service and Peel Regional Police, have refocused public criti-

cism of systemic racial bias and police use of lethal force in Ontario. In particular, the killings of Jermaine Carby and Andrew Loku, Black men killed by Peel and Toronto police, respectively, became the focus of public demands for increased transparency. In both cases, the Special Investigations Unit declined to lay charges against the suspect officers (Gallant 2016a; Gillis 2015b). Many organizations, including Black Lives Matter Toronto, the African Canadian Legal Clinic, the Canadian Mental Health Association, and the Anti-Black Racism Network, have successfully lobbied the Ontario government to implement policy initiatives to address these issues (Battersby 2014). In 2016, Justice Michael Tulloch was tasked with completing an independent review of police oversight in Ontario (Gallant 2016b).

In 2015, the province announced it would regulate police “carding” and in 2016 the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate was formed. The province also conducted a review of police oversight agencies and cancelled more than half of the funding for the TAVIS program (Gillis 2015a, 2016b). In 2016, Toronto Mayor John Tory struck a “Transformational Taskforce,” with a mandate to modernize the Toronto police (Nasser 2016).

The final report of the Toronto Police Transformational Taskforce, entitled *Action Plan: The Way Forward*, was released in January 2017. The report identified several central concerns, including the growing cost of policing, improving police accountability, eliminating racial bias and discrimination, increasing trust and improving relations with the public, and improving the force’s response to persons with mental health issues. To this end, the taskforce outlined several recommendations, including increased use of neighbourhood policing tactics, changing divisional boundaries and reducing the number of police divisions, improving the culture of the force, increased use of technology and improving public reporting and accountability.

In 2017, Ontario launched the *Black Youth Action Plan*, a component of the province’s wider anti-racism initiatives. The *Black Youth Action Plan* is intended to reduce disparities for Black children and youth and address issues of systemic racism. The initiative will provide \$47-million over four years to support 10,800 Black children and youth across a variety of areas of need, including schooling, employment, community outreach, anti-violence and criminal justice (Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services 2017).

3.4 Implementation

The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) is widely considered to have been a success, having achieved most of its policy objectives. The use of juvenile custody, which was relatively high compared with rates in other western nations, dropped 60 percent between 2002–2003 and 2008–2009 (Milligan 2010). The use of police charging has also declined, dropping from 63 percent of youths who are accused of a crime being charged in 1999 under the *Young Offenders Act*, to 42 percent in 2010 under the YCJA. The burden on the courts has also declined significantly under the YCJA, dropping 23 percent from 2002–2003 to 2008–2009 (Milligan 2010). However, reducing the use of pre-trial detention, a stated goal of the YCJA, has not been achieved, as the average number of youth in remand per day was 15 percent higher in 2009–2010 than it was in 2003–2004.

However, while young male incarceration rates have declined significantly under the YCJA, there is evidence to suggest that this rate of decline has not benefited black males and Aboriginal males and females in Ontario. Information obtained by Owusu-Bempah (2013), through a

Freedom of Information request, indicates that the admission rate to Ontario youth facilities for young Aboriginal men between the ages of 12 and 17 is five times their proportion of the population, while the rate for young black men is four times higher and the rate for young Aboriginal women is a staggering 10 times higher. There is no such disparity evident for other groups (Rankin, Winsa, and Ng 2013).

It has been widely alleged that the *Safe Schools Act* (2001) has had a discriminatory effect on racialized and disabled youth. While there is no systematic evidence to support this claim, a study of Toronto high school students found black students being more likely to allege they had received differential treatment from teachers, in school suspension practices, in having police called, and from police officers at the school (Ruck and Wortley 2002). Allegations of misconduct under the Act, including a 2005 complaint to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, resulted in Bill 212, which amended a number of controversial aspects.

The Toronto Police Service conducted evaluations of the School Resource Officer program for the 2008/09 and 2010/11 school years, with mixed results (Toronto Police Service 2011). The 2009 study included surveys distributed to students in October 2008 and May 2009, with a 59 percent and 51 percent response rate, respectively. It should be noted that principals were asked to select the classes to be sampled and that the surveys were administered in-class, thus excluding absentee youth and youth serving suspensions, which have been found to disproportionately target Black students (Rankin, Rushowy and Brown 2013). Further, over half of the study participants, 57 percent in October and 59 percent in May, indicated that they lived in neighbourhoods with no crime or very low rates of crime.

According to the results of the 2009 study, the vast majority of respondents in both October (91 percent) and May (90 percent) indicated they felt very or reasonably safe in and around school during the day. Further, while students were more likely to report being a victim of crime to police, they were no more likely to report witnessing a crime after the implementation of the SRO program. Students who had informally spoken with the SRO were significantly more likely to report they felt safe in school than those who did not. However, speaking with the SRO did not have a significant effect on perceptions of safety in the neighbourhood around the school. Further, students who approached the SRO to discuss an issue they had experienced in school were twice as likely to report not feeling safe in school or in the neighbourhood surrounding the school. For 2008/09, the study found that there were decreases in reported offences on school grounds and within 200 metres of the school.

For the 2010/11 school year, the SRO program was expanded to 46 schools, from 29 in 2008/09. The 2011 follow-up study of the SRO program found largely similar results to 2009, with some notable changes. For 2011, self-reported victimization declined among students, while significantly more students indicated that they had reported crime to the SRO. The number of students who believed that weapons were being brought to school once a week or more declined significantly in the 2011 study. Between the two school years studied, the total number of certain specific offences (weapons offences, assaults causing bodily harm, aggravated assaults, and robberies) during the school week and within 200 metres of the school declined by 7 percent. However, during this period there was an overall increase in robberies by 16 percent. Further, there was a 20 percent increase in robberies and 67 percent increase in weapons offences during school hours, suggesting a possible displacement effect whereby crimes

that had previously taken place on school grounds were now being carried out away from the school.

In 2017, the SRO program came under renewed public criticism, with groups including Black Lives Matter Toronto and Education Not Incarceration calling for the program to be abolished, citing community concerns that the program had a racist and anti-immigrant bias (Gordon 2017; Westoll 2017). By June 2017 the Toronto District School Board voted to approve the planning of system-wide review of the SRO program. Facing mounting public pressure and increasingly contentious board meetings, the Toronto Police Services Board unanimously approved an independent review of the SRO program to be carried out by researchers from Ryerson University, with results expected by January 2018. However, some critics have pointed out that the inclusion of Toronto Chief Mark Saunders, police board chair Andy Pringle, and another member of the board on the project steering committee negatively impacted the purported independence of the process (Gillis 2017).

At an August 2017 Toronto District School Board meeting, trustees voted to temporarily suspend the program, citing concerns that the presence of SRO officers in school could create potential bias in their review process. The police board review process is still ongoing (Westoll 2017).

On November 15, 2017, the Toronto District School Board staff released the results of its investigation into the SRO program and recommended that the program be discontinued. The report, which examined the 45 secondary schools currently hosting an SRO for the 2016/17 school year, involved over 15,500 student surveys and 1062 SRO program staff surveys. While a majority of student respondents had a generally positive view of the SRO program, over one-third indicated that the presence of SROs had a negative impact on them, including feeling uncomfortable or very uncomfortable when interacting with the SRO, being made to feel uncomfortable attending school, feeling intimidated by the presence of the SRO and that the SRO's presence caused them to feel watched or targeted while at school.

Further, while a majority of student respondents (72 percent) indicated that they had no interaction with their SRO, only 41 percent felt their SRO was trustworthy and 42 percent that their SRO was helpful. While the report does not disaggregate individual responses by race, the authors do note that 50 percent of students who self-identified as Black indicated that the SRO program helped them feel safe at school. The report found that the presence of SROs is contrary to the principles outlined in the *Ontario Equity Action Plan* and the school board's own *Caring and Safe Schools* policy. However, the authors recommended that the school board should continue to maintain a positive working relationship with the Toronto Police (Toronto District School Board 2017c). On November 15, 2017, Toronto District School Board trustees voted unanimously in favour of the staff report that recommended the termination of the SRO program (Goodfield 2017). On November 22, 2017, Toronto District School Board Trustees voted to end the SRO program, but also to continue working in partnership with the Toronto Police Service to maintain school safety (Toronto District School Board 2017c).

Preliminary results of a similarly situated study of police officers in Peel District School Board high schools found that the presence of officers "reduces student stress, risks of bullying and harm, improves attendance and makes teens feel safer and better able to learn" (Gordon 2017).

The FOCUS Rexdale program was initially targeted at Toronto Community Housing properties in the Mount Olive and Jamestown communities of Toronto. However, the program was soon expanded to encompass all neighbourhoods within the divisional boundaries of Toronto Police's 23 Division, including Mount-Olive–Silverstone–Jamestown, Thistletown and Elms–Old Rexdale (Ng and Nerad 2015). In 2016, the program was expanded to include communities within divisional boundaries of 42 Division (North Scarborough), 51 Division (Downtown East) and 14 Division (Downtown West) (Fanfair 2017). The FOCUS program model involves weekly "Situation Table" meetings between the participating agencies, with the goals of reducing crime and disorder; increasing community safety, wellness, and security; and fostering partnership and capacity building (Ng and Nerad 2015).

A 2015 external evaluation of FOCUS Rexdale found that program stakeholders and participating agencies had an overall positive view of the program and that the program had been successful in linking clients and families in "high-risk situations" to services, thus reducing "potential harm" (Ng and Nerad 2015:3). In response to two survey items: (1) reducing crime, victimization, and social disorder and (2) increasing community safety, security, and wellness, participating agencies rated the program 6.0 out of 10 and 6.82 out of 10, respectively. It should be noted that this evaluation was largely focused on internal processes, with no attempt to assess the impact of the program on participants or the communities being served, or to assess changes in police reported crime or victimization data. Further, according to the authors of the evaluation report, FOCUS Rexdale currently does not possess the tools to track or measure the program's client-level impact.

The Toronto Police Service has publicly claimed that TAVIS was effective in improving safety in Toronto, primarily through increased arrests and seizures of guns and drugs (Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services 2011). However, TAVIS has never been subject to formal external evaluation. In 2009, the police conducted a survey in the Jane-Finch and Keele-Eglinton neighbourhoods regarding perceptions of safety and quality of life, with mixed results. The response rate for these surveys in the two neighbourhoods was 6 and 7 percent, respectively (Toronto Police Service 2009).

In 2015, the provincial government announced it was cutting funding to TAVIS by nearly half, citing a shift towards funding community-based crime prevention and youth engagement programming (Gillis 2015a). In 2016, the Toronto Police Services Board announced that TAVIS would be restructured and possibly renamed, to focus the unit on prevention and community policing (Gillis 2016a).

There has been no systematic effort to assess the impact of the *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence*. It has been suggested that the report's findings took on additional importance in the wake of the Danzig Street shootings in 2012, in which a 14-year old girl and 23-year old man were killed and more than 20 were wounded when gunfire erupted at a neighbourhood block party (Rankin, Winsa, and Ng 2013). As a result of this critical incident, the report's recommendations have formed part of the basis for the *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy* and the Ontario Youth Action Plan, but it is too early to assess the impact of these initiatives.

The practice of "carding" by Toronto police continued, despite repeated calls for the abolition or reform of the practice. The police continue to ignore requests for empirical data that might demonstrate the value of carding, or for explanations on how the collected data is used. However, critics allege that it has contributed significantly to the criminalization and alienation of young black males in Ontario. In Toronto, research conducted by the *Toronto Star* found that,

between 2008 and 2012, black individuals were carded at a significantly disproportionate rate relative to their representation in the population. Of particular concern is the disproportionate targeting of young black males aged 15–24, who were stopped and documented 2.5 more times than whites of the same age. For stops in the patrol zone where they live, the number of young black males carded exceeded the number living in Toronto (Rankin 2010; Rankin and Winsa 2014).

In 2012, the *Police and Community Engagement Report* (PACER) initiative was established in response to widespread public criticism of the practice of carding (Toronto Police Service 2013). All 31 recommendations in the PACER report were approved by the Toronto Police Services Board in April 2013, with a stated implementation goal of the end of 2016. Reports indicate that PACER faced considerable opposition from within the Toronto police, leading to then-Chief Blair stalling on implementation. Rather than ending the process of carding, which many had called for, the police revised and rebranded the process, failing to meet the Human Rights Code and Charter issues identified by Ontario Human Rights Commission and other groups.

The Toronto Police Service Transformational Taskforce report outlined a number of areas for policy development, including 24 specific recommendations for police modernization. Some recommendations, including the disbanding of the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Unit (TAVIS), have been completed, but the majority are slated for completion by 2019, with some involving multiple phases. As such, there is not yet sufficient data available to evaluate the impact of these initiatives.

The Independent Police Oversight review, led by Justice Tulloch, issued their final report in 2017. The report outlined 129 recommendations for increasing police oversight and accountability in Ontario. The recommendations include changes to the laws governing police oversight, anti-bias training for investigators at the Special Investigations Unit and Ontario Independent Police Review Directorate, the crafting of separate legislation governing police oversight, outside of the *Police Services Act* and the release of all previous and future Special Investigations Unit director's reports, where the agency declined to lay criminal charges (Independent Police Oversight Review 2017)

In 2015, the Ontario government announced plans to review carding and establish strict guidelines under which it might be used. An open consultative process lasting about a year yielded significant comment. On March 21, 2016, Ontario published a series of regulations that would govern the practice of carding across all police jurisdictions within the province. The new policy came into effect January 2017. Under the new policy, when asking for ID, a police officer must have a reason for the stop that is not arbitrary, including race, being in a high-crime area, refusing to answer a question, or attempting to walk away from the encounter. An officer must explain the reason for the stop, inform the individual that they do not have to provide identifying information, and offer a receipt for the encounter. Officers who do not comply with these rules may face internal discipline under the *Police Services Act*.

The revised policy also includes mandatory reporting by officers to their local police chiefs for entry into a standardized database and chiefs must review a random sample of these cases on a yearly basis to ensure compliance with the policy. New carding data must also be restricted five years after being entered into the database and access to these data must be approved by the chief of police. Officers will also receive training on the new policy, including rights and bias

awareness training, discrimination training, and training in recognizing unlawful detention, to be provided by the Ontario Police College. Chiefs will also be required to complete an annual public report detailing the sex, age, race, and neighbourhood of individuals who have been carded. At this time, no official carding data collected under the new policy has been made available, but various parties have already expressed concern over the revised regulations and the overall continued use of the practice.

The practice of carding remains highly contested, with many critics arguing that the new policy does not go far enough and that the practice should be banned entirely and all existing data deleted. Desmond Cole, a Toronto-based activist and journalist, who has been a prominent advocate against carding, argues that the carding data are the stolen property of those who have been subjected to illegal carding interactions (Gillis 2016b). However, under the revised provincial guidelines, police forces that engage in carding are required to retain the data. Further, there are several active legal proceedings underway regarding carding interactions, including 15 cases involving the Toronto Police Service alone. As these cases involved information contained with the historic carding database, a lawyer retained by the Toronto police has indicated that neither the Toronto Police Service, nor the Toronto Police Services Board, had the legal right to delete the data (Gillis 2016b).

Critics of the new legislation have also noted that banning arbitrary stops, based on race or situational variables, will not change police practices as various police forces have long denied allegations of engaging in racially-biased carding practices (McGuire 2015; Rankin and Winsa 2015). Further, increased oversight of carding practices may contribute to a decline in the use of contact cards, which are issued at the discretion of individual officers, without necessarily changing the overall character or rate of police-initiated citizen contacts. In 2013, the number of cards issued by the Toronto Police Service declined by 75 percent after it was announced that a receipt system for cards issued would be implemented, however, the actual proportion of Black persons carded increased during this period (Rankin and Winsa 2014). Critics have also contended that the releasing of carding statistics on an annual basis is too infrequent and that quarterly or semi-annual reports would better allow for the identification and addressing of trends and issues with the behaviour of individual officers (Bivens 2015).

