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POLICE SERVICES BOARD

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J Adams  
CHIEF OF POLICE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL POLICE SERVICES BOARD  
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REPORT  
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DATE: September 10, 2014

SUBJECT: **2013 YOUTH CRIME REPORT**

FROM: Brian Adams, Deputy Chief, Operations Support Services

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that this 2013 Youth Crime report be received as information by the Police Services Board.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Young Persons represent 8.1% of the policing population, at 103,988 residents.
- In 2013, 2,012 Young Persons were charged by the Peel Regional Police. This is a 17.9% decrease from the previous year.
- Young Persons represented 11.8% of all persons charged by the Peel Regional Police in 2013.
- Peel Regional Police continue to work with schools and community agencies to help young people succeed.

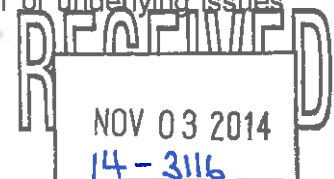
**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

The 2013 Youth Crime Report has been created to discuss crime statistics and trends, for Young Persons investigated by the Peel Regional Police. The statistics used to create this report were received from the Peel Regional Police Corporate Planning and Research Bureau.

The Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) defines a Young Person as someone between the ages of twelve and seventeen. The YCJA came into effect in April, 2003. The legislation includes guiding principles that promote the long-term protection of society. Paramount within these principles is the need to have meaningful consequences for youth who contravene the law, yet speaks to the need to address the underlying causes and promote rehabilitation of offenders.

In 2008, The Review of the Roots of Violence report was released. This review was the result of tragic gun violence in Toronto. The analysis brought to light a number of underlying issues



that called for attention in a structured and sustained way. Following the Roots of Violence report came Ontario's 'Youth Action Plan' in August of 2012. This plan identifies the need to increase support for evidence-based, impactful initiatives that provide opportunities to youth and that strengthen community capacity. It also identifies the need to begin early in a young person's life, and to better coordinate efforts and take a long term, sustained approach that focuses on positive youth outcomes.

In June of 2013, the "Stepping Up: A Strategic Framework to Help Ontario's Youth Succeed" youth strategy was released. This document includes a list of twenty evidence-based outcomes to assist in effective policy development for government ministries serving youth, to ensure that the youth across the province get the supports and services they need.

### a) Population

In 2013, the policing population in the Region of Peel was 1,280,000 of which 103,988 were Young Persons, a decline of 0.6% from 2012. In 2013, Young Persons represented 8.1% of the policing population.

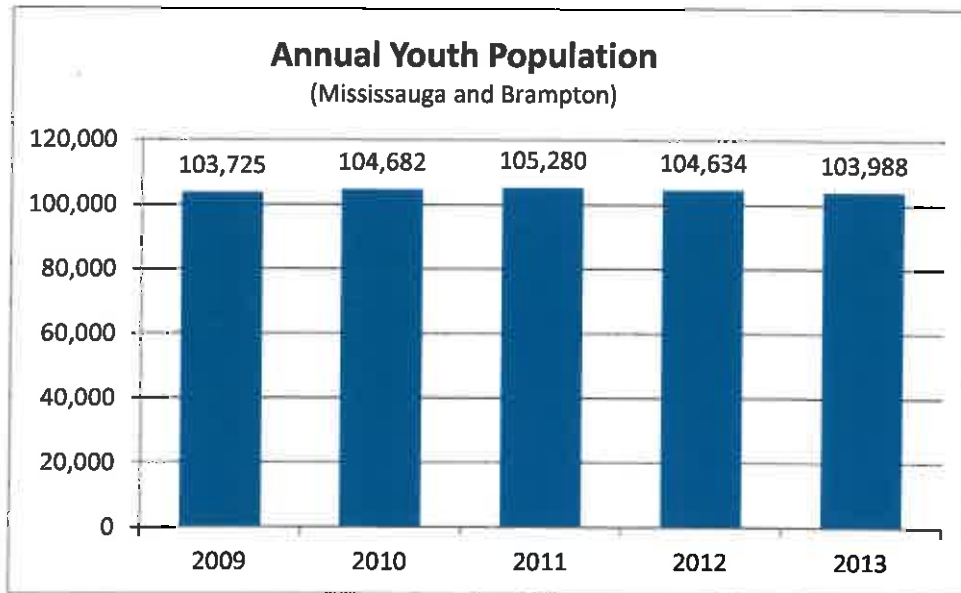


Figure 1

### b) Crimes Against Persons

Crimes Against Persons included offences such as Assault, Robbery, Sexual offences, Criminal Harassment and Threatening. In 2013, 805 Young Persons were charged in relation to one of these occurrences. This represented a decrease of 50, or 5.8% from 2012.

