



# PATIENCE, ADAPTABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY

A RI'S PRACTICAL GUIDE  
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1 CRPG | YELLOWKNIFE, NWT

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## Introduction

Congratulations on becoming a RI (RI) and welcome to the Canadian Armed Forces' 1st Canadian Rangers Patrol Group (1 CRPG) headquartered in Yellowknife, NT. This is a great introductory guide into your work and for your reference later in your career. You will be working as a RI for both the Canadian Rangers (CR) and the Junior Canadian Rangers (JCR). The area of responsibility (AOR) for 1 CRPG covers a small section of British Columbia, primarily Atlin, BC, and Canada's three territories: Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon. This Northern Canadian AOR is larger than Europe and its inhabitants are as diverse, if not more, than Europeans. Canada's territories are home to 0.3% of the Canadian population spread across an area of 3, 535, 263 km<sup>2</sup>. Many Northern communities are remote, isolated, and/or coastal. Most Northern communities are limited to boat or air access with minor road connections between few communities. Demographically, Nunavut is majority Indigenous, the Northwest Territories is split in half between non-Indigenous and Indigenous, and Yukon's population is mostly non-Indigenous. The territories have young populations, particularly Nunavut, which has one of the youngest populations in Canada. Mothers are getting younger and having more children in Nunavut, according to Statistics Canada.<sup>1</sup> With an increased number of young people, the JCR program will play a more integral role in the North and its support for youth in the region for years to come. For many young Northerners, the JCR program is the only accessible extracurricular program in their local community and their chance to experience life changing opportunities.

The JCR program's aim is to provide a structured youth program, which promotes traditional cultures and lifestyles, in remote, coastal, and isolated communities of Canada. To achieve this aim, the JCR objectives are to impart JCRs with three skills: traditional, life, and Canadian Ranger skills. When the JCR program was first trialed in Paulatuk, NT, in 1994, it was an outstanding success. The JCR model is more congruent with diverse Northern lifestyles and cultures. In most of the communities where JCR patrols exist, Cadet Corps or Squadrons are infeasible. The Canadian Cadet Organization's paramilitary practices and rigidity are difficult to transplant and function in Northern environments effectively. The JCR program is successful because it is community-led, flexible, and adaptable. Essentially, JCR patrols are to be overseen and led by the Canadian Rangers in their community. 1 CRPG's JCR vision is to have active and autonomous JCR patrols in communities where they operate. An autonomous JCR patrol is defined as one that can organize and execute regular and acceptable JCR activities, and request pay independently of their RI. Therefore, a RI's mission is to support and encourage Canadian Rangers and other community leaders to take responsibility over their JCR patrol and develop it to be autonomous. For the individual JCR patrol, a RI's role is to support the CRs and JCRs in their delivery of the youth program. However, the JCRs are the priority, and it is vital that JCR activities are pursued when a RI is in the community, even if community and Ranger leadership is lacking for a given JCR patrol. Before diving into your role as a RI, you must first understand some important details about Canada's Northern region and who calls it home, specifically the young Canadians.

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<sup>1</sup> Nunatsiq News, "Nunavut moms younger and have more children than others in Canada: StatCan," *Nunatsiq News*, October 1, 2020, <https://nunatsiq.com/stories/article/nunavut-moms-younger-and-have-more-children-than-others-in-canada-statcan/#:~:text=Mothers%20in%20Nunavut%20are%20still,average%20age%20was%2030.7%20years.>

The following visual aids will assist in your comprehension of the North's unique geographic and cultural characteristics associated with your working environment.

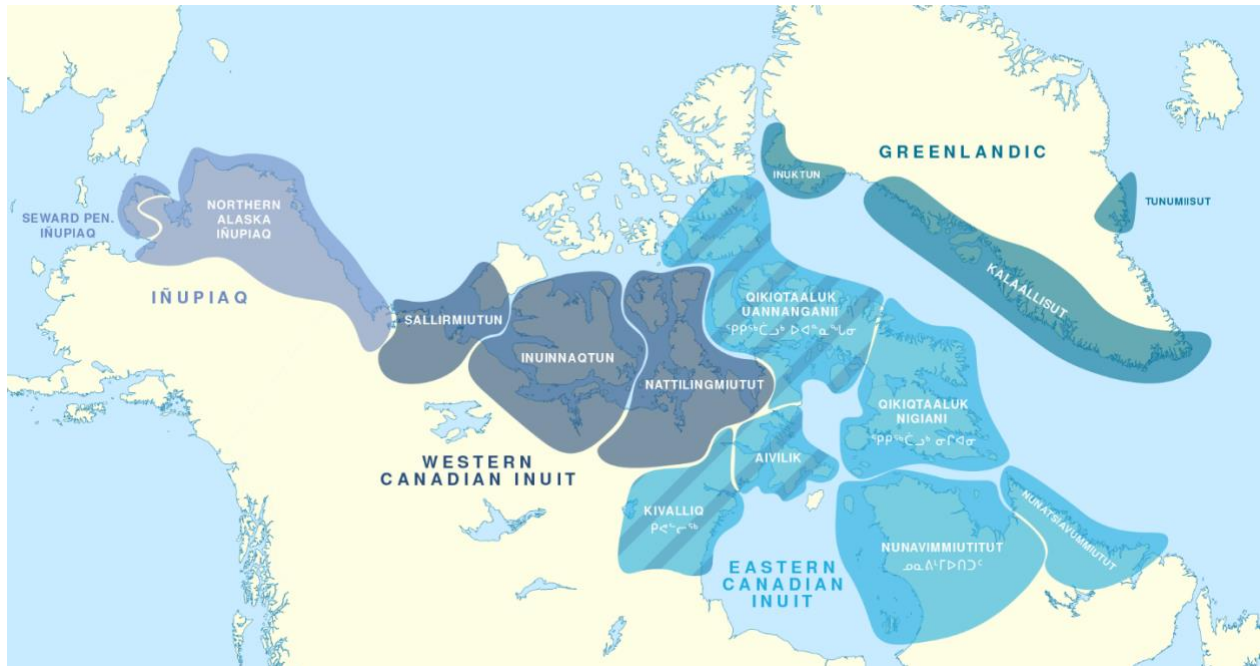
Below is a map displaying Indigenous cultural regions found in present-day North America. 1 CRPG's AOR is home to three of these regions, the Arctic, Subarctic, and Northwest Coast.