Police chiefs and officers have also publicly opposed the revised legislation, noting that it may negatively impact public safety. In a 2015 public statement on the proposed draft regulations, Chief Jeff McGuire, President of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, commented that the proposed legislation presented “significant challenges for police... in their efforts to prevent crime and public safety” and that “the regulations may not promote public trust...and have unintended, negative impact on crime rates” (McGuire 2015). Mike McCormack, president of the Toronto Police Association, described the proposed regulations as a “social experiment” (Gillis 2015c) and linked the changes to an increase in gun violence in Toronto (City News Staff 2016).

In November 2017, the Ontario government announced several updates to the *Police Services Act*, which governs policing in the province. These changes, the first in over 25 years, draw on the recommendations outlined in Justice Tulloch’s report. The main changes include the establishment of an Inspector General to oversee police services, the publication of all past and future Special Investigations Unit reports, the ability for police chiefs to suspend officers without

pay when under suspension or in custody, an expansion of the Special Investigations Unit mandate, including increased powers to lay charges. The Special Investigations Unit will also be required to release the names of officers charged (Canadian Press 2017). These changes are very recent and their impact has yet to be determined.

The overall YCJA policy shift to recognizing the neighbourhood level of analysis and a more holistic approach to addressing the factors that contribute to youth crime are undoubtedly important steps in addressing this issue. The *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* (2008) contained recommendations that were lauded at the time of their release, but were not immediately acted upon by the province and municipality. Furthermore, when they did act, it was in fragmented and contradictory ways. For example, municipal and provincial governments propose policy approaches that advocate for strong neighbourhoods and support for at-risk youth, yet take a “tough on crime” approach to youth crime through aggressive policing.

Many of the current initiatives undertaken by the province have been too recently implemented to assess their impact. The Toronto Police Service Transformational Taskforce issued a report outlining a number of measures designed to modernize the force, including cost-cutting measures and cancelling or “rebranding” the TAVIS program (Nasser 2016). The Anti-Racism Directorate was enlisted to assist in a review of the new carding policy, within two years of regulatory implementation in January 2017 (Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services 2016).

The passing of Bill 114, the *Anti-Racism Act*, has mandated the establishment of a framework for the collection of data to monitor systemic racism and racial disparities. However, several organizations, including the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2017) and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (2017), have identified areas of concern that they argue need to be addressed to strengthen the Bill’s data-collection provisions. In particular, the Bill does not make the collection of data mandatory for public sector organizations, only stipulating that the Lieutenant Governor “may” require this. In a public letter to Minister Coteau, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2017) noted, “Without action on the part of government, many organizations will fail to identify and monitor systemic racism and fail to eliminate racial disparities.”

3.5 Conclusion: Looking Forward

Ontario has seen a significant shift in policies on youth justice, including changes at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels.

Federally, the enactment of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) in 2003 has contributed to a move away from the use of formal charging and towards an increase in informal sanctions for youth.

Provincially, the former Progressive Conservative government undertook a “tough on crime” approach to youth justice, including the *Safe Schools Act* and the *Safe Streets and Communities Act*. More recently, the provincial Liberals have enacted programs designed to address the social and structural causes of youth crime, including the Youth Challenge Fund and the Ontario Youth Action Plan.

Municipally, the 2005 Toronto “Summer of the Gun” was a key driver of program and policy initiatives, including initiatives from the City of Toronto, the United Way, and the Toronto Police Service. The programs and policies of the City and the United Way generally focused on addressing the social and structural antecedents of youth crime, consistent with more recent provincial-level initiatives. Conversely, the strategies of Toronto police focused on aggressive surveillance and police-citizen contacts, primarily targeting neighbourhoods characterized by largely racialized populations. These initiatives, including TAVIS (funded by the provincial government), and the practice of carding have been shown to disproportionately target racialized youth, primarily young black males. Critics allege that these practices have resulted in the criminalization and alienation of many Toronto youth and a diminished trust between youth and the police.

Since the enactment of the YJCA, there have been significant advancements in the policies designed to address the causes of youth crime and deviance. However, racialized and marginalized youth continue to be disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system. In particular, policies such as the *Safe Streets and Communities Act*, the *Safe Schools Act*, and aggressive police suppression strategies continue to have a disproportionate impact on these youth, including excessive police-citizen contacts and unequal rates of incarceration. To mitigate these realities, as discussed, a number of recent policy initiatives have been enacted at both the provincial and municipal levels to address these disparities.

In order to better address these worrying trends and the impact of the associated policy interventions, we must first understand the extent of the problem. Historically, there has been an effective ban on the systematic collection and public dissemination of race-crime statistics in Canada, including “data related to the processing of racial minorities through the criminal justice system” (Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2014: 395). Data on the race of suspects and offenders has been collected by several police departments, including data collected through carding, but these data were intended for internal use and was only released publicly through the use of freedom-of-information requests (Cross 2016). Similarly, regional data on the racial composition of the offender population in Ontario has only been made available through the use of freedom-of-information requests (Rankin, Winsa and Ng 2013). Several school boards, including the Toronto District School Board, have been collecting disaggregated race data for several years, but this process has not been standardized across the province (Bascaramurty 2017).

Recent legislation and policy changes in Ontario are a promising start in remedying these issues. The formation of the anti-racism directorate, the discontinuation of the TAVIS program, the enactment of the rights-based carding policy, and changes to the *Police Services Act* all have the potential to positively impact youth justice in Ontario by acknowledging and comprehensively addressing persistent issues of systemic racism in the criminal justice system and increasing police oversight and accountability.

4. Recreation

Caroline Fusco, Amanda DeLisio, and Danielle Dicarlo

Canada, Ontario, and Toronto have made efforts to promote physical activity, but often these efforts have done little to address larger systemic, structural inequalities. The policies reviewed here show that federal and provincial desires to build a “healthier, more active” citizenry have found a stable home within the realm of sport and recreation (Fusco 2009). This is not a new phenomenon, because there is a heightened emphasis placed on youth to take responsibility for and monitor their health through physical activity and recreation (Wright and Harwood 2009).

The development of sport and recreation policies continues to be concerned directly with the physical inactivity and sedentariness of youth, depicting inactivity and obesity and rising childhood illnesses as a threat to the future of Canada and its health care system (see Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services 2014). At the same time, community-based recreation is called on to respond to social, economic inequities, as well as youth crime and violence (City of Toronto Parks and Recreation 2004a, 2004b; McMurtry and Curling 2008).

4.1 History and Context

In 1974, Canada’s former National Health and Welfare Minister, Marc Lalonde, wrote a significant report entitled, *A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians*, which defined health as a combination of human biology, health care, environment, and lifestyle (Lalonde 1974).¹ The Lalonde report challenged the traditional biological approach to health, and endorsed the need for more social and environmental approaches (Bercovitz 1998, 2000; Coburn et al. 2003).

The Lalonde report gained international recognition at the First International Conference on Health Promotion, hosted by Canada in 1986, because it suggested alternative approaches to the biomedical approach to health (World Health Organization 1986). Prior to the Lalonde report, Sport Participation Canada, a non-profit private company, had created ParticipACTION. In 1972, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau nationalized ParticipACTION in an effort to reduce future

1 Despite the long-term impact of the report, the Lalonde Report was initially dismissed by Parliament and received little attention in the media (MacKay 2000).

health care expenditure. ParticipACTION was celebrated at the First International Conference on Health Promotion as a model for alternative approaches to health care – one that targeted disease prevention as opposed to treatment (Costas-Bradstreet and Edwards 2004).

Through ParticipACTION, healthy active citizenship was advertised as an individual responsibility through a national campaign. It encouraged regular and vigorous participation in recreation and sport, yet failed to consider geography, time, opportunity, or the cost of participation for Canada's diverse and marginalized communities.

More recently, with a focus on high-performance excellence, federal government funding has been directed towards programs such as Own the Podium and Long-term Athlete Development to deliver success at international-level sports events (Fusco 2009), as well as the construction of facilities for major events (such as the 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games). This focus may have neighbourhood-level effects, as “sport’s ingrained cultural resonance” and the “political hegemonies of neoliberal ideologies and policies” have led to the “dramatic (re)capitalization of city landscapes” (Silk and Andrews 2006: 315).

At the provincial level, opportunities for recreation and sport have been made possible through the Government of Ontario’s Daily Physical Activity program. In 2005, Education Minister Gerard Kennedy announced that schools would be required to offer every elementary student a minimum of 20 minutes of vigorous daily physical activity as part of the government’s Healthy Schools Program, which covered Grades 1 to 8. The Health and Physical Education Curriculum (HPE 2010 and the 2015 revised curriculum) was updated to reflect this policy change.

The introduction of Daily Physical Activity, although recognized for its importance in providing school children with opportunities for physical activity, does not extend beyond grade 8 and one credit in Health and Physical education (HPE) in the secondary years (grades 9–12) is required for high school graduation. While the revised Grade 9–12 HPE curriculum (2015) does include information on healthy lifestyles (including physical activity, healthy relationships and consent, online safety, mental health, healthy eating, and concussions), it does not address the lack of equitable access to neighbourhood infrastructure to support youth in physical activities. It also does not account for the critiques levelled at physical education in Canadian schools in terms of its reproduction of exclusionary spaces based on racism and Eurocentric curricula (Douglas and Halas 2013; Millington, Vertinsky, Boyle and Wilson 2008), heterosexism and homophobia (Grace and Wells 2005), and body surveillance (Rice 2007).

Other provincial strategic initiatives such as *Stepping Up: A Strategic Framework to Help Ontario’s Youth Succeed* from the Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services (2014), identify “Health and Wellness” as a central theme with three priority outcomes; (1) Ontario youth are physically healthy, (2) Ontario youth feel mentally well, and (3) Ontario youth make choices that support healthy and safe development. Moreover, under another theme titled “Coordinated and Youth Friendly Communities,” a priority outcome is that “Ontario youth have access to safe spaces that provide quality opportunities for play and recreation.”

Interestingly, *Stepping Up* (2014: 85) identifies Play Works, “a group of not-for-profit organizations – representing the areas of sport, physical activity, civic engagement, arts and culture, rural youth and recreation – who advocate for the importance of play in the lives of youth. Play Works seeks to support the wellbeing of Ontario’s young people by creating environments that

support growth and development through play.” Since 2005 (the “Summer of the Gun”) Play Works has recognized more than 40 Ontario communities as being youth-friendly but of the examples listed on their web page² only one community in Toronto (East Scarborough) is represented as youth-friendly.

The Government of Ontario has many initiatives to support *Stepping Up* outcomes (including Healthy Eating and Active Living from Aboriginal Health Access Centres, Ontario’s After School Program, and Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund). *Stepping Up* states that:

Ontario’s After-school Program gives 18,000 students in Grades 1 to 12, who are living in priority neighbourhoods, the chance to participate in safe, supervised activities after school. The program leads to: increased physical activity, healthier eating, better grades, and less youth violence (Ontario Children and Youth Services 2014: 29).

Implementing after-school programs was one of the recommendations of the 2008 *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence*, which identified the period between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. as “prime time for crime” (McMurtry and Curling 2008: 20). The report concluded that bolstering “health promotion efforts and addressing childhood obesity through recreational and nutritional initiatives at schools in the crucial 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. time period” would produce numerous benefits.

There is evidence of provincial and school board partnerships through the Community Use of Schools Program. This program provides funding to Ontario school boards to offer school space to groups at reduced rates for use outside regular school hours in order to increase access to affordable youth programs in under-served communities (Ontario Children and Youth Services 2014: 92). Despite the stated commitment in *Stepping Up* to “digging deeper into the experiences of marginalized youth” (95), there appears to be no available research to date that examines the impact of these initiatives at the neighbourhood level or whether the provincial and municipal governments partnerships on these initiatives are successful.

At the municipal level, policies also appear to be directed towards youth inactivity and wellness, but more emphasis is placed on what recreation can do to reduce youth involvement in crime because of pervasive perceptions of the potential for criminal behaviour. The solution is seen as sport programming in “high-priority” communities (City of Toronto Parks and Recreation 2004b). This strategy continues to be lauded as a way to tackle youth violence. For example, the *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy* (City of Toronto 2014a: 41) action plan identifies working with “Community Recreation Programmers to connect youth most vulnerable to involvement in serious violence and crime to its existing recreation leagues, drop-in, and sports opportunities.”

Additionally, Toronto’s Strong Neighbourhood Strategy 2020 (City of Toronto 2014b) identifies “high quality after-school recreation care” (30), investing in “neighbourhood infrastructure for active transportation” (32), encouraging affordable activities (32), and enhancing neighbourhood parks and green space (38) as priorities. The private sector has played an instrumental role in the development of recreation infrastructure in “high-priority” communities in Toronto. For example, Maple Leaf Sport and Entertainment Foundation, in partnership with Toronto

2 See <http://playworkspartnership.ca/youth-friendly-communities>

Community Housing, the Daniels Corporation, and the City of Toronto, has contributed \$2 million to the revitalization of Regent Park.

The Regent Park Athletic Grounds project focuses on three recreation facilities and four sports with one impact in mind: giving the kids of Regent Park a chance to PLAY.

This project is an opportunity to fully realize the concept of “sports as intervention,” a positive force drawing young people towards healthy, life enhancing pursuits. Over 2,800 youth will have access to innovative athletic grounds that will contain a basketball court, outdoor hockey rink and soccer pitch.³

The Regent Park Athletic Grounds project appears to mirror the creation of the Nike Malvern Sports facility developed in Scarborough in 2006, which was a joint initiative between the Toronto Catholic District School Board, the City of Toronto, and Nike Canada to provide one of Toronto’s most marginalized communities with recreation facilities. Since 2009 that facility has been vacant, however, because there are no adequate nets to play (Lackey 2010).

While sport and recreation continues to be viewed as a crucial intervention for reducing youth crime, the involvement of Nike and Maple Leaf Sport and Entertainment in the construction of recreational facilities indicates a broader shift in local governance. From a municipality that once established a general by-law for the maintenance of public park space in 1860 (Andrew, Harvey and Dawson 1994) to one that is now reliant on the private sector to provide recreational facilities for urban youth, these spaces may render invisible the complex geographical contradictions that underpin youth’s lives, urban power relations, and corporate consumption (Fusco 2007, 2012). There is a lack of research on the extent to which youth use these privatized facilities and whether such facilities lead to more active, health-conscious youth or reduce neighbourhood crime.

4.2 Governance and Geography

At the neighbourhood level, there has been little effort to target, encourage, or financially support collective neighbourhood action on recreation. In 1998, before amalgamation, city-run recreational facilities were free of charge. Other municipalities within the Greater Toronto Area also had access to both free and subsidized facilities.

With amalgamation effective January 1, 1998, user fees were introduced across all recreation facilities. To compensate for this additional fee, “priority” centres were introduced in 21 of the 134 communities across Toronto, and there was a plan to expand these priority facilities in the future. In addition to the establishment of priority centres, Toronto also introduced the “Welcome Policy,” a subsidy program available to those whose income fell below the Low Income Cut-Off.⁴ In 2011, however, there was a freeze on the “Welcome Policy” (no child or youth

3 See <http://www.mlsefoundation.org/How-We-Give/Regent-Park-Revitalization.aspx>

4 The Welcome Policy is budgeted to serve roughly 3 percent of the people living in Toronto with incomes below the Low Income Cut-Off. In order to be eligible for the Welcome Policy, an applicant must be (1) 18 years or older; (2) a City of Toronto resident; and (3) have a before-tax family income of less than Statistics Canada’s Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) (which is currently \$23,861 for a single

could register for summer programming), while adult programming was cut from each priority centre.