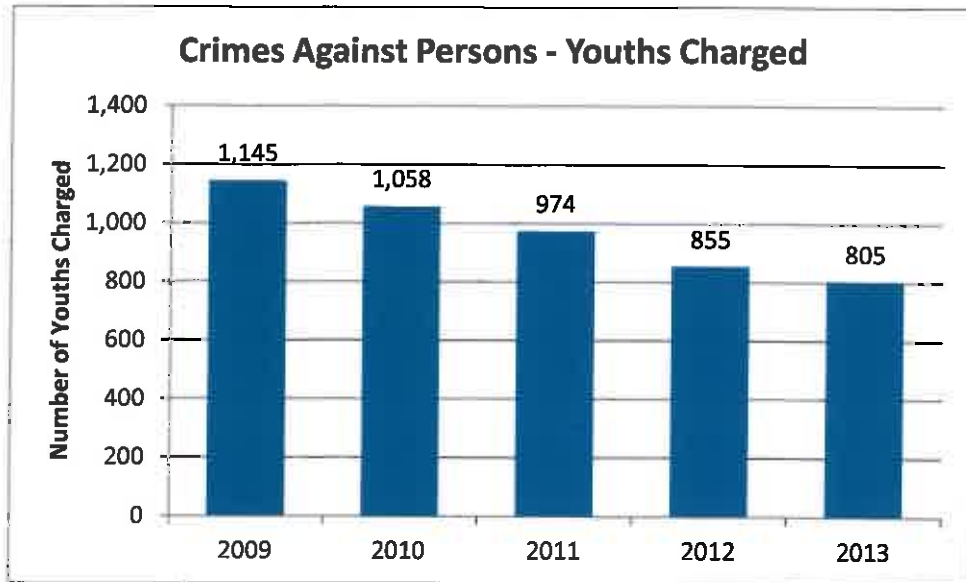


Figure 2

The four most frequently occurring incident types for Crimes Against Persons were Robbery, Assault Levels One and Two, and Uttering Threats.