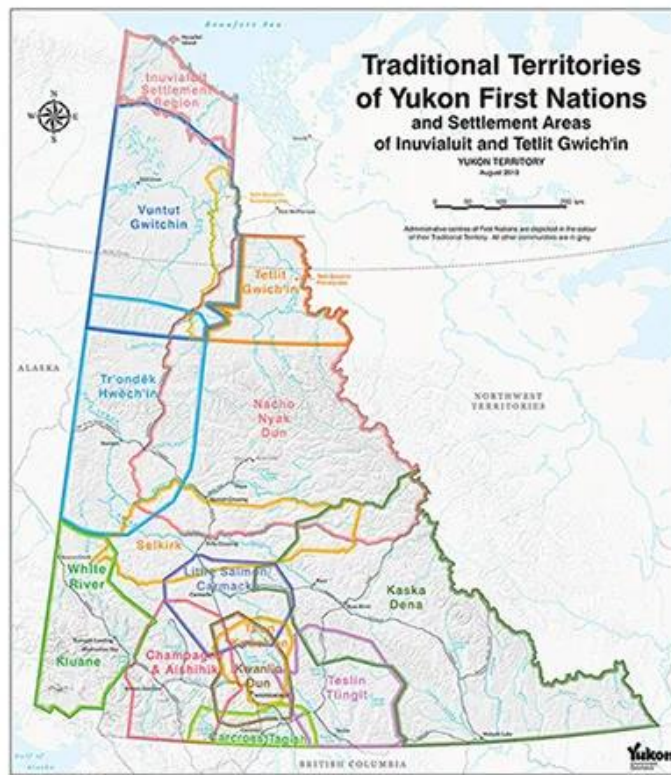
Next, this is a map detailing the various traditional language regions of Indigenous peoples in North America. 1 CRPG's AOR contains primarily Indigenous speakers from the Athabascan and Inuit language families.



This map below breaks down further the diversity of the Inuktitut language spoken by Inuit peoples regionally.

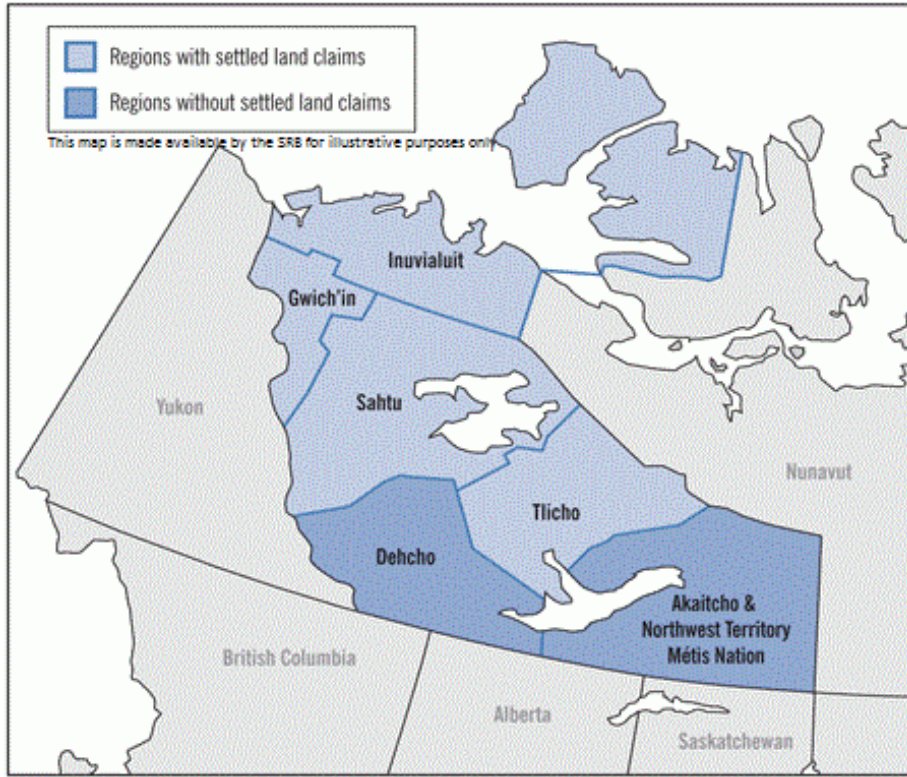


Below is a map of the Traditional Territories of Yukon First Nations and the areas each nation calls home within the territory.





This map shows current Northwest Territories land claims situation and traditional territories of the Inuit and First Nations that inhabit this territory below.



Finally, the map below depicts the various Inuit regions in Canada. 1 CRPG operates in Inuvialuit and Nunavut.



## Intents

These are the intents that guide the JCR program for 1 CRPG, and it is crucial you understand them to be a successful RI.

**1 CRPG JCR Patrol Intent:** To support and mentor the develop of autonomous and active JCR patrols in Northern communities with consistent CR engagement.

**1 CRPG JCR Participant Intent:** To assist in the development of JCRs into respectful and resourceful community leaders by instructing them in traditional, life, and Ranger skills relevant to their geographic location.

## Understanding Northern Communities

First, the peoples that inhabit the Canadian territories are diverse, especially the North's first peoples. Indigenous peoples speak various languages and are members of disparate cultural groups that should not be painted with the same brush. From the above visual aids, you can notice that Northern communities are members of more than simply the three territories but other regional agreements. They are settlements on traditional lands occupied by their First Nation and Inuit nations since time immemorial. Hence, Northern communities have both similar and contrasting qualities. To operate effectively in the North as a RI, the differences in peoples and communities must be respected and understood. Above 60, respect is not given, it is earned and can be easily taken away for years with the deterioration of a respectful working relationship.