Uncertainties regarding the (potential) future privatization of these facilities have further threatened access to recreational facilities across the municipality. For example, in March 2015, the City of Toronto (in consultation with the Toronto District School Board) agreed to privatize the sports field at Central Tech High School. This made it the third school in Toronto (following Monarch Park Collegiate and Lakeshore Collegiate Institute) to privatize facilities; five more were planned for the midtown/North Toronto area (Ross 2015).

According to Andrew, Harvey, and Dawson (1994: 14): “Cost-cutting efficiency of the state and market-driven policy are all goals for present-day recreation policies in Toronto.” The spatial impact of such strategies does not appear to address the diverse realities of youth in Toronto and research is needed to analyze whether different neighbourhoods are treated in equitable ways. Echoing federal policies on sport and recreation, municipal-level strategies appear to re-inforce the discourse of individual “clients” who are responsible for their own health and recreation choices, irrespective of spatial polarization and inequalities (Fusco 2007, 2012).

4.3 Policy Development

The City of Toronto has emphasized the importance of child and youth development through sports and recreation policies at the municipal level, and the demand for equitable access to public space(s) by diverse communities across the area (City of Toronto Parks and Recreation 2004b; City of Toronto 2014a, 2014b). Using a place-based approach to target neighbourhood health, Toronto has focused on developing and maintaining infrastructure in communities with an identified need.

In February 2013, in response to the *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence*, Toronto City Council voted unanimously for “creating community hubs to provide space for meetings, recreation, the arts, and service providers including mental health services” and “reducing barriers to youth recreation programs” (City of Toronto 2013b). Similar to past reports (such as *ReActivate TO!* and *Our Common Grounds*, both 2004), emphasis has been placed on revitalizing urban parks and programs for youth. For example, *Our Common Grounds* (City of Toronto Parks and Recreation 2004b: 52) stated:

... we need to offer youth inclusion into something larger than themselves. We need to eliminate barriers that feel like exclusion. We need to offer welcoming alternatives to gangs, which youth sometimes join to protect themselves from unsafe streets.

These reports were released before the “Summer of the Gun” in 2005. In 2012, the City of Toronto adopted a Recreation Service Plan (2013–2017) to increase overall participation in recreational programs by (1) decreasing financial barriers and (2) improving access to recreation programs and facilities in various neighbourhoods. The Plan recognized youth as important users of recreation facilities and crucial resources in program development and delivery.

person). A Torontonian receiving social assistance automatically meets the requirement. For more information, see the City of Toronto website.

In an attempt to better incorporate the voice of young people, the Youth Recreation Engagement Strategy surveyed youth as well as youth-serving agencies in 2013. Approximately 1,600 youth responded to the survey.⁵ The three main barriers to participation included (1) time (43 percent), (2) cost (35 percent) and (3) transportation (30 percent). By 2015, Toronto City Council (specifically Parks, Forestry and Recreation) was expected to use the feedback from this survey to build free, more accessible programming within its next fiscal year (City of Toronto 2013a).

The Recreation Service Plan (2013–2017) demonstrated wide support for more subsidized programming to improve low-income access. However, it was reported that the introduction of an adult user service fee had significantly reduced program registrations. Moreover, despite promises to build new facilities, these were not all realized. There has been a renewed commitment to build new facilities in identified low-income neighbourhoods⁶ as part of the Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation 2017 budget (Toronto Budget 2017).

4.4 Implementation

In analyzing recreation-based policies in Toronto, it is clear that the effort to promote sport and recreation on a broad scale is an attempt to address larger structural inequalities that reflect ecological disadvantages – what Fitzpatrick and LaGory (2003) have called the “urban health penalty.” Policies that were once directed at middle-class youth who were seen as future investments of the city, province, and country (Rail 2012; Rose 2007) are now increasingly targeted at youth depicted as “at-risk,” such as resources to revitalize urban parks and neighbourhood facilities to promote a healthier, more active lifestyle (City of Toronto Parks and Recreation 2004b) for these targeted populations.

Dating back to ParticipACTION, healthy active citizenship meant regular and vigorous participation in recreation or sport, but current federal government promotion of “excellence” in sport has placed added pressure on provincial and municipal strategies to shift focus away from participation towards elite athlete development to gain international prestige at the most advanced-athletic level of competition (Fusco 2009). This push is most evident in the Canadian Sport Policy (which built on the National Recreation Statement 1987) and Bill C-12: An Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport, both enacted in 2002, along with newer federal policies (Own the Podium), provincial policies (Daily Physical Activity), and municipal policies (ReActivate TO!) which further promote “excellence” in sport.

At the municipal level, there has been an effort to establish partnerships to serve youth better (Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services 2014). For example, the implementation strategy for Toronto’s Recreation Service Plan 2013–2017 requires that “City Council direct the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) to fully participate in the youth consultation

5 57 percent of respondents identified as male, 42 percent as female, and 1 percent as other, such as transgender or pangender.

6 As part of its 10-Year Capital Plan over the 2017–2026 period, Parks, Forestry and Recreation will deliver new community centres, which include: Canoe Landing CC (formerly Block 31/Railway Lands), Bessarion CC, North East Scarborough, Western North York, and 40 Wabash/Parkdale (Toronto Budget, 2017: 20)

framework developed for the Youth Equity Strategy” (City of Toronto 2014). Furthermore, emphasis has been placed on having more youth involved in decision-making processes that directly impact on opportunities for sport and recreation in Toronto (City of Toronto 2013c). Indeed, in “Issues Youth Care About” in Toronto City Planning’s *Youth Engagement Strategy* (Toronto City Planning 2015: 12), the City of Toronto appears to be taking youth concerns into account as they report:

For some youth, sports and play are important because of the opportunities they provide to be both physical and social. Youth are concerned by what they see as a general lack of recreation, sports and play spaces and the difficulty some face in accessing parks and natural areas, which may be located far from home.

Nevertheless, there is relatively little data on the implications of the Youth Recreation Engagement Strategy to date. Parks, Forestry and Recreation appear to be moving in a positive direction with respect to serving youth in Toronto, but there is concern that newcomer youth may be losing out. The 2016 Social Planning Toronto report titled *Newcomer Youth Access to Recreation in Toronto: Relationships, Resources and Relevance* recognizes that

recreational activities offer benefits to newcomer youth experiencing the challenges of settlement, including opportunities for newcomer youth to make friends and build support networks in their new country, to practice English, to maintain good health and cope with stress, and to foster leadership and employment skills” (Social Planning Toronto 2016: 1).

However the report identified many barriers (including cost, lack of information, wait-lists, language, and cultural barriers) to newcomer youth’s access to opportunities for sport and recreation, barriers that have been recognized in other research (MacDonald, Abbott, Knez and Nelson 2009; Nakamura 2002; Taylor and Doherty 2005). Future municipal, provincial, and federal policies need to account for the full range of barriers to youth recreation; barriers that could easily be determined by attending to community-based research.

4.5 Conclusion: Looking Forward

It appears that policies are genuinely directed at providing youth with increased recreational opportunities, as the importance of recreation has been consistently reiterated at every level of governance. However, recreation has also illustrated a shift from participation to individualized surveillance and monitoring of health and the reproduction of discourses about the inner city as dangerous and (certain) youth as “at-risk” (Cole 1996) while neoliberal urban reform has (re)configured the city “as an arena for market-oriented growth and elite consumption practices” (Silk and Andrews 2006: 323).

Consequently, while recreational opportunities are created at the neighbourhood level to reflect governments’ desires for “participation” and preventive health-care, the increasing emphasis on specialized, competitive sport – dependent as it is upon income and access to coaching and equipment – can be less reflective of actual neighbourhood demand. Such an emphasis fails to account for (1) where opportunities and facilities are, (2) who has access to them, (3) how safe playing fields and centres are for different kinds of youth, (4) what activities are provided for di-

verse groups of marginalized youth and (5) what barriers keep youth away from recreation (e.g., gender, cost, time, location etc.).

Finally, with the introduction of more privatized facilities on public land, recreation may become homogenized across the city and region and may not account for the particularities of different communities with their own unique and multifaceted desires for, and approaches to, physical culture.

5. Employment

Lance McCready

Youth employment has become a pressing concern for governments at all levels. Employment here is defined as full-time, stable work, unemployment as unsuccessfully looking for work, and underemployment as work in part-time, contract positions that pay below a living wage (MacDonald 2011). This section considers predominantly youth employment policy that has emerged since 2006, and relates to Ontario's youth unemployment rate, which since 2008 has been both dismal and stagnant (Geobey 2013).

Employment is often measured provincially and treated as a mandate of provincial governments, meaning that the majority of the relevant policy exists at a provincial level. These policies typically affect the provision of quality employment for Toronto youth as a part of a broader provincial strategy, although Toronto merits distinct attention to the extent that youth unemployment is particularly high (Geobey 2013). Much of the municipal policy context around youth employment can be traced back to the 2005 "Summer of the Gun." This spike in gun violence (twice as many in the previous year) made youth a central focus for provincial and municipal governments for years to come. Here, youth employment is viewed as one of many ways to prevent youth violence through a focus on successful labour market transitions for young people.

Maguire et al. (2013) lay out a helpful framework for understanding youth employment policy. They distinguish between *strategic* policies, which coordinate policy and programs under a common approach or framework; *preventative* policies, which aim to reduce the likelihood of a person entering into an undesirable status (in this case, unemployed); and *re-integrative* policies, which are intended to bring back into employment those who are currently unemployed. They use this framework for understanding the challenges faced by youth who are "NEET" (Not in Education, Employment or Training), a recently developed conceptual category for youth that is currently preoccupying the efforts of policy makers in OECD countries (Maguire et al. 2013).

5.1 History and Context

Municipal policies. Toronto released its Toronto Youth Strategy (TYS) in 2006; it contained a detailed approach to leveraging city resources to ensure employment for youth through private-public partnerships, advocating for increased employment opportunities for youth, and raising awareness of the issue of youth unemployment (City of Toronto Policy and Finance Committee

2006). This detailed approach to youth employment was not included in the 2014 *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy* (City of Toronto 2014a). The shift in focus can be understood as a one from a preventative and re-integrative policy approach focused exclusively on employment, to a strategic and holistic approach that considered employment as one facet of broader youth social integration. The TYS was aimed at smoothing transitions to employment and getting unemployed youth into employment, and conceived of youth employment as a discrete issue that can be addressed outside concurrent social factors – a conception that has been abandoned in more recent policy documents.

Provincial policies. Provincially, employment is one of seven key focus areas in *Stepping Up*, the provincial strategy for youth development in Ontario (Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services 2013). The goals for the province include ensuring more youth are participating in the labour force and reducing the number of youth in the NEET category, as well as ensuring that youth are satisfied with their jobs and safe at work (Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services 2013). *Stepping Up* is based on theories of positive youth development and sees employment opportunities as integral to the full flourishing of young people. Employment is thus conceptualized as a means to a specific goal (positive youth development) as opposed to an end in itself.

Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy (2014) also focuses on increasing opportunities for vulnerable youth, and some of the programs detailed in the Youth Action Plan (2012), such as the Youth in Policing Initiative, view employment as a means to promote youth participation in and exposure to the work environment through diverse, educational and productive work assignments that enhance the link between the police and "priority" neighbourhoods. This initiative stems from the 2008 *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence*, which emphasized the lack of employment opportunities and fractured relationships with police as creating fertile ground for youth violence. Before 2008, Ontario had the Youth Opportunities Strategy, which included funding for the Youth in Policing initiative, a summer jobs program, a youth outreach worker program, and a school-based prevention/diversion program.

Federal policies. The Canadian government coordinates the Youth Employment Strategy across 11 departments and ministries, including three separate programs providing skills development, career search assistance, and summer work opportunities for youth. The program has been operating for 18 years, and serves youth aged 15–30. The program receives ongoing applications from agencies seeking to offer skills development or summer employment.

Non-profit and community agencies. Outside government, certain non-profit and community agencies have a role in affecting youth employment policy. The CivicAction Alliance (2014) has released a report on the different approaches the private sector can take to create youth employment opportunities in Toronto and Hamilton, such as a mentorship program and an engagement program for small and medium-sized enterprises. The United Way partnered with the City of Toronto to deliver the Youth Challenge Fund, a social investment strategy that directs public resources to Toronto's 13 Priority Neighbourhoods. The Youth Challenge Fund has been operating since 2006 and has established space, partnerships, and leadership development for youth seeking to start their own initiatives.

Impact. Youth unemployment rates rose in 1970s before leveling out through the 1980s and 1990s. A 1978 report from the Ontario Ministry of Treasury, Economics, and Intergovernmental

Affairs explained these trends as a function of demographics, and not to any kind of systematic disadvantage faced by youth. At the time, policy focused primarily on job creation through wage-subsidy programs. Moreover, the government conceived of youth unemployment as a subsection of general unemployment. In other words, the issue was conceived in predominantly economic terms. This strategy was criticized on grounds that it ignored non-wage-related barriers to labour force entry, and stood in stark contrast to contemporary theories of positive youth development, which posit employment not only as a remedy for economic woes, but also as integral to the full development of youth as productive and integrated citizens.

The 2005 “Summer of the Gun” led to the commission of the *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* (McMurtry and Curling 2008), which called for a provincial policy strategy for youth. The response to this report led to a number of relevant policy documents: *Stepping Stones* (Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Service 2012); *Ontario Youth Action Plan* (Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Service and Ministry of Community, Safety and Correctional Services 2012); *Stepping Up* (Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Service 2013) and the *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy* (City of Toronto 2014a). While many of these policies do not directly deal with unemployment, almost all contain employment recommendations to prevent youth from participating in criminal or violent behaviour.

The 2008 financial crisis led to what is now an ongoing, stagnant youth unemployment rate. The problem has been felt across all of Ontario, but is particularly severe in Toronto. Based on an analysis of employment data from Statistics Canada over the five years following the global economic crisis, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives’ *Youth Unemployment Report* noted that the youth-to-adult unemployment rate in Toronto was the highest in the province at over 21 percent in 2012 (Geobey 2013). Even while the national youth unemployment rate has fallen to 10.9 percent in the intervening years, neoliberal ideologies have also diminished the number of continuing full-time jobs, thus largely compelling young people to take on short-term, contract and precarious work that constitutes the gig economy (Alexander & McKean 2017).

Historically, youth employment policy focused on employing well-educated youth in public-sector positions. More recently, public-sector opportunities have disappeared, while increased emphasis has been placed on vocational education and youth entrepreneurship.

Explanations of the crisis in terms of a demographic bulge have abated. Instead, the economics of youth unemployment is often conceptualized as a skills mismatch and as the result of social barriers to employment. However, there is an alternative rationale for widespread concern regarding unemployment: since 2008, there has been a high visibility of youth participation in social movements, and concerns have risen over “idle youth” and the theory that large groups of unemployed young men are a precondition to social upheaval (Atluri 2013; Weber 2013).

5.2 Governance and Geography

Youth employment policy has been enacted using a piecemeal approach and often through incongruent ways across different levels of government. The federal government has not expanded its role in youth unemployment beyond the youth employment strategy, which focuses solely on skills development and summer employment, and without addressing questions of social context, equity, or access to opportunities. This leaves the province and individual munic-

ipalities to deploy the majority of youth employment policy, with the aid of certain key non-profit, private, and broader public-sector organizations.

Most youth employment policy exists at the provincial level, and is often focused on reducing the overall unemployment rate for youth, ensuring safe working conditions, and providing opportunities for youth entrepreneurs. The emphasis is on creating equal access to employment for all Ontarians. While context is peripherally acknowledged in policy documents such as *Stepping Up*, it is not included in the analysis of how different youth might achieve employment, or might describe a “good job” (United Way 2015). Furthermore, Provincial youth policy is limited in the extent to which it can track whether equitable outcomes are being achieved for different groups of marginalized youth. This is due to the use of a performance measurement tool that aggregates the metrics from different groups into a single snapshot of youth across the province, called the “profile of youth well-being” (Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services 2013).