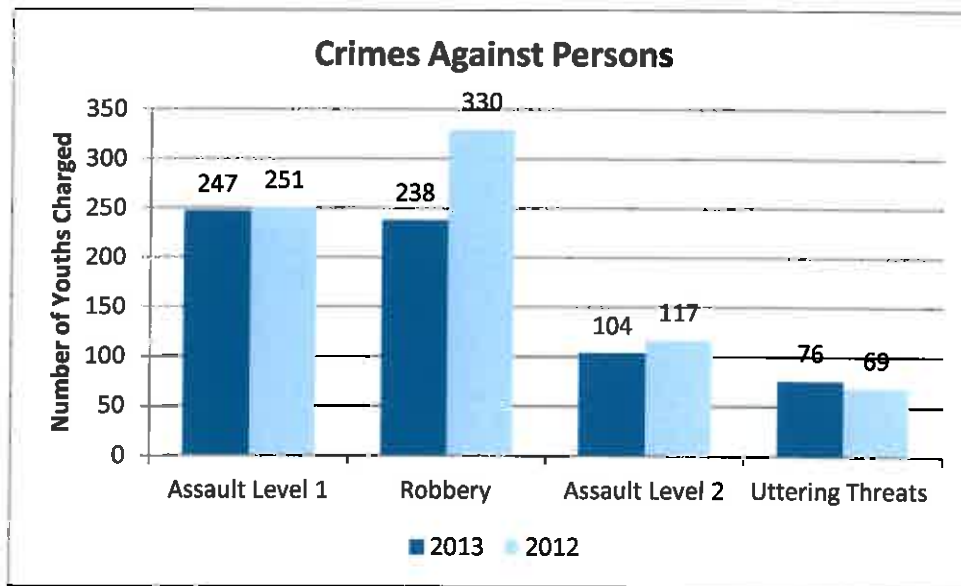


Figure 3

### c) Crimes Against Property

Crimes Against Property included offences such as Break and Enter, Thefts, Possession of Property Obtained by Crime, Fraud, Mischief and Arson. In 2013, 616 Young Persons were charged in relation to one of these occurrences. This represented a decrease of 185, or 23.1% from 2012.

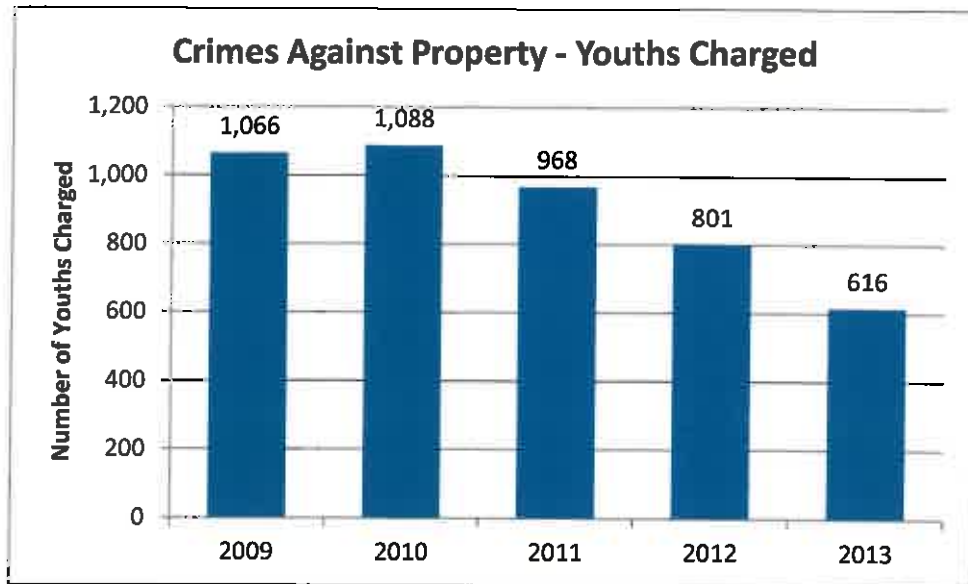


Figure 4

The four most frequently occurring incident types for Crimes Against Property were Theft Under \$5000 – Shop theft, Break and Enter, Mischief, and Theft Under – Other.

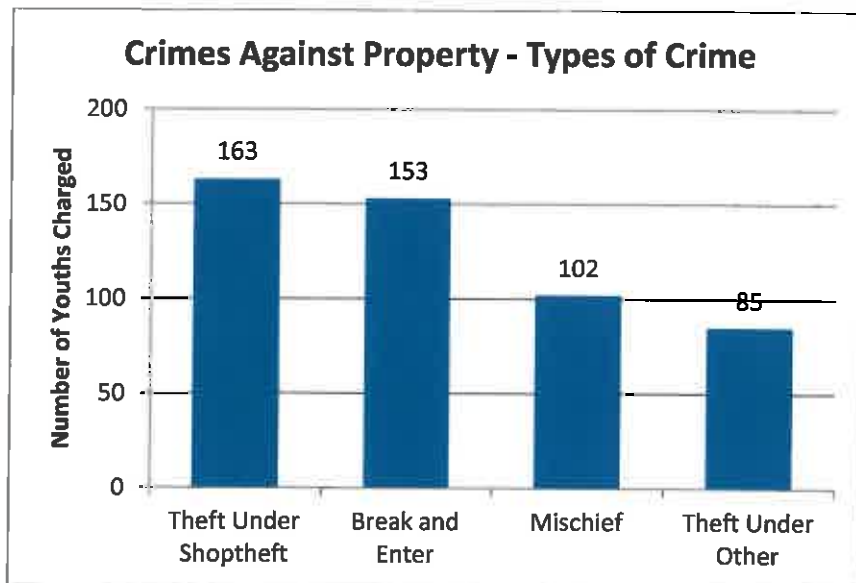


Figure 5

#### d) Criminal Driving Offences

Criminal Driving Offences included Impaired Driving and Fail/Refuse Breath/Blood Sample. In 2013, 12 Young Persons were charged in relation to one of these occurrences, a one-third (33.3%) decline from 2012.