Many incoming RIs believe that the JCR program is strictly Indigenous-oriented and are ignorant of the program's diversity. Indeed, the JCR program is inclusive of all young Canadians from every background. Any Canadian aged twelve (12) up to their nineteenth (19) birthday, where a JCR patrol is present, can register and become a JCR. Registration is simple. Individuals who want to become a JCR require a completed application form, a piece of identification with a birth date, and signed consent from a parent or legal guardian that is submitted to their local JCR patrol. Once registered, young Northerners can be active JCRs that participate in their patrol's local activities. It is important to note that each patrol's meeting frequency and engagement differs based on the dynamics of the local community including the leadership and resource capacity available.

Throughout the North, many communities have populations less than 2,000. For example, one of the smallest and northernmost permanent settlements is Grise Fiord, NU, with 144 people. In contrast, Whitehorse, YK, is 1 CRPG's largest community at over 25,000 in population. Despite the limited amount of people in the North, the labour force participation rate ranges from 60% to 75% across the three territories and the unemployment rates are some of the highest at 8% to 17% in Canada.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, some of these communities have large amounts of people that are unemployed. As most medical literature suggests, the higher unemployment and labour nonparticipation contributes to higher rates of substance abuse, sexual violence, and suicide.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> "Labour force characteristics by territory, three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, last 5 months," Data, Statistics Canada, last modified August 24, 2023, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410029201>.

<sup>3</sup> Dieter Henkel, "Unemployment and substance use: a review of the literature (1990-2010)," *Current Drug Abuse Review* 4(1), (2011):4-27, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21466502/>.

Unfortunately, this is true in the North and the region has high amounts of all three. The rate of hospitalization for substance use is four times higher than the national average in the territories.<sup>4</sup> This can be coupled with the sexual assault rate in ranging as high as nearly 80 per 10,000 when the national average sits at 7.2 per 10,000.<sup>5</sup> The suicide rate is another depressing statistic in the North. Nunavut has the worst suicide rate across the country at 72 per 100,000 and is labeled an epidemic.<sup>6</sup> In fact, Inuit men are four times more likely to die by suicide than their Southern peers.<sup>7</sup> These statistics ruin communities.

Nevertheless, Northern communities are strong and pull together when times get tough. These communities have survived the North's frigid winters, climate change's harsh effects, and transitions from nomadic to more stationary lifestyles. To survive in the North, the beliefs in community, respect for elders, and cooperation are critical to uphold. Despite the statistics from above, most Northerners are positive individuals and want what is best for their communities. Northern peoples love their communities, and as a newcomer working in the North, you must seek understanding of the situations these communities face. By acknowledging these characteristics of Northern communities, you can better assist youth through the JCR program. One of the CAF's four roles in the North – *Support Northern Peoples and Communities* – and that is what the JCR program works to accomplish.

## Understanding Northern Youth

One of your most challenging tasks to be an excellent RI will be to understand Northern youth. If you grew up below 60, your childhood experience was most likely different than those above. To begin, the North's demographics, environment, socioeconomic conditions, and culture impact individuals' childhoods in the region. In some Northern communities, biological gender remains a large determinant in societal roles youth hold and can lead to girls facing a more difficult upbringing. Indigenous women are more likely to be abused by an adult and be raised by harsh parents during childhood than their non-Indigenous counterparts.<sup>8</sup> Further, Inuit women experience violence rates 14 times higher than the national average.<sup>9</sup> Typically, Northern youth are at a higher risk of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and have more ACEs than youth from other Canadian regions.

Although, what are ACEs? In the late 1990s, the term ACEs was coined by Dr. Vincent J. Felitti following his research's publication on ACEs from a study between 1995 until 1997. In his study, Felitti divided ACEs into three categories: abuse, household challenges, and neglect. ACEs

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<sup>4</sup> Priscilla Hwang, "Northern territories have highest rate of alcohol, drug-related hospitalization: study," *CBC News*, June 3, 2019, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/substance-abuse-hospital-stays-north-1.5158918>.

<sup>5</sup> Anna Paletta, *Understanding Family Violence and Sexual Assault in the Territories, First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples*, (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2008), [https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/aj-ja/rr08\\_1/rr08\\_1.pdf](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/aj-ja/rr08_1/rr08_1.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> "Death rate for intentional self-harm (suicide) in Canada in 2020, by province or territory," State of Health, Statista, January 2022, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1318446/death-rate-for-suicide-in-canada-by-province-or-territory/>.

<sup>7</sup> Mohan B. Kumar, and Michael Tjepkema, *Suicide among First Nations people, Métis and Inuit (2011-2016): Findings from the 2011 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort (CanCHEC)*, (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2019), <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/99-011-x/99-011-x2019001-eng.htm#a5c>.

<sup>8</sup> Loanna Heidinger, *Violent victimization and perceptions of safety: Experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women in Canada*, (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2022), <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00004-eng.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> Nicole Diakite, and Gwen Healey, *Family Violence in Nunavut: A Scoping Review*, (Iqaluit: Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre, 2019), <https://www.qhrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Scoping-Review-Poster.pdf>.



are further broken into subcategories that include, but are not limited to, experiences such as emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse, household substance abuse, domestic violence, parental separation, and physical and/or emotional neglect. Results from the study demonstrated how an individual's life trajectory can be impaired by the number of ACEs they acquire during their childhood from conception to eighteen years of age. Individuals who suffer from a high number of ACEs are more likely to have poor maternal health, unplanned pregnancies, choose risky behaviour causing serious physical injuries, severe mental illness, are more susceptible to HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, extreme chronic diseases, and heavy substance abuse. This contributes to what physicians call toxic stress. Toxic stress is, "the body's response to lasting and serious stress, without enough support from a caregiver."<sup>10</sup> This type of stress has dire consequences for child development in both physical, emotional, and mental health. Today, ACEs are associated with five out of the top ten leading causes of death.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, studies show that toxic stress and ACEs are intergenerational, and unless there is intervention to break cyclical intergenerational trauma, ACEs will continue for generations. In fact, when an infant is born because of an unplanned pregnancy to a single teenaged mother that infant is 50% more likely in becoming a teenaged parent themselves.<sup>12</sup> This is a reality of countless children in the North.