Compared to policies at the provincial level, youth employment policies at the municipal level focus on employment as a deterrent to violent behaviour among marginalized youth. This focus leads municipal policy to take a more contextual approach to policy making by invoking principles of equity. Fewer policies direct resources specifically towards employment. While the 2006 Toronto Youth Strategy specifically called on the city to use public funds to generate employment, the 2014 *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy* mentions employment only to the extent that the city itself is able to provide jobs for youth (City of Toronto 2014a).

Outside government, many non-profits are active in the field of youth unemployment. The United Way has released several reports on income stratification in Toronto, many of which include a focus on youth employment as a way to reverse trends towards polarization. In addition, the United Way report on youth policy best practices (Jeffrey 2008) has been used by provincial and municipal governments in their deployment of more contemporary youth policy. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives also released a report (Geobey 2013) on the state of youth unemployment in Ontario, documenting post-2008 trends across the province and focusing on Toronto as a municipality with particularly high youth unemployment rates. Finally, a report by the CivicAction Alliance (2014) explains their emerging role as a convener of the private sector, establishing programming for businesses to offer more jobs to younger candidates.

There is a tension in the ensemble of youth employment policies regarding the extent to which these documents can incorporate a spatial focus with theoretical consistency. Despite acknowledging that context matters, provincial youth employment programs seem limited in the way they account for context in design and deployment. Nevertheless, there is room for youth employment policies, enacted municipally and through non-profits, to take a spatial approach.

Calls for employment programming from the City and the United Way, for example, have explicitly recognized the need for higher levels of employment in the Priority Neighbourhoods. This recognition partially stems from theoretical coherence with the stated goals and values of the *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy*, and the Toronto Youth Strategy before it. Both policies explicitly acknowledged the trends towards wealth polarization and situated themselves in terms of reversing those trends. This approach stands in stark contrast to the provincial policy ensemble, which posits itself as serving the needs of all youth, unrelated to the dynamics of socio-economics and spatial polarization.

5.3 Policy Development

As stated earlier, much youth employment policy in Toronto relates to crime prevention. The *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy*, for example, calls on the city to use its position as an employer to employ youth to prevent them from engaging in criminal activity. Employment is recast not as an end in itself but as a means to preventing crime, which limits the extent to which policymaking related to youth unemployment can focus on issues of labour market participation independent of crime and antisocial behaviour. This approach tends to produce programs and initiatives aimed at re-integrating marginalized youth into the labour force, through skills development, resume-building, and career planning. Arguably, one could call it an individual response to a systemic problem.

In Toronto, most relevant youth employment policies have been developed explicitly for working-class youth of colour from the Priority Neighbourhoods. As stated earlier, these policies view employment as one of many tools to prevent youth violence. For example, the Youth in Policing Initiative, which stems from the *Youth Action Plan* (2012), provides after-school employment to Toronto youth by having them work alongside police officers in various capacities. Importantly, to be eligible for the program, the candidates must reside in certain Priority Neighbourhoods in Toronto, such as Malvern or Mount Dennis.

Whereas municipal youth employment policy explicitly targets demographic groups, the provincial youth employment strategy is intended for all youth, as the scope and scale of the interventions are meant to apply across the province. *Stepping Up*, the most comprehensive youth employment strategy affecting Ontario youth to date, focuses on three areas: youth participation in the labour force; youth self-employment and entrepreneurship; and youth safety at work. The goals of the youth employment policy context in Ontario are based on developing both vocational skills to meet a proposed “skills mismatch,” as well as transferable skills to prepare youth for changing economies. An increase in apprenticeships and vocational training opportunities are linked to achieving these goals.

Two key concepts inform the policy development of provincial and municipal youth employment policy: evidence-based programming and positive youth development. Evidence-based programming suggests that programming must be designed with metrics in mind for evaluation. In recent conceptualizations of what is meant by evidence, emphasis is placed on results rather than participation. For example, in the case of an employment mentorship program, evidence of the number of participants would be an insufficient metric in comparison to evidence of the percentage of program alumni who obtain employment within their field within six months of completing the program. However, there is a question of what evidence bases are recognized as legitimate. Many programs that might have a strong impact on a small number of youth do not yield evidence that is easily convertible into numbers, and cannot be properly measured through quantitative means. Thus programs that serve smaller numbers of youth may not yield robust quantitative effects compared to programs that serve large numbers of youth. For this reason, smaller programs may be at a disadvantage to generate quantitative “evidence” that indicates effectiveness.

The second concept, positive youth development (PYD), is critical to understanding the theoretical assumptions underpinning the development of the policies themselves. The PYD perspec-

tive derived from developmental systems theory stresses that positive youth development emerges when the potential plasticity of human development is aligned with developmental assets (Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, and Lerner 2005). PYD is considered a strength-based conception of adolescence. In other words, PYD is a theory that claims that youth have the assets needed to enter into society with vision and enthusiasm if they are given the right supports and enablers. PYD differs from other approaches to youth in that it rejects an emphasis on trying to correct what is young people's behaviour. Rather, programs and practitioners seek to empathize with, educate, and engage youth in productive activities. One of the limitations of the PYD concept, however, is that it may undertheorize the historical power relations that have created formidable barriers to youth employment initiatives. For example, addressing the kinds of despair that can result when factories close or industries that provide youth work opportunities leave a community cannot be remedied by engaging youth in a workshop on how to write an effective resume. Rather, "the disappearance of work" from the neighbourhood will need to be addressed through a combination of community development policies and initiatives, and grassroots organizing. By relying on PYD as a theoretical framework, obvious tensions are created in relation to the social context, political economy and the history of youth unemployment in Toronto.

5.4 Implementation

The policies most relevant to this review (*Stepping Up*, *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy*, the Civic Action Alliance report, etc.) have all been released since 2012, so there is little evidence of the success of their implementation thus far. *Stepping Up* released a one-year review of its programming in 2016, which includes a discussion of numerous programs being implemented as part of the framework. However, most evidence for these policy approaches draws either from theory (as in PYD), or experiences in other employment contexts rather than rigorous evaluation of the impact of the policies' implementations.

5.5 Conclusion: Looking Forward

The purpose of this chapter is to critically review youth employment policy that has emerged since 2008, including Ontario's youth unemployment rate, which since 2008 has remained high. There has been substantial youth employment policy activity in Ontario in the last decade, yet further research is needed to determine the effects of the historical shift in approach to youth employment – from looking at youth employment in purely economic terms during the 1970s and 1980s to looking at youth employment as a component of a broader positive youth development strategy that includes innovation and entrepreneurship. At this time, the different impacts of these different standpoints remains unclear.

Analysis of the impact of youth employment policies could also benefit from a social geography perspective. For example, most youth employment policies have been provincial initiatives that do not take into account issues of job availability by neighbourhood, town or geographic community. The Youth Challenge Fund is likely the most promising policy initiative for spatial analysis, as it is intended to focus directly on Toronto's Priority Neighbourhoods and has existed for long enough to have a track record.

Another issue related to assessing the impact of youth employment policies is the fact that different policies use different approaches to data collection for monitoring and evaluation. For example, *Stepping Up* tracks data metrics that are meant to come together to compose the “profile for youth well-being” in Ontario. All the data is aggregated, and the profile is meant to represent the state of all youth in Ontario. Diversity is acknowledged in *Stepping Up*, but not in terms of what works for whom, and it does not translate into a specific focus on tracking the success of marginalized youth over time. This approach runs counter to calls from the *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* to track race-based data, and to calls from Toronto communities to focus on particular neighbourhoods. Furthermore, it limits the ability of these communities to effectively lobby the government for changes to provincial policy following implementation. A more equity-informed approach impact assessment would include disaggregating data by race, socioeconomic and citizenship statuses as a tool for communities to understand and change social circumstances. The data metrics currently being used in *Stepping Up* creates theoretical limits on the ability to collect data that could assess how youth employment policies affect marginalized youth and disadvantaged communities.

One point of tension that may emerge is the increasing emphasis on an equitable approach at the municipal level in contradistinction to an emphasis on the equal participation of all youth at the provincial level. A point of agreement amongst the policies is that employment is now seen as part of a larger ecosystem of institutions that support youth, and achieving youth employment is a goal best served by achieving harmony within this ecosystem.

One final point of investigation for youth employment policy is youth voice. *Stepping Up* frames itself as the result of a series of consultations with youth, written with the input of key youth influencers throughout the policy development process. Yet there are questions around the extent to which the programmatic directions of the province, in terms of youth employment, resonate with Ontario youth. In other words, can and should youth voice, their perspectives and life experiences, influence what youth employment programs are funded through provincial youth employment policies? A review of the research on employment reveals that little has been done to effectively explore how youth experience employment policy in Ontario. Existing research focuses largely on a national or provincial narrative, at the expense of understanding the ways low-income, racialized, newcomer youth, and youth with disabilities, for example, are affected by youth employment policies. Future assessments of youth employment policies should be informed by critical, equity-focused social theories and the use of mixed quantitative and qualitative methodologies that centre on the voices of youth and open up the possibility of examining differential impacts across different groups of youth and geographic neighbourhoods.

6. Final Thoughts

Circumstances such as poverty, racism, lack of family supports and the like do not directly cause violence. Instead, but importantly, they are sources of — in our parlance, the roots of — the immediate risk factors for violence involving youth, including alienation, oppression, lack of hope or empathy, low self-esteem, impulsiveness [with] no other apparent means of being heard nor of addressing inequalities and unfairness. (McMurtry and Curling 2008: 225)

Since its release in 2008, McMurtry and Curling's *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* has emerged as a foundational document upon which many policy and programmatic interventions have been developed and directed towards youth at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels. In this critical youth-focused report, the authors frame violence as the kind “that causes serious injuries or death or the fear of such” (18) and acknowledge its spatiality – some neighbourhoods are disproportionately impacted by violence, especially when racism is considered.

By choosing to see violence across a spectrum of space, time, and identity, and specifically honing in on “serious violence,” the authors ultimately argue for a framework that considers the intersections of multiple domains that impact youth lives. Such a framework must also attend to the rapid proliferation of social media and communication technologies in the lives of young people and in social life more generally. Our Urban Youth Working Group, based on research and interdisciplinary conversations, holds that there is need to further examine “violence” and trace how youth policy and programs have responded to, or neglected, it in order to fully understand its complexities over the last three decades. Such an historical approach is necessary to successfully contextualize and properly assess promising youth development and engagement practices, especially at the neighbourhood level. And understanding “neighbourhood” from a youth vantage point, we have learned, is increasingly elusive, as young people lead more mobile lives, residing, going to school, working, and playing in many different places, traversing the city in unique ways.

This paper has attempted to contextualize the impact of violence and broader forms of youth disenfranchisement in urban settings like Toronto in order to set it in the context of policy and program interventions in education, police interactions, recreation, and employment. We have found that these domains reflect the range and diversity of urban youth experience in cities like Toronto that are characterized by growing socio-economic polarization.

However, following policy development and responses across domains has made it difficult to effectively trace youth mobility across the city of Toronto, as we believe it is commonly experienced. First, youth policies and programs imagine space in ways that do not accurately reflect the lived experience of many youth. For instance, municipal policy has imagined “safe” and “unsafe” neighbourhoods as if they were static and polarized entities, whereas youth carry their vulnerabilities across neighbourhoods, as is evidenced in policing practices such as carding and their disproportionate impact on racialized youth across the city. Of course, particular neighbourhoods can and do lack material resources and opportunities for young people, but failing to recognize the mobility of young lives in a city like Toronto is a rather large shortcoming of current approaches to policy-making and program design.

Second, universalizing policies at the provincial and federal levels has often had the opposite effect to the one intended, due to their failure to recognize how the different social locations occupied by youth can predetermine how readily such positive interventions might be accessed by diverse young people. Consulting more rigorously with young people and then paying close attention to specific barriers that youth identify based on how they are socially positioned and on where they live, work, go to school, and enjoy leisure activities in the city is urgently needed so that we do not reproduce policies and programs that are well-intended but unsuccessful.

Third, by failing to collect statistics on the unique experiences of particular youth, especially historically marginalized youth, we have failed to fully appreciate the obstacles well-meaning policies and programs face in being fully and fairly realized. This data gap is the product of the typically Canadian impulse to imagine all people as “equal,” the legacy of liberal multiculturalism, and a general reluctance to admit the disadvantages that some youth carry with them because of the systemic nature of disadvantage. Viewing race-based statistics in particular as “biased” or unfair has been most deleterious in policing policies and our understanding of processes of criminalization of youth, as well as in school attainment across diverse neighbourhoods in Canada’s largest public education system. Fortunately, the Toronto District School Board has been turning more readily towards race and gender-based statistics over the past decade, and in November 2016, the Peel District School Board announced plans to collect race-based data on students as well. This followed the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies’ decision to collect race information on the children and families they serve. These shifts, we anticipate, will make a positive change in school-based attainment and targeted programming for multiply marginalized youth.

Fourth and last, neoliberalism’s ideologies of individualism and competitiveness have seeped into all four domains, reducing a sense of youth community and a “commons,” rendering youth individually responsible for their well-being, educational attainment, employability, and health.

In studying education, policing, recreation, and employment, what we have gained, however, is an important understanding of the compounding effects of disadvantage in young people’s lives when policies and programs fail to recognize social difference, different access to opportunities, and urban mobility in the lives of contemporary youth. In short, the total impact of these policies is larger than their individual effects. The layering, at every turn, denies opportunities – in that a mark against an individual in one arena transposes to another.

For example, youth criminal justice policies seldom constructively complement policies on youth employment or school engagement. In fact, police presence has been shown to have a

negative effect on school-engagement, especially for racialized boys. School disengagement, in turn, has a powerful effect on both youth employment and youth leisure participation outside school. Conversely, youth community participation (in sports, arts programming, religious communities etc.) has a statistically significant positive effect on school and academic engagement (Gallagher 2014). These domains in youth lives are often intimately tied together and yet policy development tends to unfold in silos with little consideration for the overlapping nature of these policies in young people's lives.

Many of the policy and program initiatives developed and implemented over recent years can be seen as reactions to critical and violent incidents and seem, therefore, overwhelmingly focused on mitigating increased youth crime. While commissions directed to study these critical incidents often recognize systemic factors as central to creating the conditions that led to the incident, there is often a disconnect between the subsequent report and the final rollout of policy and programs that might alter the status quo at the structural level and diminish obvious trends towards greater socio-spatial polarization.

Many members of our working group have experience with research projects within historically marginalized communities. Often working in partnership with socially engaged organizations, their more collaborative models of research unearth rich and complex narratives to frame statistical data and survey results that can sometimes fail to tell a nuanced story of the multiple challenges faced by young people in major Canadian cities like Toronto.

We conclude with some considerations for further research development.

1. For youth, neighbourhoods may not serve the same purpose in their day-to-day lives as they once did. They learn, work, play, eat, hang out, and sleep in many different neighbourhoods. Researchers and policy-makers need to reconsider conventional notions of neighbourhoods as singular and geographically bounded. Some neighbourhood characteristics may be linked to certain outcomes more than others, for particular groups of youth, but the very notion of neighbourhood has a fluidity that needs to be reconciled in research and future policy development.
2. Ontario-focused data on how racism intersects with the roots of violence are limited, along with data and research on racialized youth interactions with police/law enforcement or school disciplinary mechanisms. These data need to interplay with interlocking systems, such as the social determinants of health. For example, consider the Black Experience Project: A Greater Toronto Area Study Capturing the Lived Experiences of a Diverse Community,⁷ undertaken by the Environics Institute in partnership with Ryerson's Diversity Institute, the United Way of Greater Toronto, and the YMCA of Greater Toronto. This kind of research benefits enormously from such strategic partnerships.
3. Over the last few decades, researchers have experienced increasing difficulties receiving approval to conduct research related to policing (see above) or race/ethnicity in institutions such as schools. As school districts themselves begin to work more with race- and gender-based statistics in their student census data to inform programming, we foresee an easier communication with critical researchers of youth. Community

7 See <http://www.environicsinstitute.org/institute-projects/current-projects/black-experience-greater-toronto>

centres, however, remain uniquely positioned to partner with researchers to study key neighbourhood and youth development and engagement questions relative to particular demographic groups.