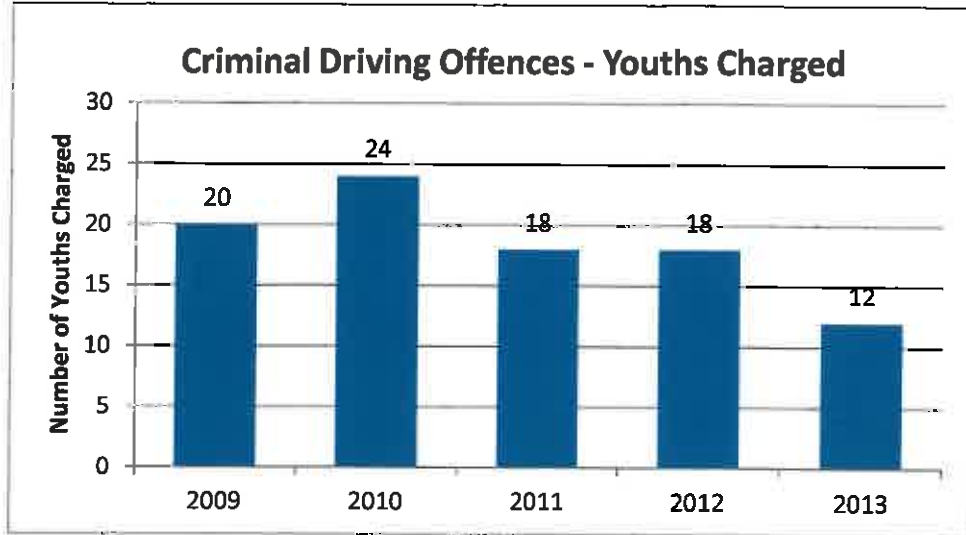


Figure 6

**e) Drug Offences**

Drug Offences included Possession, Trafficking and other related crimes. In 2013, 230 Young Persons were charged in relation to one of these occurrences. This represented a decrease of 62, or 21.2% from 2012.

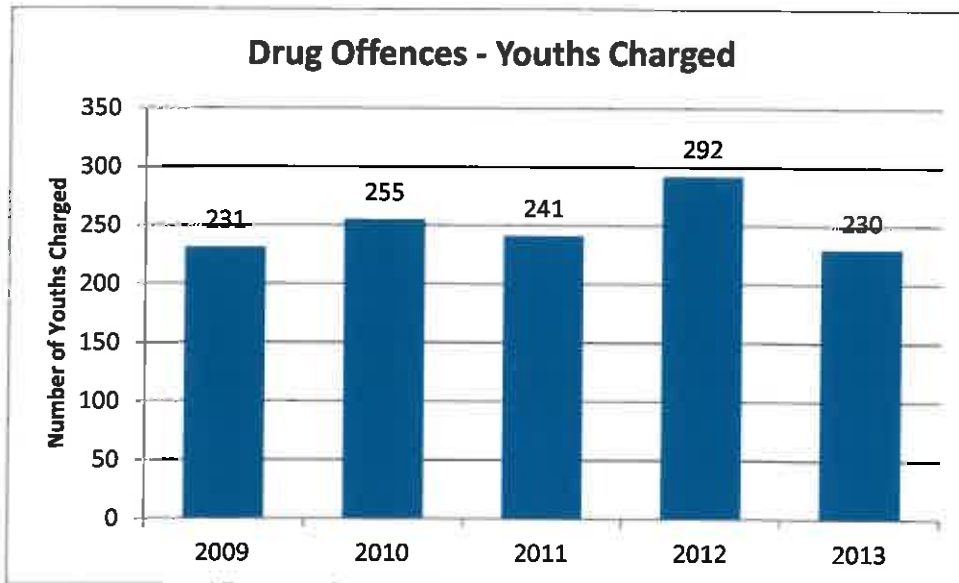


Figure 7

**f) Total Young Persons Charged**

In 2013, 2,012 Young Persons were charged by the Peel Regional Police. This represented a decrease of 439, or 17.9% since 2012.