Typically, newcomers to the North ask, "why is this the case?" There is a plethora of reasons that range from historical trauma, normalization of violence, substance abuse, overcrowding, poverty, and personal circumstances. Unemployment, and the lack of social and economic development, are major factors to poor childhoods in the North. Other factors include intergenerational trauma from the Government of Canada's past relationship with Northern Indigenous peoples. The Canadian government's policies such as the High Arctic Relocation, sled dog slaughters, and other discriminatory practices forcing Inuit and First Nations from their nomadic lifestyles on the land into permanent settlements has caused massive rifts in Indigenous peoples' lives and health. These past injustices and other Northern realities continue to impact the health of Northern youth.

However, contemporarily, one of the most perilous aspects of youthful Northern life is the advancement in social media platform technology. Most Northern youth have smartphones and use TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and other social media platforms that give them sights into worlds they are made to crave but are unattainable. For many Northern youth, constantly watching the marketing of Southern life on a smartphone to looking up and realizing their Northern reality is devastating to youth who are already struggling. Today, these youth are at a crossroads between ideas of traditional Northern life and the encroachment of modern Southern urban living. Essentially, Northern youth are caught between two worlds.<sup>13</sup> For many, this navigation is unbearable, and leads to mental illness.

In your experience as a RI in 1 CRPG, you will encounter Northern youth who have experienced countless ACEs. Some JCRs may suffer and be survivors from fetal alcohol

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<sup>10</sup> Center for Youth Wellness, *What is Toxic Stress?*, (Sacramento: State of California Department of Health Care Services, 2018), <https://www.acesaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/2-What-is-Toxic-Stress-English.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Vital Signs*, (Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019), <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/pdf/vs-1105-aces-H.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Susan D. Hillis, Robert F. Anda, Shanta R. Dube, Vincent J. Felitti, Polly A. Marchbanks, James S. Marks, "The Association Between Adverse Childhood Experiences and Adolescent Pregnancy, Long-Term Psychosocial Consequences, and Fetal Death," *Pediatrics* 113 (February 2004): 320–327.

<sup>13</sup> Birgit Kleist Pedersen, "Young Greenlanders in the Urban Space of Nuuk," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 32, no. 1 (2008): 91–105, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42870707>.

syndrome disorder (FASD), depression, substance addiction, and various forms of abuse. At these times when you experience struggling youth, it is vital to remain patient, provide a listening ear, and be compassionate. However, if JCRs disclose any criminal activity to you regarding them being a victim of a crime, you are obliged to inform them that any disclosure of criminal activity requires you to contact the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) about the crime. It is critical that you are transparent with JCRs about that information and your duty as it relates to reporting crimes.

Otherwise, during times you are called on to support a youth in crisis, it is your responsibility to work as a team with fellow RIs, Rangers, and support staff available. When assisting a JCR, always have another adult, whether it be a Ranger or RI, present for transparency and resourcefulness. If you are unable to find a second adult immediately available, assist the JCR in an open and public space. Regardless of if you are trying to help, some JCRs might lie about something you did so they can get attention or lash out. That is why you must always work with youth in public spaces or with other trusted adults.

After assisting a JCR with an issue, you and your team should assess whether the JCR requires further support in their community. If so, please inform the JCR's local Master Corporal (MCpl), Rangers, and other relevant community leaders you deem relevant. If at any time you would like more information on how to interact with struggling youth, please consult experienced RIs, Ranger Dollie Simon of Fort Resolution, and/or Padre Kenneth MacRae of Joint Task Force North (JTFN). Those are exceptional youth mental health resources with experience.

On the brighter side, there is hope for all these youth, and JCRs are one piece of the puzzle. Fortunately, youth with any number of ACEs and the extreme side effects of childhood trauma can recover. New medical studies show that the brain's high degree of neuroplasticity, the brain's way of healing, thought only to be found in children, lasts well into adulthood.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, with healthy approaches and routine beneficial strategies to healing from ACEs, anybody can redefine their life situation. However, this takes a community effort and supportive individuals to make this happen. This is where the JCR program is influential not by choice but rather by its singularity. The JCR program's Promoting Healthy and Safe Experiences (PHASE) modules is tailored for appropriate youth intervention by RIs, Rangers, or responsible adults. Given that it is the only youth extracurricular program in many Northern communities, the JCR program cannot be ignorant of the impact it has on youth to better their life.

Numerous RIs have described their experiences working with Northern youth as "crazy," "weird," and "bizarre." Honestly, to individuals raised below 60, many of these issues Northern youth are dealing with are different. Although, to many Northern youth ACEs and unhealthy behaviours are normalized. That is why it is critical to maintain adaptiveness and flexibility when working with JCRs. In certain scenarios JCRs are going to try to sneak cigarettes, discuss suicide, and cry about their family members drowning from a beluga whale at young ages. However, remember these are youth, and many of them want the same things no matter if they live above or below 60. They want to be respected, cared for, have fun, and reach their fullest potential. Regardless of what JCRs might do or say, be smart, patient, and supportive.

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<sup>14</sup> Eberhard Fuchs, and Gabriele Flügge, "Adult neuroplasticity: more than 40 years of research," *Neural Plasticity* 2014, (2014), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4026979/>.

## Best Practices from Youth Organizations

1. Scouts Canada: Age division, tangible affirmation, and physical activity.
2. Girl Guides of Canada: Empower intersectionality and individuality.
3. Cadets: Promote effective leadership and predictable schedules.
4. Jack.org: Be an ally in youth mental health with Be There.
5. The Friendship Bench: Have healthy conversations.
6. Kids Help Phone: Share resources that can help Northern youth.
7. Boys and Girls Club of Canada: Be flexible and adaptive to assist youth.
8. Right to Play: Play is always an option for healthy JCR activities.
9. Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada: Mentorship leads to healthy youth.
10. Le regroupement des Maison des jeunes: Provide youth a consistent location to decompress.
11. Rotary International: Develop challenging and new opportunities for JCRs to sustain involvement.