4. The intersection of neoliberalism and liberal multiculturalism in policy remains understudied. Our policy investigations over time certainly noted neoliberalism as a clear theoretical imperative across policy development in recreation, education, policing and criminalization, and employment. Liberal multiculturalism acknowledges diversity of cultures superficially by embracing notions of tolerance while ignoring differences within groups. The results can best be evidenced by how the federal government carried out the 2011 census, in contrast to current movements in Toronto to disaggregate data and begin collecting key demographic data to improve the evaluation of programs and services.
5. Quantitative studies dominate in areas of employment and police interactions, whereas mixed methods and qualitative studies tend to be more common in education and recreation studies. Creative arts-based methods, such as drama and visual sociology (such as photo-voice research) may offer added depth to traditional qualitative and quantitative methods. Critical youth research scholars are leading the way with promising research designs that pay attention to the intersections of policy and practice, while also activating youth expertise.⁸
6. Technologies such as GIS and other mapping software may also offer valuable tools to spatialize the “floating” or mobile urban youth experience in new and important ways, offering insights into the layering of opportunity gaps and the clustering of risk factors in the daily lives of youth.
7. There is a need to critically interrogate how youth voice and youth participation are incorporated into youth policy development. Current approaches, for example in Ontario’s *Stepping Up* youth policy framework, tend to engage youth in advisory capacities, usually *after* the foundational theoretical framework has been developed, in this case Positive Youth Development. This means that youth are brought in after the fundamentals of the policy scope and focus have been determined. Shifting from involving youth in a consultative capacity to involving them as policy co-creators and surrendering some of the power over policy direction to the youth who will be the most affected by the policy are possible strategies for achieving policies that better reflect the populations the policies are aiming to serve. Models of participatory and community-based research with youth may offer instructive models for the distribution of power in the broader field of policy development.

8 For an excellent example of promising research design, see Fine and Ruglis (2009).

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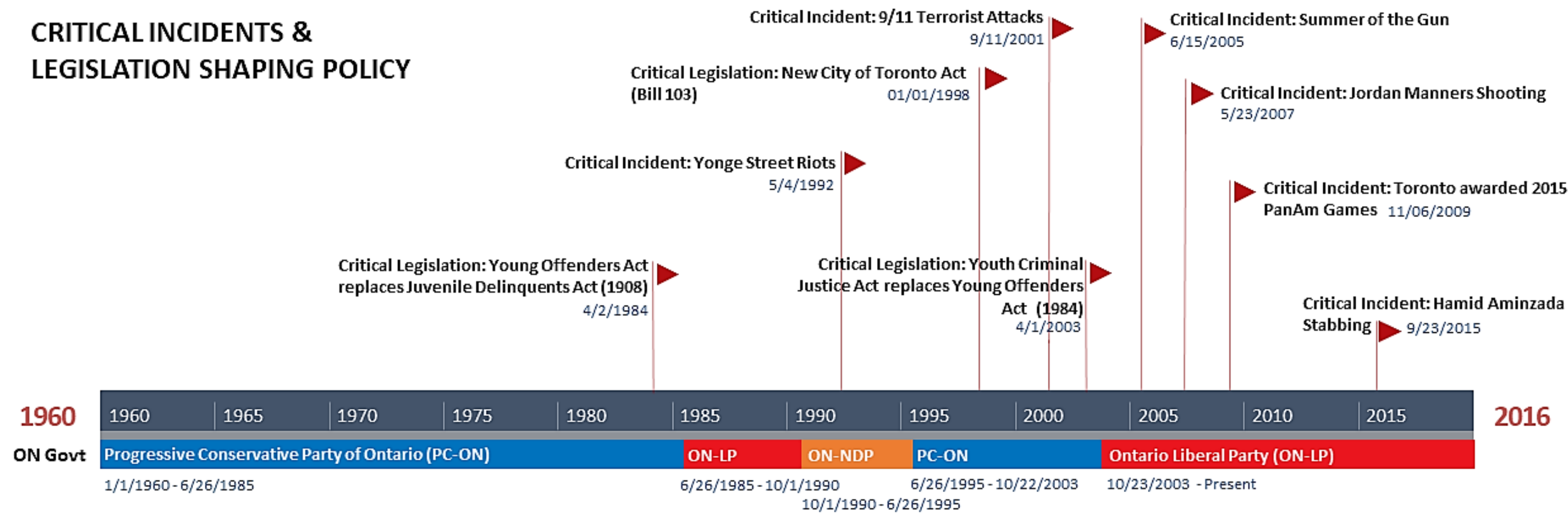
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Appendix A: Chronological Mapping of Critical Incidents and Legislation Shaping Policy

CRITICAL INCIDENTS & LEGISLATION SHAPING POLICY



Appendix B: Major Policies: Scope, Impact, and Relevance (1960–2015)

Year, Month	Level (Political party in government)	Name	Description	Impact/Relevance
		<div>Schooling</div>	<div>Crime & Policing</div>	<div>Recreation</div> <div>Employment</div> <div>Critical Incident</div>
1964	Federal	Federal role in education	The federal government increased its role in providing student financial assistance to students by expanding the Dominion-Provincial Student Aid program (operating since 1939) into the Canada Student Loan Program. It was a matching grant system.	
1965, May	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Bill 153 amends the Education Act to create Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATs)	In 1966, Centennial College of Applied Arts and Technology became the first CAAT established. In 1967, 23 more CAATs were established. These institutions were part of the province’s strategy not only to meet growing enrolment but also to recognize that “it was no longer possible to have one type of education program” (Ontario Legislature 1967 as cited in Eastman and Lang 2001, p. 64).	
1968	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Reduction in school boards	Minister of Education Bill Davis reduces school boards from 3,676 (1962) to 192 (1967). The move was part of a movement by several other provinces in the 1960s to cut costs while increasing access. Access was viewed as moving towards schools with larger enrolments and enriched programs of study systematized across the consolidated districts.	
1971	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Provincial expenditures on education	Education expenditures in Ontario grew by 454% between 1962 and 1971 under Minister of Education Bill Davis in response to the execution of large-scale reforms announced toward the end of the 1960s.	
1984	Federal	<i>Young Offenders Act</i> (YOA)	Replaced the <i>Juvenile Delinquents Act</i> (JDA) as the federal legislation governing youth crime in Canada; Emphasized individual responsibility over the social-welfare perspective of the JDA; established an age of criminal culpability (12) and moved to a focus on proportional sentences based on the offence and removed the use of status offences against the offender; Affirmed young offenders’ right to due process and to their rights under the Charter. The YOA was widely criticized for being both too punitive and too lenient.	
1984	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Bill 30	Premier Bill Davis extends public funding for Catholic School Boards through Bill 30.	Bill 30 amended the <i>Education Act</i> and extended full public funding to Roman Catholic high schools. Ontario remains the only province in Canada to publicly fund Catholic school boards through the secondary level.
1987	Recreation Ministers	National Recreation Statement	According to the Leisure Information Network, the statement “provides a working definition of recreation, recognizes its importance to individuals and communities across Canada and provides the basis of a National Recreation Framework.”	
1992	City of Toronto	Yonge Street Riots (May 4)	The Yonge Street Riot was a public response to racism and police brutality. It began with a peaceful demonstration to protest the acquittal of four white police officers in Los Angeles for the videotaped beating of Rodney King, but was rendered more significant after a 22-year-old black man, Raymond Lawrence, was shot and killed by a Toronto police officer two days after the King verdict. That shooting of a black person was the eighth in the GTA since August 1988.	
1993	Provincial (New Democrats)	PPM. No 119 – Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Development and Implementation	The guidelines supported implementation of a 1992 amendment to the <i>Education Act</i> whereby all school boards in the province were required to develop and implement antiracism and ethnocultural equity policies.	The establishment of school board racial and cultural equity policies was not mandatory prior to 1992. These guidelines called for systemic policies covering multiple areas of education provision, including curriculum, pedagogy, student assessment and placement, hiring and staffing, race relations, and community relations.
1993	School Board (Scarborough Board of Education)	Safe Schools Policy on Violence and Weapons	The Safe Schools Policy on Violence and Weapons enacted by the Scarborough Board of Education was the first policy of zero tolerance in the province towards violence in schools.	Black parents and community groups publicly expressed concerns that the policy was having a disproportionate impact on Black students (Irish 1994).

Year, Month	Level (Political party in government)	Name	Description	Impact/Relevance
<div><div></div><div>Schooling</div><div>Crime & Policing</div><div>Recreation</div><div>Employment</div><div>Critical Incident</div></div>				
1994	Provincial (New Democrats)	<i>Violence-Free Schools Act</i>	This policy was enacted in response to several incidents surrounding the safety of students in both elementary and secondary schools and constituted, in part, an official response to a commission's recommendations from the previous provincial government.	The <i>Violence-Free Schools Act</i> simply required school boards and schools to develop safe schools policies, including discipline codes.
1994	Provincial (New Democrats)	Royal Commission on Learning (RCOL) report: <i>For the Love of Learning</i>	The Province of Ontario established the Royal Commission on Learning “to ensure that Ontario’s youth are well-prepared for the challenges of the twenty-first century” (Final Report of the Royal Commission on Learning 1994). The Commission’s mandate was to engage the public in potential policy changes for the future of K-12 education in Ontario.	<i>For the Love of Learning</i> was not “policy” but a background document that made recommendations for reform through four main strategies: new school and community alliances for the education and development of children and youth; early childhood education; the professionalization and continuing development of teachers; and the use of new information technologies in education. The significance of the RCOL report was that it foreshadowed many policy changes occurring later in the decade.
1994	Provincial (New Democrats)	PPM 122 – School Councils	The purpose of this policy was to establish school councils to advise school administrators in terms of school plans and budgets.	This Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM) was an outcome of the <i>New Foundations for Education</i> – a series of announcements to reform educational delivery. School councils were mandated as a result of this policy but without any site-based decision-making authority. They were to consist of representative parents, community members other than parents, teachers, and the principal.
1995–1998	Federal (Liberals) - Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Federal-Provincial Relations	Between the 1995 budget and 1997-98, the federal government slashed cash transfers to the provinces by \$4.5 billion to close the budget deficit. The impact of drastically reduced federal support led the Progressive Conservative provincial government in Ontario to make deep and long-lasting cuts in funding for health, education, and other social programs. In higher education, Ontario slashed funding to universities and colleges and reregulated tuition fees (Jones 2014). Tuition fees increased and designated professional programs saw far higher increases. As a result, universities and colleges became tuition-dependent to meet operating costs. This period led to the quasi privatization of higher education in Ontario with marketization strategies (e.g., public-private sector funding partnerships) that fuelled competition between institutions (Jones and Young 2004). In K-12 education, the impact would be seen with the passage of structural legislative bills (Bill 30, 103, 104, and 160) that would fundamentally alter education delivery in the province, especially in Toronto.	
1996	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Bill 30 – <i>Act to Establish the Education Quality and Accountability Office</i> (EQAO)	Bill 30 created the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) as a semi-independent government agency distinct from the Ministry of Education with a mandate to develop, manage, conduct, and evaluate of standardized tests in Grades 3, 6, 9, and 11. These tests would be tied provincial curriculum expectations. EQAO also has authority to mandate schools and districts to submit “annual school improvement plans” which includes results on provincial testing measures and local-specific data on school performance and needs (Anderson and Ben Jafaar 2007: 10).	Since its establishment, the EQAO has been criticized for placing a disproportionate focus on literacy and numeracy over science and technology, social studies, the arts, etc. Timelines, validity, and how test data is used by the EQAO have also been routinely questioned.

Year, Month	Level (Political party in government)	Name	Description	Impact/Relevance
<div><div></div><div>Schooling</div><div>Crime & Policing</div><div>Recreation</div><div>Employment</div><div>Critical Incident</div></div>				
1996–2016	Municipal: Toronto Police Service (TPS) / Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB)	Toronto Police Community Contacts Policy	Investigative tool used by the Toronto Police Service involving non-criminal police-citizen contacts as a means of gathering information. Toronto Police have justified this process as necessary to ensure public safety and as a valuable investigative tool. This process has gone through multiple revisions, but the policy was still in effect despite wide criticism on legal, social, and human rights grounds. The policy has recently been replaced by Ontario regulation 58/16 to the <i>Police Services Act</i> , which came into effect January 2017.	
1997, January	Federal (Liberals) - Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee on Fitness and Recreation	Physical Inactivity: A Framework for Action	This framework was intended to provide a foundation for individual provincial/territorial governments and the federal government to determine priorities and initiatives concerning the issue of physical inactivity. Strategies of the framework include subsections for health, social, and economic aims. This includes reducing chronic disease associated with physical inactivity, to realize the potential of physical activity to contribute to the building of “healthy” communities and to lower health care system costs and increase the productivity of Canadians in the workplace.	
1997	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Bill 103 – <i>New City of Toronto Act</i>	To reduce the size of government expenditures through the amalgamation of seven constituent municipalities of Metropolitan Toronto into one, single-tier municipality. Educational implications from this legislation were most directly encapsulated in Bill 104 introduced concurrently in the provincial legislature.	
1997	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Bill 104 – <i>Fewer School Boards Act</i>	Part of the government’s “Common Sense Revolution” policies to reduce educational expenditures.	Removed education from the residential property tax base, meaning that school boards no longer collected property tax to support programs and services; instead, all school board funding would come from the provincial government. School boards reduced from 124 to 72; number of trustees reduced from 1,900 to 700. For Toronto alone, six English public school boards were merged into the TDSB, 22 trustees (reduced from 74) responsible for 300,000 students, 21,000 employees, and 600 schools.
1997	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Bill 160 – <i>Education Quality Improvement Act</i>	Increased government control of teachers, working conditions, and compensation, and intended to increase “quality control.”	Bill 160 not only excluded principals and vice-principals from collective bargaining, but also prevented them from seeking collective bargaining rights under the <i>Labour Relations Act</i> 1995.
1997	Federal (Liberals)	Youth Employment Strategy (preventative)	Federal government approach to reducing risk and creating resiliency among youth through summer jobs, skills development, and career planning. The strategy creates federal funding streams for employers to hire young employees.	
1998	School Board (TDSB)	Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is created.	Toronto District School Board becomes the largest in Canada responsible for over 300,000 students, approximately 21,000 employees, and about 600 schools under the leadership of 22 trustees.	
1999	School Board (TDSB)	P-037: Equity Foundation policy statement adopted by the TDSB	P-037 established TDSB’s “commitment to ensure fairness, equity, and inclusion” as “essential principles” of the public school system” (TDSB 1999).	With the merger of schools, P-037 brought TDSB into compliance with PPM-119 (1993)’s directive to develop and implement antiracism and ethnocultural equity policies. This policy was also in recognition of the growing diversity of the newly amalgamated school district governed by a smaller administration.
1999	Municipal, City of Toronto	Priority Centre Program (place-based)	Goal – To improve access to recreation for residents of Toronto who cannot afford to pay fees; free recreation programs for all ages, fee permits for not-for-profits; priority areas identified via percentage of economic families living below the “Low Income Cut-Off” (LICO).	Not equitably distributed across the City, limited capacity (program and space), demand far exceeded supply, and facilities varied. Revised method for determining centres needed, especially an equitable and consistent method for identifying areas. (City of Toronto, 2011).

