

They see few mechanisms to participate in society and lack access to information and services. This is especially true for street youths whose daily realities are the streets.

In cities there is a lack of communication between people; there isn't enough space for social interactions between different groups. Groups of punks often face discrimination based on their looks. (Street youth in Montreal)

Sometimes we are repressed just because we are there. (Street youth in Montreal)

Youth Participation

At UNCED, youth rallied together to ensure their involvement in the decision-making processes on environment that would affect their futures. Since then youths and youth organizations have been active throughout Canada participating in decision-making processes on local, provincial/territorial, and national levels. Many young people are still concerned that their voices are not being heard. Their concerns are not only limited to "youth" issues, but rather they are striving toward the larger picture of sustainable development. Many youth feel that there are still too few mechanisms to develop linkages with youth in appropriate ways (e.g., mentorships and internships). Canadian young people are concerned that they are excluded because of age and are not respected for their views. Youth can offer to the decision-making process a fresh viewpoint to problems and a flexibility to view questions from more than one perspective. They have proven that they have creative ways to solve problems and a drive that allows them to act on decisions made.

Government and Youth Working Together

The government of Canada has included youth in Canadian delegations to international conferences. More experienced members of these delegations have provided advice and support, improving the effectiveness of young delegates.