As an OC, try to absorb some best practices from other successful youth organizations such as pairing JCRs with CR mentors (Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada) or coordinating a free Indigenous Jack Talk (Jack.org) in a community. For example, the hesitation to do PHASE in Northern communities can be addressed by incorporating Jack.org's "Be There Certificate" into JCR mental health and life skills training. Set time aside to review these best practices from other youth organizations and discuss with your RIs what could work with their JCR patrols.

Basically, there is an opportunity for horizontal collaboration among other youth organization who want to help and be involved with Northern youth. Most only require a conduit such as the JCR program to make inroads in the North. The more youth organizations can cooperate and teach each other, the better the JCR program can serve Northern youth. Please see the appendix for more information on best practices from other youth organizations.

## Working with JCR Master Corporals

The best advice to provide you when working with JCR Master Corporals (JCR MCpl) is to know each one is diverse and remain adaptable. If you choose to be inflexible and indecisive with your JCR MCpls, you will be eaten alive and spat out quickly. JCR MCpls can be frustrating as most are unfamiliar with Southern professionalism and CAF competency that you worked in prior to 1 CRPG. Your original expectations should be low, but also professional. The degree to which JCR MCpls take pride and responsibility over their JCR patrols vary from each community. Essentially, JCR MCpls lead in inconsistent ways. Some of them administer active and autonomous patrols while others do not.

Despite a JCR MCpl's leadership capacity, sustain a level of mutual respect and encouragement to progress. It is unhealthy for the JCR program and a JCR MCpl's personal growth if you do everything for them. Instead, challenge the JCR MCpls with clear and concise tasks that can be easily accomplished. You will get frustrated and annoyed with the Northern way of doing things because it can be slow, imperfect, and ad hoc, but remember to take a step back, consult another RI, and laugh. Make sure to maintain positive energy with the JCRs and JCR MCpls because a RI's positive energy permeates to the patrol and leads to greater success. Orders, commands, and yelling does not work with JCR MCpls or JCRs. They will feel



ostracized and insignificant. Instead, look to frame disagreements and difficulties alternatively and respectfully. Never promise anything and remember that once you earn the trust and respect of JCR MCpls and JCRs, it can be easily taken away. Your role is to ensure a healthy and professional relationship with your CRs, JCRs, and community.

Furthermore, regular and effective **communication** is a priority when working with your JCR MCpls. Every JCR MCpl wants information on JCR developments, activities, and what is offered. Frequent communication helps JCR MCpls feel valued and enables them to share best practices with you. To do this communication, it is best to create Outlook email groups, text group chats, and/or Facebook groups. These are excellent methods of communication with your JCR MCpls. For individual communication with JCR MCpls, the best recommendation is to use both an email and a text/social media messaging methods of communication. The email method can be used for document sharing and more important information sharing, while text or direct messaging on social media is a good way to have quick communication for reminders, questions, and check-ins. Make sure to request updates and photos of JCR activities when communicating with JCR MCpls to stay up to date on a patrol's activity. The most popular social media for Rangers is Facebook (commonly referred to as RangerNet), and it is easy for you to create a professional Facebook account as a RI. However, be aware that connectivity in the North is spotty and some JCR MCpls do not pay their phone bills regularly or have access to reliable wifi. It may be difficult for them to get back to you, but remain persistent with concise, simple, and clear messages and information.

Another factor inhibiting quick responses from JCR MCpls is Northern culture. A Northerner's regard for time is very different than a Southerner's perspective. Deadlines and timelines do not always work for Northern peoples. Most Northern peoples do things when they decide to complete something. If this is the case, stress the importance of the deadline, and send routine reminders. Otherwise, it goes back to patience and keeping an open mind. It is good to know that some JCR MCpls will not send you documents on time, and that is simply the reality of Northern culture. Instead, always try to send documents and information earlier, when possible, to give yourself a realistic window to receive desired paperwork. Those are essentially the best ways to communicate with your JCR MCpls.

## Idealized In-Community Patrol Plan

Your patrols will vary in size, scope, and scale depending on financial and human resources. Typically, one patrol is between 7 to 13 days including travel and being in the community. With autonomous patrols, you should be a fly on the wall by mentoring and supporting the logistics of whatever the JCR MCpls has planned to do while you are in the community. Below are two JCR Type 1 patrol examples with an optimum timetable. If you would like to see a combined CR and JCR patrol please see the appendix.

### Long (13 Days) Type 1 JCR Patrol

Days	D1 (Th)	D2 (F)	D3 (Sa)	D4 (Su)	D5 (M)	D6 (Tu)	D7 (W)	D8 (Th)	D9 (F)	D10 (Sa)	D11 (Su)	D12 (M)	D13 (Tu)
Morning 9h00 – 12h00	Depart from YK	Travel	Brief-in with Rangers	Meet with Principal, staff	Verify stores	Admin	Prep	Prep	JCR X	JCR X	JCR X	Leave	Travel
Afternoon 13h00 – 17h00	Travel	Travel	Meet with RCMP, Nurses, mayor, elders	Meet with students	Admin	Plan with JCR MCpl	Prep	Prep	JCR X	JCR X	End JCR X, AAR	Travel	Travel
Evening 18h00 – 21h00	Travel	Arrive, JCR Act.	JCR Act, new JCRs	JCR Act, hand out kits, pay outs	JCR Act.	JCR Act.	JCR Act.	JCR Act.	JCR X	JCR X	Post- X	Travel	Return to YK