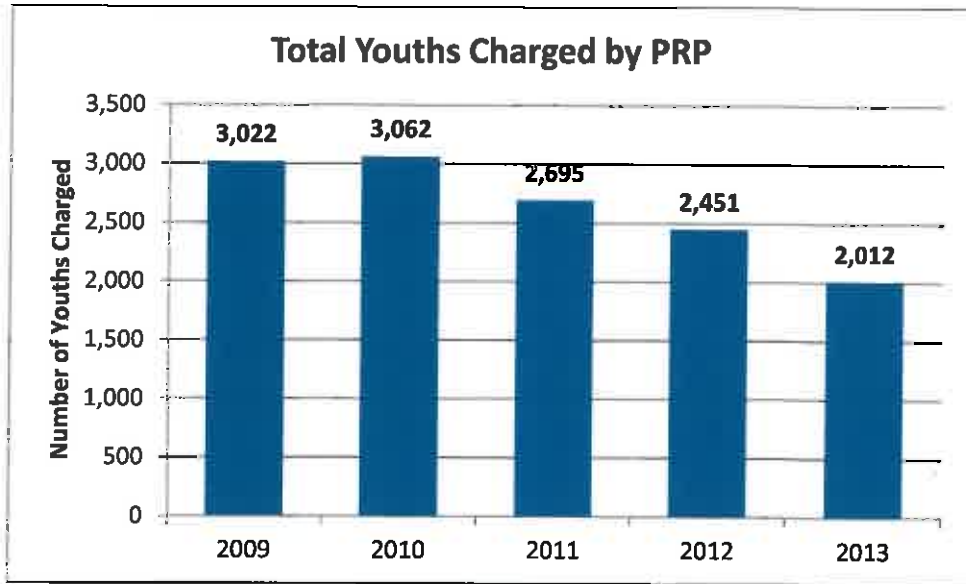


Figure 8

Young Persons represented 11.8% of all persons charged by the Peel Regional Police in 2013. The following chart summarizes this involvement, comparing 2012 to 2013, including the adult population.

