

TORONTO POLICE SERVICE YOUTH PRE-CHARGE DIVERSION PROGRAM

Mission Statement: To provide an effective, timely and alternative response to a crime committed by a young person with a view to repairing and acknowledging harm caused to the victim and the community.

Background

The Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) came into effect on April 1st 2003. Police were given certain options to consider when dealing with an arrested youth. One of those options was to refer the young person to a program or agency in the community that may assist the young person to not commit offences, in lieu of laying charges. The Toronto Police Service (TPS) is now developing a formalized youth pre-charge diversion program that will be available to all divisions in the city. This program will be launched in the latter part of 2016.

Process

- TPS is partnering with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services (MCYS)
- When a youth is arrested and the police officer determines that this youth is suitable for diversion and the youth consents, a waiver is signed. The Parent/Legal guardian is also notified
- The youth contacts the MCYS and an intake meeting is arranged with the youth and the Parent/Legal guardian.
- As assessment is made as to the best course of action for the youth to complete
- If the program has been completed successfully, the TPS is notified and the case is closed.
- If the youth does not complete the program, then the TPS is notified and the youth can be charged criminally.

Types of Programs the Youth May Have To Complete

Counselling (ie. substance abuse)
Letter of Apology
Community Service
Restorative Justice Conferencing
Connections to jobs and volunteer opportunities