### Short (9 Day) Type 1 JCR Patrol

Days/Time	D1 (Mon)	D2 (Tues)	D3 (Wed)	D4 (Thurs)	D5 (Fri)	D6 (Sat)	D7 (Sun)	D8 (Mon)	D9 (Tues)
Morning 9h00 – 12h00	Depart from YK	Travel	Brief-in with Rangers, mayor, elders	Verify stores, prep for X	Prep for X	JCR X	JCR X	Admin	Travel
Afternoon 13h00 – 17h00	Travel	Travel	Meet with RCMP, nurses, principal, staff, students	Prep for X	Prep for X, Start JCR X	JCR X	End JCR X, AAR, Post-X Routine	Leave	Travel
Evening 18h00 – 21h00	Travel	Arrive, JCR Act.	JCR Activity, hand out kit	JCR Activity	JCR X	JCR X	Admin	Travel	Return in YK

Again, these are idealized and optimum timetables for you to use. However, there may be many instances where RIs must adapt and change their patrols' schedules to provide the JCRs with the best activities possible. You could be sent with other tasks ordered by the CO such as focusing on cleaning up the rolls or building the program with new enrollees and their paperwork. Overall, everything can easily change when you are on the ground in a community, so keep an open mind and be versatile.

Remember that as a RI your role throughout your time on patrol is to provide support to the JCR MCpl in their planning of JCR exercises, fill in gaps, and mentor JCRs and CRs in their capacity as valuable leaders in Northern communities. RIs should step in and lead when it is necessary for the delivery of JCR activities, otherwise RIs are to empower and encourage local JCR leadership from CRs and community adults.

### Conclusion

As this reorganization concludes, it is vital that 1 CRPG does not leave the JCR program and Northern youth behind. Assigning RIs both CR and JCR patrols has been tried before, and the JCRs were put on the backburner. That is the reason why other CRPGs expect 2 CRPG maintains the separation between CR and JCR RIs. However, this does not need to be the case. Instead, you can choose to keep JCRs a priority for 1 CRPG. Undoubtedly, the JCR program benefits Northern communities and their youth. The consequences are too devastating if Northern youth do not have the opportunity to participate in an excellent JCR program.

With the information provided in this document, you are more ready to go be an influential and effective RI for both the CRs and JCRs. However, remember that you will learn



how to operate at 1 CRPG in due time. It is crucial to remind yourself that experience is the best teacher when becoming a RI in the North. Of course, when you are in difficult times, lean on experienced RIs, CRs, and your command team to receive counsel and advice. Do not be afraid to try something new, experiment or ask questions. Throughout your service a RI at 1 CRPG remember to consistently consult with your CR Sergeants and JCR MCpls to maintain a healthy relationship in Northern communities. When times get tough and/or frustrating, take a step back, breathe, and share a laugh or two. Despite the successes and difficulties that come your way, remain patient, adaptable, and flexible to have the greatest impact at 1 CRPG.

# Appendix

## Organizations Investigated

### Introduction

The Junior Canadian Rangers (JCRs) can learn significant best practices from similar and contrasting youth organizations in Canada. Notably, each major Canadian youth charity has the same goal of helping youth but with a variety of avenues to achieve that goal. If the JCRs can learn from the following organizations, they can harness the best practices from Canadian examples that should be tailored to the JCR program. Eleven organizations were investigated in this document, but no means is this an exhaustive list. Any new individual with experience from other organization should be provide best practices to make the JCRs better. Although some may resist change, it is critical to sustain constant evaluation and review of how the program is working and where to improve certain aspects. The more the JCR program can develop and evolve, the more relevant and effective it will become in assisting the social development of Northern youth in safe environments.

#### 1. Scouts Canada

Scouts Canada<sup>15</sup> was founded in 1914 as a boys' association focused on community service, shaping responsible young men, and teaching skills to function in the outdoors. Today, Scouts Canada is a co-ed organization with over 50,000 youth participating across Canada. Their mission and vision are, "To help develop well-rounded youth, better prepared for success in the world," and "Canadian youth making a meaningful contribution to creating a better world." Key reasons identified with Scouts Canada for being a success are solidary and purposive tenets.

Scouts recite a pledge and follow the Scout Law. These are concise literary and oral techniques to form bonds and remind scouts regularly about their purpose and goals within the program. Scouts wear the same uniform to practice unity. One of the most important elements of the program is outdoor literacy. Scouts are ages 5-26 years old with divisional groups between ages about every two years (e.g. Beavers 5-7 years old, Cub Scouts 8-10 years old, and etc.). Most of the programming Scouts do consist of weekly meetings, outdoor weekend adventures, and community service activities. For reference, the Boy Scouts of America plan their weekly meetings with a pre-opening activity, opening ceremony, group instruction, skills instruction, breakout groups, main activity, leader's minute, and closing ceremony.<sup>16</sup> Major outdoor activities include paddling excursions, camping, white water rafting, mountain climbing, axe and saw permit, rock climbing, scoutcraft, and jamborees. Through this programming Scouts development outdoor skills, civic responsibility, and self-confidence. A key element of the Scouts program is affirmation with personal achievement badges. They focus on more of British

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<sup>15</sup> "About," Scouts Canada, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://www.scouts.ca/>.

<sup>16</sup> "Troop Meeting Agenda," Troop Leader Resources, Boy Scouts of America, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://troopleader.scouting.org/troop-meetings/>.

military construct with leadership being a main focus, as its father organization suggests, and an Anglican heritage.

Best practices to learn?

The JCR program should take away three aspects from Scouts Canada. First, the Scouts do a good job with age divisions. In the North, age groups should remain flexible. However, older JCRs do not want to participate with younger JCRs. This is a natural phenomenon, especially with young men. Scouts tailor their programming to age groups to engage and interact with youth effectively. Like the Scouts, there needs to be tiered activities to challenge and engage JCRs of different ages. Giving names to the groups such as Scouts with Beavers, Cubs, and etc., are essential to display healthy movement and affirm growth in the JCR program. The two age divisions proposed are 12 to 15 years old and 15 to 18 years old. Having 15 years old be the age of choice provides flexibility to join the younger and older JCRs. This gives youth the impression that they are progressing through the JCR program.