Year, Month	Level (Political party in government)	Name	Description	Impact/Relevance
<div><div></div><div>Schooling</div><div></div><div>Crime & Policing</div><div></div><div>Recreation</div><div></div><div>Employment</div><div></div><div>Critical Incident</div></div>				
1999	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	<i>Ontario Safe Streets Act (SSA)</i>	The <i>Ontario Safe Streets Act</i> (OSSA) came into effect January 2000. The act addressed three main categories of offences: aggressive panhandling, solicitation of a captive audience, and the improper disposal of used condoms, needles, and broken glass. Repeated refusal or inability to pay fines could result in a loss of ability to renew identification or in the issuing of an arrest warrant.	Critics have argued that this law contributes the criminalization of an already marginalized and vulnerable population. <i>This law is still in effect.</i>
2000	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Bill 81 – <i>Safe Schools Act</i>	In response to a few highly publicized incidents involving weapons in schools, Bill 81: <i>The Safe Schools Act</i> set a common provincial Code of Conduct for students, that included explicit standards of behaviour and consequences for serious infractions.	Expulsion made compulsory for possession of weapons, causing damage to school property, swearing at or threatening teachers. The Act authorized teachers to suspend students for a day, gave principals the power to expel students for up to a year, and required school boards to provide discipline programs for suspended students to gain re-entry into the school system. The <i>Safe Schools Act</i> resulted in P-037: Equity Foundation being reviewed, but not significantly overhauled.
2000	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	<i>Postsecondary Education Choice and Excellence Act</i>	Through this Act, the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities authorized colleges to offer a limited number of applied baccalaureate degrees.	By 2012-2013, approximately 74 degree programs were offered by 12 Ontario colleges (Panacci 2014).
2001	Provincial (Progressive Conservatives)	Bill 45 – Equity in Education Tax Credit	This legislation permitted parents enrolling their child in private school to claim an income tax credit of 50 percent of private school tuition fees up to a maximum of \$3,500 per child. The legislation was a response to pressure from lobby groups within the private-school sector (especially faith-based groups) for access to some form of government funding for education (particularly given full public funding for Catholic education).	This legislation had the potential to further reduce funding to the public school system (Ontario Public School Boards' Association 2002) by providing parents with an incentive to move their children to private schools but without requiring accountability from private schools (Anderson and Ben Jafaar 2007). Bowing to criticism, the Progressive Conservatives suspended this tax credit program six months later, they restored its implementation prior to defeat in 2003 (Anderson and Ben Jafaar 2007).
2001	Provincial: Ontario	<i>Safe Schools Act (SSA)</i>	The <i>Safe Schools Act</i> (SSA) came into effect September 2001. Sole authority to suspend a student moves is expanded from principals to teachers; authority to expel a student is expanded from the school board to principals. SSA provides for mandatory suspension and expulsion and in the involvement of police in wide array of disciplinary issues that would have previously not necessarily involved police.	Widely critiqued for having a discriminatory impact on students from racialized backgrounds and students with disabilities. Revised in 2005 by Bill 212, which came into effect February 1 2008. Bill 212 added bullying to the list of infractions that can lead to suspension, The new policy provides for flexibility and progressive consequences for actions, while removing the ability for teachers to suspend students.
2002, May	Federal-Provincial/Territorial Sports Committee (FPTSC)	Canadian Sport Policy	(The policy builds on the National Recreation Statement of 1987). The vision of the CSP is to have: (1) a leading edge sport environment that allows all Canadians to participate in sport for personal and social development and (2) to strengthen from playground to podium results by 2012. This includes enhanced participation, enhanced excellence, enhanced capacity, and enhanced interaction in sport. Of particular interest for youths is the CSP's objective of improving school sport and physical activity. Effective May 24, 2002.	

Year, Month	Level (Political party in government)	Name	Description	Impact/Relevance
<div><div></div><div>Schooling</div><div></div><div>Crime & Policing</div><div></div><div>Recreation</div><div></div><div>Employment</div><div></div><div>Critical Incident</div></div>				
2002, October	Federal (Liberals)	Bill C-12: <i>An Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport</i>	This bill replaced the <i>Fitness and Amateur Sport Act</i> of 1961. Its purpose was to better reflect the Canadian governments’ role in promoting and developing physical activity and sport. The objectives of the bill include: (1) Physical activity: to promote physical activity as basic part of health and well-being; to encourage all Canadians to integrate physical activities into their daily lives to improve their overall health; to reduce barriers that prevent Canadians from being active; (2) Sport: To increase participation in sport and support the pursuit of excellence in sport; to build capacity in the Canadian sport system. Effective October 9, 2002.	
2003	Provincial (Liberals)	Creation of Ministry of Child and Youth Services	Provincial ministry with specific designation to respond to issues facing youth outside school.	Established youth unemployment as one of many concerns facing young people, instead of being an independent economic concern.
2003	Federal (Liberals)	<i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i> (YCJA)	Replaced the <i>Young Offenders Act</i> in April 2003. Stated focus on rehabilitation, reintegration, and crime prevention. Moved away from formal sanctions by requiring police to consider all informal options before proceeding to formal charges; crown attorneys are also required to screen for youth who do not require formal processing through the court. Courts must also consider all alternatives before imposing a custodial sentence and incarceration should be reserved for the most serious violent offences and repeat offenders.	Resulted in a significant decrease in the use of custodial sentences in Ontario, accompanied by a proportionate increase in the use of community-based sanctions. <i>This law is still in effect.</i>
2003–2004	School Board (TDSB)	TDSB establishes the Task Force on Safe and Compassionate Schools, December 2003. Report of the task force presented to the board May 11, 2004.	The purpose of this task force was to ensure that “Board schools are safe and inclusive learning environments for students and safe places in which employees work.” One task force objective specifically sought to “assess whether race, gender, sexual orientation, mother tongue of students, disability, socioeconomic status, or other dimensions of diversity as listed in the Board’s Equity Statement [had] any impact on the application of the Safe Schools Policy, and if so, [to determine] what the impact [was]” (Task Force on Safe and Compassionate Schools 2004).	The report of the task force was compiled from information gathered during 16 days of hearings and numerous written submissions. The task force concluded that the TDSB’s Safe Schools Policy in keeping with the provincial mandate disproportionately impacted students from racialized and marginalized communities. The report recommended that TDSB appeal to the provincial government to repeal the Act, dedicate resources to “collect and analyze data on expulsions and suspensions under the <i>Safe Schools Act</i> to monitor, prevent, and combat any discriminatory effect on individuals protected under the [Ontario Human Rights] Code” (Task Force on Safe and Compassionate Schools 2004)
2004–2005	Municipal: United Way of Greater Toronto, City of Toronto, Toronto City Summit Alliance	Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force (SNTF)	Task force led to a 2005 report identifying the initial 13 Priority Neighbourhoods. Called for the development of an investment agreement between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments to address issues in the priority neighbourhoods.	While initially unsuccessful, the SNTF report became the basis of the Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy.
2004, May	Federal (Liberals) endorsement of the WHO Global Strategy	WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health	The four main objectives of the global strategy include: (1) To reduce the risk factors for non-communicable disease that are the result of unhealthy diets and physical inactivity; (2) To increase the overall understanding and awareness of the impact of physical activity and diet on health; (3) To encourage development and implementation of international, national and community policies to improve diet and increase physical activity; (4) To monitor scientific data and research on diet and physical activity.	

Year, Month	Level (Political party in government)	Name	Description	Impact/Relevance		
		Schooling	Crime & Policing	Recreation	Employment	Critical Incident
2004–2006	School Board (TDSB)	2004: Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) Task Force struck in Toronto. 2005: MSIC Task Force Report released. 2006: MSIC Program launched.	Recognizing that economic poverty is linked with other kinds of social disadvantage, the idea for model schools was to address needs of students from low socio-economic backgrounds and boost school achievement. The \$3.5 million program was launched with three schools. The program was expanded to four additional schools in 2007. Today, there are 150 schools organized into seven clusters.	While not a policy, MSIC was TDSB’s recognition of the inequities in access and success for certain students from certain neighbourhoods and became one of the main programmatic strategies to mitigate the growing income inequality within Toronto’s neighbourhoods (as described in Hulchanski 2010). It began as a pilot project for three schools later expanded to seven schools who were given \$1-million each to provide additional resources/supports to students, such as extra teaching supports, vision and hearing tests, nutritional programs and after-school programs based on locally-determined priorities.		
2004	NGO (United Way)	<i>Poverty by Postal Code</i> report published (strategic)	Report on the stratification of wealth in Toronto according to neighbourhood.	Affected youth programming by focusing attention on programming by neighbourhood.		
2004	Municipal (City of Toronto)	Community Safety Plan (CSP)	Adopted by City Council in 2004, the Mayor’s Community Safety Plan was designed to address poverty in Toronto’s vulnerable neighbourhoods. Employed a variety of programs, including recreation, employment, public health, and cultural services.	Short-lived but well received, the Community Safety Plan is considered a forerunner of current neighbourhood-focused community policy in Toronto.		
2004	Municipal/NGO (United Way of Greater Toronto) / The Canadian Council on Social Development	<i>Poverty by Postal Code</i> report published (MacDonnell et al. 2004).	Influential report examining the spatial distribution of poverty in Toronto.	Lead to the formation of the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force (SNTF).		
2004	Municipal (City of Toronto)	Toronto Police Integrated Gun and Gang Task Force (IGGTF)	In response to violence, guns, and gangs, the IGGTF was formed and has subsequently expanded several times. <i>This task force is still in effect.</i>	Outcomes are as follows: Since its inception the IGGTF has been involved in numerous high-profile raids on suspected gang members. The IGGTF also works closely with members of the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS), who act as the “on-the-ground” presence of the IGGTF in Toronto’s priority neighbourhoods.		
2005–2007	Federal (Progressive Conservatives)	Action for Neighbourhood Change Program	Federal pilot project designed to effect neighbourhood revitalization. Facilitated through the UWGT, the ANC targeted the area of Scarborough Village.	Designed to develop community capacity, the ANC sought to develop a sustainable neighbourhood model for change that would persist beyond the program lifecycle. Although short-lived, the ANC was considered a successful pilot program.		
2005	NGO (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association)	<i>Everybody Gets to Play: Recreation Without Barriers</i> paper released	This position paper summarizes the issue of child poverty in Canada and discusses how recreation can improve the lives of low-income families and children. It pre-dates the 2006 National Policy on Access to Recreation for Low-income Families.			
2005	Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Health	Integrated Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy	The strategy aims to enhance collaboration and planning across health and ‘non-health’ sectors. The targets of the Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy are: (1) healthy eating; (2) physical activity—”By 2015, increase by 20% the proportion of Canadians who participate in regular physical activity based on 30 minutes/day of moderate to vigorous activity as measured by the CCHS and the Physical Activity Benchmarks/ Monitoring Program”; and (3) healthy weight.			
2005, February	Provincial (Liberals)	<i>Ontario: A Leader in Learning</i> (also known as the Rae review or Rae report) released	The report called on the provincial government to deregulate tuition fees, increase funding to colleges and universities, increase financial assistance and overhaul how and to whom these programs that allocate these financial resources.			

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2005, May	Federal (Liberals)	Sport Canada’s Policy on Aboriginal People’s Participation in Sport	Builds on the 2002 Canadian Sport Policy, this Ministry of Canadian Heritage policy ensures that Canada’s Aboriginal communities participation in sport is inclusive and enhances the experience of sport for ALL in Canada. Further, this policy is guided by the principles outlined in the Canadian Sport Policy (see above) and by focusing on the following goals for Aboriginal peoples in sport: (1) Enhanced participation; (2) Enhanced excellence; (3) Enhanced capacity; (4) Enhanced interaction.	
2005	Provincial (Liberals)	<i>Reaching Higher</i> plan for postsecondary education released.	The plan called for a \$6.2-billion investment in postsecondary education over six years to address issues such as capacity, access, financial assistance, etc. Specific to the plan was to achieve a target postsecondary attainment rate of 70 percent.	The plan was the provincial government’s response to the Rae Report. The plan also came with the announcement that the two-year tuition freeze had been lifted. The \$6.2 billion investment included \$1.5 billion for student financial assistance, \$1.9 billion for colleges, training, and apprenticeship, and \$2.8 billion for universities. The plan also specifically targeted those groups that historically have not accessed post-secondary: first generation, Aboriginal peoples, students with disabilities, etc.
2005	Provincial (Liberals)	<i>Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario Act</i> passed.	The Act established the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) as an independent advisory agency funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities to provide recommendations for improving quality, accessibility, inter-institutional transfer, system planning, and effectiveness in higher education in Ontario.	Through its evaluation of the postsecondary sector, the HEQCO aims to examine student satisfaction with their experiences, the return on investment exists as a result of their participation in postsecondary education, and the barriers to access, persistence, and achievement for students. There is a specific focus on underrepresented groups and an emphasis on identifying strategies to improve participation, education delivery, and accountability.
2005	Municipal (City of Toronto)	“Summer of the Gun”: In 2005, 52 of 78 homicides (67%) were gun-related as compared with 27 of 64 (42%) in 2004. Most of the gun-related homicides occurred in “at-risk” neighbourhoods during the summer, giving 2005 the name – “Summer of the Gun”	This critical incident results in implementation of the “Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy” (TAVIS) and the Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy (SNS). The Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS) was formed in 2006 largely in response to the Summer of the Gun. The program is run by the Toronto Police Service. In 2012, the program was fully funded by the province but in September 2015, the province announced its intention to cut funding for the program. The program is two-pronged: a year-round rapid response unit and a summer neighbourhood initiative (begun in 2008). Concerns have been raised that the emphasis on policing (e.g., tactics like “carding”) and arrests rather than dealing with the lack of resources in certain neighbourhoods disproportionately targets the young men of colour and the homeless.	
2005, June	Provincial, Ministry of Education; School-based	PPM 138: Daily Physical Activity in Elementary Schools (G1-8)	Requirement: Ontario school boards [district school boards and school authorities] must ensure that all elementary students, including students with special needs, have a minimum of 20 minutes of sustained moderate to vigorous physical activity each school day during instructional time.	
2005	Municipal (City of Toronto)	Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy (SNS)	Formed in reaction to the “Summer of the Gun,” the SNS acted on the findings of the SNTF report, identifying the 13 Priority Neighbourhoods and implementing an investment framework for these communities. Revised in 2014, the City rebranded the Priority Neighbourhoods to “Neighbourhood Improvement Areas” (NIAs) and designated 16 new areas, while dropping eight of the original 13.	Resulted in an estimated \$210 million funds for the Priority Neighbourhoods. The impact of these funds is difficult to assess, but it has been suggested that it has had a positive impact. The 2014 re-evaluation of the SNS met with criticism from City Councillors and the public.