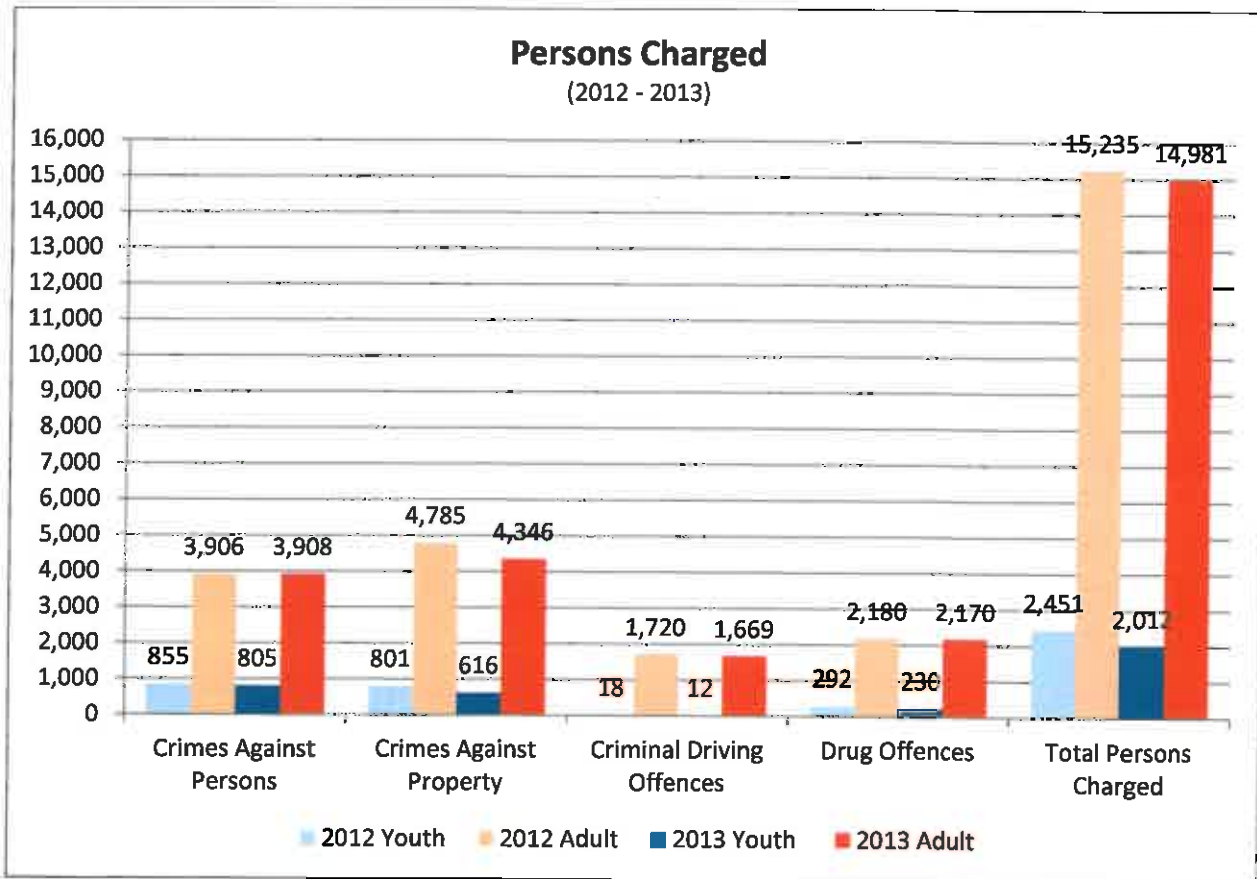


Figure 9

**g) Pre-charge Diversion**

A significant component of the YCJA is the application of Extrajudicial Measures, where young people are diverted away from the Criminal Justice System, yet are still held accountable for their actions. When a Young Person has committed an offence, Extrajudicial Measures shall be considered before a charge is laid. Where appropriate, the Peel Regional Police defer youth who have committed a criminal offence to the Pre-charge Diversion Program administered by the Associated Youth Services of Peel, where they are counseled and required to perform tasks that help them to realize the significance of breaking the law.

In 2013, 416 cases were referred by Peel Regional Police to Associated Youth Services of Peel. With 489 referrals occurring in 2012, this represented a decrease of 73 cases, or 14.9%, between 2012 and 2013. The decision to refer a youth to the program is left to the discretion of the investigating officer. Closing some minor cases by way of caution may be deemed appropriate, if the investigating officer determines this to be the correct conclusion. It is worth noting that most of the cases referred to the Pre-charge Diversion program are very minor in nature. By referral to the program, youth are simply given a greater consequence for their actions.

Each month, the Regional Pre-charge Diversion Program Coordinator examined the frequency of referrals compared to the use of cautions by officers. In some cases, the youth does not meet the requirements for referral to Pre-Charge Diversion. These requirements include: the youth must have no previous convictions, the offence must be non-violent, the youth must accept responsibility for their actions, and the parents must be in agreement with the referral. In 2013, 47.8% of the cautions that met the criteria of this program were referred by officers (52.2% of the time, officers chose to caution the youth rather than refer them even though they qualified for referral). In 2012, 46.4% of these cases were referred.

When the Pre-charge Diversion Program was established with Associated Youth Services of Peel, referrals were anticipated to be in the range of 300 youth per year. It is worth noting that the program had experienced dramatic growth between 2008 and 2009 of 92.13%, nearly doubling the 445 cases referred in 2008. The high number in 2009 stressed the resources of that agency. In 2012, Associated Youth Services of Peel received additional funding allowing an increase in resources allocated to the Pre-Charge Diversion Program.