Second, personal achievement badges instill pride and direction in youth. The digitization of the twenty-first century makes youth desiring instant gratification. Badges are a way for JCRs to feel appreciated, purpose, and a goal-oriented mindset. After discussions with Craig Roury, it was discovered he wrote a badge plan using blankets in the system. Once a JCR earns a badge, they will sew the badge onto their blanket. This is a visible and tangible sign of progress for youth. Further, badges give RIs and the community an idea of activities to work towards. The badges pertain to the three circles of Ranger, Life, and Traditional Skills. Currently, Roury's plan uses 15 badges per circle with five additional badges awarded based on certain community customs and activities.

Thirdly, a foundational aspect of Scouts Canada is keeping youth active. JCR RIs should focus on outdoor activities that keep kids physically active and moving. Outdoor activities keep both youths' minds and bodies healthy.

## **2. Girl Guides of Canada**

The Girl Guides of Canada<sup>17</sup> was established in 1910. Originally, the Girl Guides started as a sister organization to Scouts in the United Kingdom. When girls demanded participation in Scouts, Lord Baden-Powell asked his sister Agnes to create the Girl Guides as a Scout-like organization for girls. Since its inception in Canada, over 7 million girls and women have been involved in Guiding. Their vision is “a better world, by girls,” and their mission is “to be a catalyst for girls empowering girls.” Similar to Scouts Canada, Guides have a promise (pledge) and law they follow.

Like Scouts, Guides break up their branches by age about every two years. Guides are provided opportunities to be involved in Guiding through awards, special events, travel, leadership opportunities, and camping. The goals of the Guiding program is to develop a safe space, growth mindset, positive identity, leadership qualities, and community engagement possibilities for girls. Guides meet weekly and accomplish activities in relation to their eight

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<sup>17</sup> “About Us,” Girl Guides of Canada, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://www.girlguides.ca/web/>.



areas: Guide Together, Into the Outdoors, Build Skills, Explore Identities, Experiment and Create, Be Well, Connect and Questions, and Take Action. Large organizations such as Girl Guides have planned activities that are easily transferable and accessible to other Guide groups. Activity highlights for 12 to 14 year old girls in the Pathfinder group are hiking, rafting, cooking contests, pitch-a-thons for new inventions, DIY crafting, eco-friendly building solutions, traveling, mentoring, and leadership opportunities on committees and forums. Rangers, 15 to 17 year old girls, enjoy canoeing, camping, budgeting, resume writing, and become Junior Leaders. The Guides have noticed stronger youth engagement when girls' independence is recognized, they actively participate in their learning, and are part of the leadership and decision-making process.

Best practices to learn?

In today's social era, there is a lot of push toward gender neutrality in groups and organizations. However, Girl Guides has remained firm in their commitment to serve those identifying as girls. The best practice to learn here is the acknowledgment and empowerment of an individual's intersectionality. It is important to keep this in mind when working with the JCRs. The North, in a large part, continues to practice cultural gender roles. That is neither meant to be a negative or positive characteristic of the North, but instead a reality. Therefore, the JCRs must acknowledge this reality and become syncretistic. The blending of Northern cultures and traditions with the JCR program makes the organization sustainable, adaptable and ultimately successful. Ranger RIs should accept and encourage the program to include more alternative activities that girls may prefer and vice versa. Categorically, these activities should never be limited to any JCR based on gender. Nevertheless, the JCR program should be a safe and inclusive space for all youth, and some boys and girls may feel uncomfortable participating in activities that are known to be gender-specific traditionally. For example, if sixteen year old girls want to sew as a JCR activity, most boys at the same age would most likely prefer an alternative activity. The opportunity to participate in each activity should be equal, but acknowledging the rigid cultural gender role environment is critical to understand for the JCRs' success. Teenage years are a strange time for youth as they navigate puberty, emotions, and responsibility. Having time allotted for those who identify as girls and then another session for boys could help create safe spaces and provide an opportunity to discuss gender-specific challenges with relevant mentors.

### **3. Cadets**

Formally, Cadets<sup>18</sup> and the JCR are the under the same commandment, the Cadets and Junior Canadian Rangers Command Team in Ottawa. The origins of the Canadian Cadet Organization predate confederation and has survived to the present. Currently, there are over 57,000 active cadets in Canada spanning across the country. In Canada, cadets are separated into three elements: the Royal Canadian Army Cadets, the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets and the Royal Canadian Air Cadets. These reflect the current branches of the Canadian Armed Forces. Canadian youth from 12 to 18 years old can join cadets, which is the same for the JCR. The CCO is devoted to five main goals: invite all Canadian youth, instill Canadian military values, develop leadership, citizenship and fitness, balance safety and challenge, and leave a positive lifelong

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<sup>18</sup> "About the Cadet Program," Cadets, Government of Canada, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/cadets-junior-canadian-rangers/cadets.html>.

impact. However, each cadet branch complete different activities in relation to their parent military branch. Typically, army cadets focus on physical and outdoor activities by doing physical fitness activities, expeditions, survival exercises, and practicing map and compass skills. Sea cadets learn about seamanship, sailing, operating pleasure crafts, and the Navy. On the other hand, air cadets are taught about aviation technologies, flying, aerospace, and air crew survival. Each cadet division participates in parades, relevant military drills, physical fitness, marksmanship, and music. Generally, cadets meet one evening per week, one weekend every month, and can participate in summer camps and other events throughout the year.

Despite Cadets and the JCR being under the same commandment, they are contrasting organizations. The differences in geography, resources, and connectivity are immense. There are Cadet programs in the North, but JCR patrols outnumber them substantially. In 1996, the Junior Canadian Ranger program was created to be different than the Cadet program because of its flexibility and difference in engaging youth based on community leadership. The Cadets are more militaristic and was not adaptable enough to function in remote and coastal communities. From its first trial in Paulatuk, it was a great success.

Best practices to learn?