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2006–2013	Provincial (Liberals)	Youth Challenge Fund (YCF)	Launched to support youth in the Priority Neighbourhoods, the YCF resulted in \$42.5 million in investments from the province, private donors and the United Way. The YCF ended in 2013. Within that period, 111 programs were funded by the policy.	It is difficult to assess the impact of the YCF, due to the great variety of programs it funded, but it is considered to have made a positive impact; 17 programs of the original 111 continue to be funded through YCF “legacy” funding. The YCF model has been criticized by for not providing a sustainable funding commitment.
2006, June	Federal (Progressive Conservatives)	Policy on Sport for Persons With a Disability	This Ministry of Canadian Heritage policy provides a framework for engaging stakeholders in initiating changes to reduce and eliminate sport-specific barriers that prevent persons with a disability from participating in sport. The policy discusses the health benefits of participating in sport and engaging in physical activity for persons with a disability.	
2006	NGO (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association)	National Policy on Access to Recreation for Low-Income Families	(Builds on <i>Everybody Gets to Play</i> position paper – see above, 2005). A national policy focused on increasing access to recreation for low-income families across Canada. Under “statements of principle,” it mentions the importance of physical activity and recreation for children and youth. The document contains excerpts from Grade 4 children in North Bay, ON, who describe the different meanings of poverty. Children say poverty is: <i>Not being able to play soccer or hockey, take swimming lessons, or go on school trips or to camp; Being teased about clothes, being afraid to tell your mom or dad you need gym shoes or not buying books at the book fair; Not getting to go to birthday parties or have your friend sleep over; Not having breakfast, or pretending you forgot your lunch; Being ashamed when your dad or mom can’t get a job or when you get a basket from the Santa Fund</i> (See Canada Parks and Recreation Association, 2005), pp. 1-2).	
2007	Federal (Progressive Conservatives)	Children’s Fitness Tax Credit	A non-refundable tax credit on eligible amounts of up to \$500 to register a child in an eligible program of physical activity (for each child under 16) at any time of the year. In order to qualify for the tax credit, a program must be: ongoing (minimum of eight weeks duration with a minimum of one session per week or in the case of camps, five consecutive days); supervised; suitable for children; all the activities must include a significant amount of physical activity that contributes to cardio-respiratory endurance plus one or more of: muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility or balance.	
2006	Municipal (City of Toronto)	Toronto Youth Strategy (strategic)	Attempt to coordinate action of City around priority areas in youth well-being, such as employment, communities, and engagement.	Placed onus on city to act as a service provider, resource provider, facilitator, and advocate for youth unemployment.
2006	Municipal/NGO (United Way)	Youth Challenge Fund (preventative and re-integrative)	Funding mechanism for community initiatives from priority neighbourhoods to fund programming for youth leadership, space, and partnerships.	Created mechanism to distribute resources to priority neighbourhoods through local leaders and programs, generating employment.
2006	Municipal: Toronto Police Service	Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS) / Neighbourhood TAVIS Initiative (NTI)	Formed in response to the “Summer of the Gun” to address gangs, drugs and illegal weapons, TAVIS is described as an “intensive community mobilization strategy intended to reduce crime and increase safety” (Public Safety Canada 2013). The primary element of TAVIS is roving groups of officers called Rapid Response Teams. Officers in groups of 18 are sent to high-crime neighbourhoods to engage in aggressive stop, question, and search activities. <i>This strategy is still in effect.</i>	Many have alleged that TAVIS has had a negative effect on the communities they target by engaging in over-surveillance of marginalized neighbourhoods and in racial profiling of blacks. Despite public claims of effectiveness, TAVIS has never been subject to a formal external evaluation. In 2015, the Ontario government announced it was cutting TAVIS funding by almost half, citing a shift towards community crime prevention and youth engagement. In 2016, the TPSB announced it was restructuring and possibly renaming TAVIS as part of a move away from police suppression strategies.
2006	Provincial (Liberals)	Foundations for a Healthy Schools Framework	Document/resource material designed by the Ontario Ministry of Education to support the integration of healthy schools policies, programs and initiatives into school and school board planning and implementation processes – based on the need to focus not only on academic success but also on the whole child and student (cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development).	

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2007 (Re-launch)	National not-for-profit organization	ParticipACTION		The overall goal of participACTION is to create a nation in which daily physical activity is “not only a priority, but also second nature” similar to that of child’s play. The strategic goals of participACTION include: to ensure physical activity, as a key determinant of health, is a priority in the national agenda, to inspire Canadians to move more, to develop collaboration and partnership in the sector, to attract investment to the sector, and to manage good governance, efficiency, and professionalism.							
2007	Municipal (City of Toronto)	Human Rights Project Charter		In response to a series of human rights complaints against the Toronto Police Service (TPS) in 2005/06, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) approached the TPS with recommendations for changes to policy and training. The TPS and Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) agreed to form a joint working committee with the OHRC to ensure these changes met the public interest concerns of the OHRC.						Resulted in a number of policy changes, including issues related to human resources. Revised training for all TPS staff and officers on human rights, racially biased policing and racial profiling. Revised internal investigation process for complaints using a human rights framework. Long-term efficacy of Project Charter is still unknown as no clear framework was provided by the TPS for assessing the impact of these changes.	
2007	Provincial	Youth Opportunities Strategy (re-integrative)		Established provincial funding for summer jobs, youth in policing, youth outreach workers, and school-based prevention.						Established approaches to youth unemployment that have received consistent funding since implementation	
2007, May	School Board (TDSB)	Jordan Manners shooting		15-year old Jordan Manners died as a result of a bullet wound to his chest in a school hallway at C.W. Jeffreys Collegiate Institute in Toronto.							
2007, June	School Board (TDSB)	P-062 Alternative Schools adopted by TDSB (Reviewed in 2009; 2012)		P-062 established the TDSB’s commitment to alternative schools providing “unique pedagogy, forms of governance and staff involvement, and strong parental and/or student involvement” (TDSB 2009)						As a result of this policy, the board affirmed its recognition that teaching and learning responsive to a student’s religion, gender, sexuality, or interests in arts, drama, technology, history and athletics can more effectively shape their experiences and better support their schooling needs, interests, aspirations, performance, and outcomes (James 2009).	
2008	Provincial (Liberals)	The Review of the Roots of Youth Violence (preventative) released		Report commissioned by province to investigate the origins of gun-related violence in Ontario.						Contains analysis and recommendations on repairing the broken social context for marginalized populations in Toronto; pervasive youth unemployment conceptualized as part of broken social context; included a call for a provincial youth strategy.	
2008	Provincial (Liberals)	Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy (strategic)		5-year plan to reduce or eliminate poverty and symptoms of poverty in the province.						Included increased funding for youth opportunities strategy to target priority neighbourhoods.	
2008	NGO (United Way)	Youth Policy: What works and what doesn’t? (strategic)		Report on the state of youth public policy in Canada, reviewing best practices in youth policy						Contributed to direction towards strategic and integrated youth policy frameworks, which conceive of employment as part of creating a holistic plan for youth development.	
2008	Municipal: Toronto Police Service, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board	Toronto Police School Resource Officer Program (SRO) launched		Implementation: Police led initiative to place police officers in schools. Initial funding commitment for 30 officers School Resource Officers (SROs). By 2010/11 The SRO program was expanded to 46 schools. SROs work on a full-time basis in schools. <i>This program has been temporarily suspended by the Toronto District School Board.</i>						The Toronto Police Service conducted evaluations of the SRO program for the 2008/09 and 2010/11 school years, with both evaluations yielding mixed results. A 2017 Toronto District School Board staff evaluation of the program recommended that the program be cancelled, finding that over one-third of respondents had negative views of the program. Later that year, Toronto District School Board trustees unanimously voted in favour of recommending the report cancelling the program.	
2009	Federal (Progressive Conservatives)	Actively Engaged: A Policy on Sport for Women and Girls (Action Plan 2009–2012)		The objective of this policy by the Ministry of Canadian Heritage is to foster sport environments – from playground to podium – in which women and girls are supported through: (1) program improvement; (2) strategic leadership; (3) awareness; (4) knowledge development.							

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2009, February	School Board (TDSB)	P-067 Learning Opportunities Index adopted by TDSB	The Learning Opportunities Index (LOI) is the TDSB’s re- sponse to the growing income inequality in its student census of high schools and parent census of elementary students. The premise is that student performance is linked to external fac- tors and the LOI helps direct resources to support the neediest students performing poorly in school due to external systemic barriers. The board-developed index measures external chal- lenges affecting student success, draws from factors indicating poverty and differential access, and ranks all schools from 0 to 1 with a higher score indicating higher need. A review of the factors used to calculate the index will be reviewed at least every five years and the board commits to recalculating and republishing LOIs for all schools every two years (2009 2011 2014). The LOI determines which schools participate in the MSIC program established by the TDSB in 2007.	The policy statement and the accompanying operating procedure (PR- 526-Learning Opportunities Index) is a direction to how the LOI may be applied to the allocation of resources to schools using different meth- ods, such as cut-offs, stepped cut-offs, scaling, or a combination of these approaches.
2009, June	Provincial (Liberals)	Policy Statement PPM. No 119 – “Developing and implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools”	PPM. No. 119 mandates the development and implementation of equity and inclusive education policies at a board level across the province. Two key documents issued by the Ministry of Education foreshadowed this policy directive: Reaching Every Student: Energizing Ontario Education – a priorities docu- ment issued in Winter 2008, followed by a strategy document in Spring 2009 entitled Realizing the Promise of Diversity: On- tario’s Equity and Inclusive Strategy.	The documents as well as this policy enshrined three key priorities for the Ministry: (1) High levels of achievement, (2) Reduced gap in student achievement, and (3) Increased public confidence in the publicly funded education system. This specific policy directive mandated the creation or review of current policies to reflect these key priorities at the Board level. Given the complex diversity of the TDSB, the Ministry issued a guidelines document entitled Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation in Spring 2010.
2009, August	Sport and Recreation Ministers	Intersectoral Action on Children and Youth Physical Activity	Identifies areas for intersectoral action to be taken by federal, provincial and territorial governments on physical activity for children and youth. More specifically, it is a call to action aimed at increasing physical activity among Canada’s children and youth with an aim to im- proving their health, quality of life and well-being.	
2010, September	Federal: Canada’s Minsters of Health and Health Promotion/ Healthy Living	A Declaration on Prevention and Promotion from Canada’s Ministers of Health and Health Promotion/ Healthy Living	Through this declaration the Minsters of Health and Health Promotion express the need for promotion of health and prevention of dis- ease, disability and injury. The document describes “health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being” (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2010: 1).	
2011	Provincial (Liberals)	YouThrive.ca, Supporting Communities to Create Places Where All Youth Thrive	Working in collaboration with the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Ontario Lung Associa- tion, and Ontario Physical Health Education Association (OPHEA), this resource guide has targeted youth 12-19, offering evidence-based ma- terial intended to help alleviate substance abuse, health inequities, and youth inactivity as well as help foster positive mental health.	
2012	School Board (TDSB)	Launch of elementary academies	Nine new elementary specialty schools open within the TDSB. These would be called Elementary Academies and focus specifically on sports, the arts, and music and add to variety of alternative programs within public schools.	

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2012, January	Municipal: Toronto Police Service, City of Toronto NGO: United Way Toronto & York Region	FOCUS Rexdale (Furthering Our Communities, Uniting Our Service)	This program seeks to adapt the Community Mobilization Hub Model from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, to all target communities in Toronto. The program initially targeted all communities within the divisional boundaries of 23 division of the Toronto Police (Elms–Old Rexdale). The <i>Toronto Youth Equity Strategy</i> recommended the expansion of the program, leading to its implementation with the Toronto Police divisions of 42 (North Scarborough), 51 (Downtown East), and 14 (Downtown West). The program involves weekly meetings between the participating agencies with the goals of reducing crime and disorder, increasing community safety, wellness and security and partnership and capacity building.	A 2015 external evaluation of the program found that it was positively viewed by the participant agencies and that the program had been successful in linking ‘at-risk’ clients with services. The impact of the program on crime rates in the target communities has not been assessed.
2012, May	Public Health Agency of Canada	Curbing Childhood Obesity: A Federal, Provincial and Territorial Framework for Action to Promote Healthy Weights	This framework builds on the principles identified in the Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy (PCHLS) and Declaration on Prevention and Promotion. Its purpose is to effectively address the rising levels of obesity amongst youth, and it calls for a sustained multi-sectoral response that creates and maintains a Canada supportive of the conditions for healthy weights so that children can have the healthiest lives possible. Proposes three integrated strategies: (1) Making childhood overweight and obesity a collective priority for action; (2) Coordinating efforts on supportive environments (this includes making social and physical environments where children live, learn and play more supportive of physical activity and healthy eating), early action and nutritious foods; (3) Measuring and reporting on collective progress. Effective May 23, 2012.	
2012, June	Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers for sport, physical activity and recreation.	Canadian Sport Policy	This policy builds on the 2002 Canadian Sport Policy and sets a direction for 2012–2022 for all governments, institutions and organizations committed to realizing the positive impacts of sport on individuals, communities and society. Fundamental to the policy is the assumption that quality sport depends on seven principles integrated into all sport-related policies and programs: (1) values-based; (2) inclusive; (3) technically sound; (4) collaborative; (5) intentional; (6) effective; (7) sustainable. It includes policy goals and values for all levels of sport (recreation, competitive, high-performance and sport for development). The policy is designed as a “roadmap” that establishes direction and desired outcomes for governments and NGOs in the sport and related sectors. Effective June 27, 2012.	
2012	NGO (United Way)	Youth Impact Plan (strategic)	Report examining best practices and theories in programming for economic security	Placed focus on youth entrepreneurship as key part of economic security for youth.
2012	Provincial (Liberals)	Ontario Youth Action Plan (re-integrative)	Series of programmatic directions to organize the province’s direct interventions into the lives of youth.	Contained program approaches for employment that involved an awareness of social context issues.
2012	Provincial (Liberals)	<i>Stepping Stones</i> (strategic) document released	Psychological theory of development for youth put out by government to guide youth programming according to developmental milestones.	Rationalizes youth participation in employment, employment itself as a means to achieve the full development of youth.

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2012, June	Provincial (Liberals)	Bill 13 – <i>Accepting Schools Act</i>	Bill 13 amended the <i>Education Act</i> with the main purpose of strengthening equity and inclusive education principles including bullying prevention and intervention strategies. For the first time, gender identity and gender expression were explicitly added to the <i>Education Act</i> ’s non-discrimination clause. It also focused on progressive discipline as a strategy for dealing with violations to the Codes of Conduct in each school.	Bill 31 was premised on evidence-informed solutions rooted in prevention and early intervention, rather than reactionary and punitive consequences to behaviour. The legislation attempts to engage students, school staff, parents, and community. The bill also constituted a departure from the zero-tolerance policies of the Harris government in favour of progressive discipline with critical supports identified at each stage of the disciplinary process. The Ministry of Education issued two Policy and Program Memorandums (PPMs) as a result of Bill 13: (1) PPM 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention, and (2) PPM 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour.
2012	Municipal: Toronto Police Service	Summer Safety Initiative	Launched in response to the mass shootings at the Eaton Centre and on Danzig Street, this initiative placed the equivalent of 329 additional officers on the street from July 26 to Sept 9. Focused on Priority Neighbourhoods.	The TPS have publicly stated the initiative was a success and attributed a drop in crime in the targeted areas to this strategy; however, no conclusive evidence of causation is available.
2012	Provincial: Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and Municipal: Toronto Police Service	Youth In Policing Initiative (YIPI)	Initially funded by the MCYS on a 3-year basis, the Youth in Policing Initiative (YIPI) provides work assignments to youth aged 15–18 who reside in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. Designed to enhance relations between police and youth, while providing employment opportunities to young people. Goal is to promote careers in law enforcement to marginalized/racialized young people.	A 2011 review of the program found that the program had achieved its goals, with youth developing enthusiasm and respect for the police and gaining work experience (Chapman-Nyaho, James, & Kwan-Lafond 2011). YIPI has since received a permanent funding commitment.
2012	Municipal: Toronto Police Service	Toronto Police, <i>Police and Community Engagement Report</i> (PACER) released	Established in 2012, the PACER initiative was launched in response to widespread public criticism of the TPS community engagement policy or “carding.” Resulted in 31 recommendations with the intention of implementing “bias-free” policing within the TPS, increasing transparency and accountability and addressing the practice of “carding.”	All 31 recommendations approved by the Toronto Police Services Board in April 2013; all recommendations were to be implemented by the end of 2016. Reports indicate the PACER report faced considerable opposition from within the TPS, leading to Chief Blair’s delaying the implementation of the 31 recommendations. In 2014 the TPS engaged Dr. Phillip Goff of the Centre for Policing Equity to provide an external audit of the PACER recommendations and their impact.
2013	School Board (TDSB)	P-051: Caring and Safe Schools (formerly Safe Schools)	This policy built on P-039: Equity Foundation statement and specifically re-affirmed the Board’s commitment to “creating school learning environments that are caring, safe, peaceful, nurturing, positive, respectful and that enable all students to reach their full potential” (Toronto District School Board 2013).	This policy brought the TDSB into compliance with all applicable Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda, including: <i>PPM 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention</i> ; <i>PPM 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour</i> ; and <i>PPM 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct</i> . The policy specifically articulated expectations for schools as it relates to school climate and progressive discipline. The policy specifically directs schools to consultatively develop and review school codes of conduct at the local level that must comply with the Board’s Code of Conduct. The policy also specifically mentions cyber-bullying and makes a distinction between systemic and individual violence that impacts the school climate.