In 2013, youth were charged in 10 matters, where they did not complete the program offered by Associated Youth Services of Peel. Another 24 young people were either unsuitable or were withdrawn from the program because they did not qualify for referral. These cases included incidents where the youth had previously been referred to the program or had a previous criminal charge, had uncooperative parents, or was experiencing mental illness issues, among others. Some youth were not charged on the recommendation of the counselor who had been working with them. These young people were dealt with by caution.

Each month an analysis was conducted on the recidivism rate of youth compared with the same period of the previous year. Of the youth who successfully completed the

program in 2012, only 9.9% committed another crime within a one-year period. For those who did not complete the program, the recidivism rate was considerably higher, at 41.2%.

## **2. Findings**

Generally, there was a decrease in youth crime statistics reported between 2012 and 2013. As identified in figure 8, the total criminal charges involving youth for 2013 decreased by 17.9% during this period. The incidence of Crimes Against Persons, including crimes of violence, decreased by 5.8%. The frequency of charges, in the broad categories described in figure 9, has shown that the criminal involvement of young people has decreased over that past year, whereas the criminality of adult persons has slightly increased.

The Pre-charge Diversion program enabled over 400 young people to have a second chance before experiencing the criminal justice system. The lack of recurrence for 90.1% of those who experienced Pre-charge Diversion from 2012 demonstrated that these youth were held accountable and learned from their experience. Most of these young people would have been otherwise cautioned or charged for minor offences, most frequently being shop theft.

## **3. Continuing work with Young People**

The Peel Regional Police has an excellent reputation for collaborating with organizations to make our community safer. Our working relationships with the local school boards, local crime prevention associations and the Region of Peel contribute on a daily basis toward helping youth succeed. The Peel Regional Police has had a number of successful programs that served to bring youth and police together.

### **a) Neighbourhood Policing Units**

Divisional Neighbourhood Policing officers have been placed into every secondary school. The relationships these officers have established with students and staff, continues to help maintain a safe environment for young people to learn. Officers have continued to conduct enforcement, while at the same time provided positive role models. Countless hours have been spent by Neighbourhood Policing Unit officers in fund raising, sports and other volunteer school activities.

Officers in the schools investigated 2,399 incidents in 2013. Many of the youth criminal charges have been the work of Neighbourhood Policing Unit officers.

### **b) Youth Education**

The Youth Education Bureau has been responsible for the police-related education of elementary level students. Having the opportunity to provide drug awareness through the *Reduce Abuse in Drugs (R.A.I.D.)* program for 5,880 students, and hosting 9,869 youth at the *Peel Children's Safety Village*, has given Peel Regional Police a chance to positively impact a broad spectrum of our children.

In 2013, 39,960 young people were provided with internet safety awareness activities. Youth Education Officers also attended classrooms several times a year, to present



topics such as Bullying, Youth and the Law, Drug Abuse Prevention and Youth Gangs.

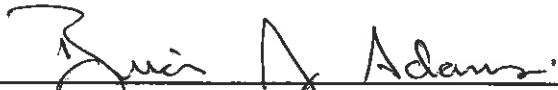
**c) Youth in Policing Initiative**

Last year, the Peel Regional Police, in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, employed 15 young people in a mentoring relationship. With the assistance of the Peel District School Board, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, our French language secondary schools, and the Children's Aid Society, students were selected to work alongside officers and civilians. This mentoring opportunity was well received by these young people. The Youth in Policing Initiative program was continued for 2014 and was augmented to enhance the employment experience for the students. The students selected a topic of importance to them, researched the selected topic and prepared a presentation from a youth's perspective. They delivered the presentation to their fellow students and to officers from the Youth Education Bureau, ultimately educating the police about their topic from a youth's perspective.

**CONCLUSION**

The Peel Regional Police 2013 Youth Crime Report has identified important data on the involvement of youth in our policing activities. It is encouraging to see the incidence of Youth Crime has decreased by 17.9% compared to 2012. The Peel Regional Police will continue to have programs and community partnerships that shall adhere to Ontario's Youth Action Plan.

**Approved for Submission:**



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*For further information regarding this report, please contact Superintendent D. Downer at extension 3600 or via e-mail at [david.downer@peelpolice.ca](mailto:david.downer@peelpolice.ca)*

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