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2013	Provincial (Liberals)	Stepping Up (strategic) policy	Policy framework for youth programming meant to provide a common set of goals, strategies, and benchmarks for working with youth.	Creates common benchmarks for evaluating the success of youth employment programming in relation to youth development theory.
2013, December	Provincial, Ontario Ministries, OPHEA and TO2015; School-based/focused	Pan Am/Parapan Am Kids	Four new in-school opportunities available, across the province, as a result of the Greater Toronto Area hosting the 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games. (1) Kids 'n' Play (TO2015) – resource of physical activities and healthy living lessons which connect to the TO2015 Games; (2) My Personal Best (Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport in collaboration with Physical and Health Education (PHE) Canada) – an online monitoring tool; (3) PlaySport (Ministry of Education) – online resource for elementary and secondary educators that can be linked to the Ontario curriculum (prioritizing physical activity, healthy living, decision making and student leadership); (4) Activity Day Kits (Ministry of Education) – support for elementary schools and/or after-schools programs to organize a Pan Am/Parapan Am Activity Day (school will receive \$200 to purchase equipment).	
2013, January	Provincial, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, TO2015; Community-focused	IGNITE Ontario program launched	Program is intended to invite “individuals, organizations and communities to create their own special Games-themed initiative, or increase awareness of existing projects through an association with the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games.”	
2014	Provincial, Ministry of Education; School-based	Ontario Federation of School Athletics Associations (OFSAA) Try Day	Up to \$700 awarded to a school for introducing a new sport or physical activity; application required, first-come, first-served basis.	
2014, January	School Board (TDSB)	Strategic Plan for Children and Youth Mental Health and Well-Being released.	The goal of this policy is to create a culture where mental health and well-being is integrated into every aspect of the student’s school experience. The strategic plan draws from provincial documents issued by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Education’s Equity Strategy.	The five-pronged approach includes implementation models, conditions and capacity-building, evidenced-based programming, engagement of specific populations (e.g., indigenous, LGBTQ), and system coordination. The plan specifically includes the following: a mental health team in each public school, training and development on youth mental health for all staff, raising awareness about stigma related to mental health, partnering with community organizations on mental health programming, and a stronger relationship with parents about their children’s mental health.
2014, March	Municipal (City of Toronto)	Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 (TSNS2020) report released	This report captures recommendations made to the City Council that reflect the use of a Neighbourhood Equity Score to establish Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) under the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020.	Under the 2005 Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, a total of 13 Priority Neighbourhood Areas for Investment (or Priority Investment Neighbourhoods; PINs) were designated for additional funds and resources. The 31 neighbourhoods recommended as NIAs under this report include 15 neighbourhoods that were a part of the PINs and 16 new neighbourhoods. Eight neighbourhoods included in the 2005-designated PINs lose their designation and potential funding resources (Brillinger 2014). While not directly linked to education, this report has implications for neighbourhoods, financial resources, capacity-building, and youth development.

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2014, April	A joint initiative of the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association Federal	<i>Pathways to Wellbeing: A National Framework for Recreation</i> report released	This paper is designed to guide and stimulate effective, coordinated policies and practices in recreation that improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities and places and spaces in Canada. It provides an “opportunity to identify concrete ways we can work together to enable all Canadians to enjoy sport, physical activity, recreation and outdoor experiences in supportive physical and social environments that enable participation.” Recreation includes physical recreation, sport, artistic expression, and cultural, social and intellectual activities. From the website, the Framework describes five goals and priorities for action under each goal: (1) Foster active, healthy living through recreation; (2) Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation; (3) Help people connect to nature through recreation; (4) Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities; (5) Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field. The National Framework for Recreation in Canada mentions youth under “Recreation and Youth Wellbeing,” detailing the positive impact of recreation specifically for this group.	
2014	Provincial (Liberals)	Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy phase 2 (strategic)	Five-year plan to promote child welfare, reduce unemployment, and end homelessness.	Conceives of youth job strategy and accompanying funding as a poverty reduction strategy.
2014	NGO (CivicAction)	<i>Escalator: Jobs for Youth</i> report released (re-integrative)	Plan for engaging businesses in creating employment opportunities for youth through mentorship, trainings, internships, etc.	Establishes timeline and criteria for private-sector involvement in reducing youth unemployment.
2014, September	School Board (TDSB)	On September 23, 19-year old Hamid Aminzada was stabbed to death while attempting to intervene in a dispute between two students in a hallway of North Albion Collegiate Institute near Kipling and Finch Avenues.	This was the second such student death as a result of violence within a TDSB school. A Steering Team was appointed to review the incident, assess North Albion Collegiate Institute’s crisis response, evaluate school climate and engagement, and make recommendations, not only for the individual school, but also for the school system as a whole.	
2014	Municipal: City of Toronto	Toronto Youth Equity Strategy (TYES)	TYES was developed to address issues facing youth who are most vulnerable to involvement in serious violence and crime. Consultations were conducted with vulnerable youth, youth-focused staff from shelters, and youth hubs community spaces and arts programs. The TYES identified 28 key issues across seven overarching themes, building on recommendations in the Roots of Youth Violence report. All TYES strategy actions approved by Toronto City Council in February 2014.	The impact of the TYES remains to be seen.
2015	Provincial (Liberals)	Provincial Directive to TDSB	In January 2015, Minister of Education Liz Sandals directed the TDSB to submit “a three-year capital plan” that includes a comprehensive system-wide assessment of how the board intends to reduce “underutilized” schools (Sandals 2015).	In response, TDSB trustees voted on February 11, 2015 to advance to Minister Sandals their list of 48 schools (currently operating at under 65% enrolment) for closure review. Multiple analyses place a majority of these schools as some of the “neediest” as determined by the board’s own metric, the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI), and a majority of them operate as part of the Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) program, also linked to the LOI (Elementary Teachers of Toronto 2015). The move renewed debate on whether a single school system that merges the Catholic School Boards with the Public School Boards in Ontario (similar to what has been achieved in Newfoundland and Quebec) is a more “effective” way to mitigate potential cuts to services in Toronto’s neediest neighbourhoods (Philips 2012).

Year, Month	Level (Political party in government)	Name	Description	Impact/Relevance
<div><div></div><div>Schooling</div><div>Crime & Policing</div><div>Recreation</div><div>Employment</div><div>Critical Incident</div></div>				
2015, January	Joint Initiative of the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association	Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015	This framework builds on the 2014 paper Pathways to Wellbeing: A National Framework for Recreation. Paper presents a renewed definition of recreation and a vision for recreation in Canada. The Framework describes five goals and priorities for action under each goal. The goals include: (1) active living; (2) inclusion and access; (3) connecting people with nature; (4) supportive environments; (5) recreation capacity.	
2015, February	Provincial, Ministry of Education; School-based	Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Health and Physical Education	Revised edition introduced; interim curriculum released in 2010 but withdrawn due to content related to human development and sexual health.	
2015, April	School Board (TDSB)	School Safety and Engaged Communities Report released	The school safety panel had been struck after the stabbing death of 19-year old Hamid Aminzada at North Albion Collegiate Institute in September 2014 released its report on April 8, 2015.	The 62-page report made 41 recommendations for action across four areas: (1) crisis response; (2) caring and safe environments; (3) policies, procedures, practices for safety in schools; and (4) community engagement and support. Despite an acknowledgment of security devices such as cameras as useful to maintaining safe environments, the report also called for supports to nurture and sustain a culture of relationships through investments in programs (e.g., peer mentoring) and services (e.g., ongoing training for hall monitors and hall supervision). The report also called on the board to update its emergency response procedures, especially communication and access issues during a lockdown.
2015	Municipal	Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy: Phase 1 report (re-integrative)	Contains numerous initiatives to understand and address poverty in Ontario.	Includes recommendations related to reducing debt and increasing support for job seekers, most of whom are young people.
2015	NGO (United Way)	The Opportunity Equation (preventative)	Report on increasing wealth inequality in relation to public sense of trust and concern for the next generation	Indicates that the vast majority of Torontonians (80%) do not believe the next generation will be better off than the current one, given Toronto youth unemployment rate of 22%.
2016, February	Provincial (Liberals)	Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate	Launched in response to concerns over police “carding” and issues faced by Syrian refugees. Ontario established a permanent Anti-Racism Directorate, led by Culture Minister Michael Coteau, who will also be Minister for Anti-Racism.	
2016, March	Provincial (Liberals)	Ontario Regulation 58/16 (O. Reg. 58/16) to the <i>Police Services Act</i>	<p>The Toronto Police “Community Contacts” (“Carding”) policy was replaced by Ontario regulation 58/16 to the <i>Police Services Act</i>, which came into effect January 2017. Main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Police must inform persons that they have the right not talk to them and refusing to do so or walking away cannot be used as a basis for suspicion.• Race can no longer be the reason for initiating a stop.• Officers must provide a receipt for the stop, including their name, badge number and information on how to contact the Ontario Independent Police Review Director.• Police will not be required to issue annual public reports with the sex, age, race and neighbourhood of those stopped.	The Police Association of Ontario, and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police have both publically come out against the draft version of the new carding regulations, claiming they will decrease public safety and increase crime rates. Recently, the Toronto Police Association have attributed an increase in gun violence to changes in the carding policy. The impact of the policy on the rate of police carding and the demographic composition of those stopped has yet to be determined.

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		Schooling	Crime & Policing	Recreation	Employment	Critical Incident
2016, April	Provincial (Liberal)	Independent Police Oversight Review	Launched in response to public pressure over the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) investigation of the fatal shooting of Andrew Loku, a black man killed by the Toronto police. The review was led by Justice Michael Tulloch and examined the SIU, Office of the Independent Police Review Director, and the Ontario Civilian Police Commission. The actions of Black Lives Matter Toronto were a significant contributor to this review’s being launched.	The report, submitted on March 31, 2017, outlined 129 recommendations. These included changes to the laws governing police-oversight, anti-bias training for Special Investigations Unit and Ontario Independent Police Review Directorate investigators and the release of all past and future Special Investigations Unit director’s reports where the agency declined to lay criminal charges.		
2016, June	Municipal (City of Toronto)	Toronto Police Transformational Taskforce formed	Launched by Mayor John Tory in January 2016, the Transformational Taskforce conducted a review of policing practices in Toronto. The resulting report, <i>The Way Forward</i> , recommended a number of cost-cutting measures and the cancelling of TAVIS. The report’s findings must go through public consultations, before being implemented.	The report was published in January 2017 and outlined a number of areas for policy development, including improving police accountability, eliminating racial bias and discrimination, increasing trust and improving relations with the public and improving the response to persons experiencing mental health issues. However, little has been provided in the way of actionable policy changes.		
2016, October	School Board (Peel District School Board)	<i>We Rise Together</i> report released by PDSB	On October 24, the PDSB releases their “We Rise Together” report that finds that black male high school students feel they experience bias and racism regularly at school.	Report was a response to a United Way Study that released in 2015 that showed young Black men feel unwanted and socially isolated. The PDSB report found that non-Black peers have fears towards Black students and teachers lower their expectations for them. The report drew on discussions and consultations with 87 Black male high school students.		
2016, November	School Board (Peel District School Board)	Race-based Student Data	The PDSB Trustees voted unanimously to begin collecting race-based data as part of a student census beginning 2018.	Has far-reaching implications for how the Board will respond to challenges related to student engagement, persistence, and achievement.		
2017, April	School Board (TDSB)	Report on Suspensions and Expulsions	TDSB releases report that says out of 307 students expelled from Toronto public schools from 2011-12 until 2015-16, a disproportionate number (48%) are black students compared to only 10% of white students (Naccarato 2017).	Confirms that implicit bias and anti-Black racism still structures the experiences of visible minorities in the schooling system.		
2017, April	School Board (Greater Toronto Area)	Report on schooling of black students in the Greater Toronto Area	A major report authored by Professor Carl James (York University) released. Report drew from discussions with 324 parents, students, educators, and administrators in Toronto as well as surrounding Peel, York, and Durham regions.	Report confirmed that streaming, a policy that was supposed to have ended in 1999, is still shaping the pathways of black students. Using data from the TDSB, the report found that 53% of black students were in academic programs as compared to 81 percent of white and 80 percent of other racialized students. Conversely, 39 percent of black students were enrolled in applied programs, compared to 18 percent of other racialized groups and 16 percent of white students. Report also found that 42% of all black students have been suspended at least once by the time they finish high school (See James and Turner 2017)		
2017, April	Provincial (Liberal)	Ontario Black Youth Action Plan	Launched as component of the Ontario government’s 3-year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan, the Black Youth Action Plan will provide \$47-million in funding, over 4-years, to address issues of systemic racism. Identified funding priorities include, schooling, employment, community outreach, anti-violence and criminal justice programming. The goal of the initiative is to reach 10,800 Black children and youth.			

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2017, June	Municipal (City of Toronto)	Review of School Resource Officer (SRO) Program	Toronto Police Services Board votes to conduct a review of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program that places armed police officers in schools.	Program introduced in 2008. At inception, 30 officers were assigned to 30 Toronto high schools, now expanded to 75 high schools. Program was initially designed to improve relations between students and police but has resulted in disproportionately marginalizing racialized school communities, particularly black students. The Board faces public pressure to ensure that the SRO program review is conducted independently.
2017, June	School Board (TDSB)	Review of School Resource Officer (SRO) program.	The TDSB votes to conduct its own review of the SRO program.	
2017, August	Municipal (City of Toronto)	School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Review commissioned	Toronto Police Services Board commissions its review of the SRO Program through researchers at Ryerson University, to be completed in Spring 2018.	The Board makes no decision to suspend the controversial program pending the review, despite public pressure.
2017, August	School Board (TDSB)	TDSB temporarily suspends the SRO program pending review	At the August 31 meeting of the Board of Trustees for TDSB, the consultation process for the SRO program review was accepted. Consequently, a motion to suspend the SRO program temporarily pending review, was passed.	This means that the school year will begin without the SRO program in effect pending review.
2017, September	School Board (TDSB, and York Region)	Social Planning Toronto releases <i>Still Streamed: How High Impact Decisions are Shaping Students' Futures</i>	On September 7, Social Planning Toronto released a report that drew on findings from 52 in-depth interviews with students and parents in the greater Weston-Mount Dennis area in Toronto. The study explored the processes and influences affecting high school course selection and offer insights into how streaming practices surfaced in the everyday experiences of families.	Racialized and lower income students are overrepresented in non-academic streams, which can limit their future opportunities and may not reflect their goals or potential. The report makes recommendations for key considerations to improve course selection and eliminate streaming processes in Ontario.
2017, November	Provincial (Liberal)	Updates to the <i>Police Services Act</i>	Based on recommendations outlined in Justice Tulloch's report, the Ontario government announced several updates the <i>Police Services Act</i> , which governs policing in the province. These changes include the establishment of an Inspector General to oversee police services, the publication of past and future Special Investigations Unit director's reports and an expansion of the unit's mandate and charging powers, revisions to the mandate and practices of the Ontario Independent Police Review Directorate (to be renamed the Ontario Policing Complaints Agency) and the ability for police chiefs to suspend officers without pay when under suspension or in custody.	These changes are relatively recent and their impact has yet to be determined.