At their core, both Cadets and the JCR are youth organizations facilitated by the Canadian Armed Forces. Yet, they have their strengths and weaknesses. Cadets put an emphasis on leadership and routine schedules. This is a best practice the JCR could follow. One of the issues voiced by Ranger RIs is the lack of community support in activities, and without regular activities the program slowly fades. RIs have said that they come in and do JCR activities, and until they return the program remains largely inactive. This should change to provide JCRs with regular and predictable exercises. Now, a JCR patrol's Master Corporal and Corporal are budgeted two full days pay to organize activities. When a RI arrives in a community, their first visit in the calendar year should be planning events at minimum once a month. It should be on a calendar and shared with JCRs so they can prepare and expect events.

Ultimately, this comes down to effective leadership. Cadets focus on youth leadership, and so should the JCR. To quote the JCR Program Training Guidance and Doctrine, “‘youth leading youth’ is a central tenet if the Canadian Cadet Organizations, including the JCR Program. Youth programs succeed when they are youth-led, and youth feel they can contribute to the decision-making process. Leadership opportunities provide youth with purpose and responsibility. Having an older JCR become a sergeant and youth leader of the program could be worthwhile for the prosperity and engagement of the JCR members. Creating set roles that are earned by commitment and participation with the program can generate lasting interest and drive for youth to stay in the JCR program.

#### **4. Jack.org**

Jack.org<sup>19</sup> is arguably Canada's leading youth mental health organization. This charity teaches youth how to revolutionize mental healthcare. In 2010, Jack Windeler, the organization's namesake, died by suicide in his first year at Queens University because, for whatever reasons,

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<sup>19</sup> “About,” Jack.org, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://jack.org/Home>.

he was unable to reach out for support. Over that year, his parents Eric Windeler and Sandra Hanington established The Jack Project which became today's Jack.org. The organization delivers their message with three main components: Jack Summits, Jack Talks, and Jack Chapters. Recently, with support from Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation, Jack.org launched Be There. Anybody can register with Be There and earn the Be There Certificate which teaches everyday individuals to step up and support neighbours going through mental health struggles in healthy way. This is a resource to engage and utilize in the North.

In the North, Jack.org has six active chapters. One in both Whitehorse, Iqaluit, and Fort Providence, and three in Yellowknife alone. Each year, Jack.org hosts a Northern Jack Summit in Yellowknife that is open to individuals aged 15 to 24 years old. The 2023 Northern Jack Summit will run from September 30 until October 2. The Summit will bring together youth mental health experts and community leaders to participate in workshops, listen to keynote speakers, and work with youth to "foster understanding, connection, and community." Another noteworthy aspect of what Jack.org offers is a free Jack Talk for Indigenous Youth. The Jack Talk speakers are trained in culturally relevant practices and informed on Indigenous issues that Inuit, Metis, and First Nations youth face above 60.

Best practices to learn?

The first best practice to learn from Jack.org is that youth mental health matters, and time must be devoted to addressing it at a community level. Professional mental health support in the North is inadequate, but there are ways around it. Be There is the most transferable resource from Jack.org that Ranger RIs can bring to Northern communities.<sup>20</sup> This device has "5 Golden Rules" for talking about mental health with friends and acquaintances. When dealing with youth, this is strategy on how to maintain professionalism while aiding youth in an evidence-based and appropriate manner. It is free to register and takes about two-hours to complete the whole certification. It is easy, and simple to instruct. No youth program, such as the JCRs, will be a healthy and sustainable organization without mentally healthy participants. These mental health conversations need to happen if an individual wants the North to succeed. This is a community strategy that is proven to work.

Be There's 5 Golden Rules:

1. Say What You See
2. Show You Care
3. Hear Them Out
4. Know Your Role
5. Connect to Help

Please feel free to explore further.

## **5. The Friendship Bench**

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<sup>20</sup> "Would you know how to be there?" Be There Certificate, accessed July 10, 2023, [https://bethere.org/Home?\\_ga=2.69310739.2015958017.1691599523-1082067483.1689272679](https://bethere.org/Home?_ga=2.69310739.2015958017.1691599523-1082067483.1689272679).

Canada's The Friendship Bench (TFB)<sup>21</sup> is an organization started in April 2015 following the suicide of Lucas Fiorella in October 2014. He was a Canadian student who struggled with depression in secret for many years, and unfortunately took his own life. Fiorella was known for engaging with fellow students with a random "hello," and encouraging them to seek help by providing them with a feeling of courage and acceptance. His family and volunteers honour his legacy with TFB and its three goals. TFB's goals are to support peer-to-peer mental health conversations, mental health education and resilience strategies, and connecting students to mental health resources. Sam Fiorella, Lucas' father, initiated the #YellowIsForHello to start raising awareness and concisely message the purpose of ordering a TFB yellow bench. Research into the program suggests it works. Most academic institutions notice an increase in about 18% more students engaging with mental health supports after a TFB bench is installed.

Although this is a Canadian example, the TFB concept is an emerging development in the treatment of mental illness. Developed, developing, and underdeveloped countries alike do not have the mental healthcare professional capacity to treat the growing rate of mental illness. Instead, new healthcare models must be utilized to combat the rise in mental diseases. Healthcare professionals are thinking out of the box, and there is remarkable progress. It can be summarized as democratizing mental healthcare.

One of the most fascinating innovations in the treatment of mental illness is in Zimbabwe. Dr. Dixon Chibanda, a clinical psychiatrist at the University of Zimbabwe, founded his Friendship Bench organization in Africa. His healthcare model engages the community by training lay people, in his case grandmothers, to have evidence-based mental health interventions. He uses the community structure to his advantage. Grandmothers, or *ambuya utano* in Shano, are respected members of Zimbabwean society and culturally known for giving strong counsel. Once grandmothers are trained, they take on patients by meeting them on park benches in the local community. There, grandmothers validate a patient's feelings, listen, and provide advice and a treatment plan to the patient. Following numerous and rigorous randomized control trials to test the program's efficacy, it was deemed effective and is now scaling up across Africa.

This is similar to the research being done by Dr. Vikram Patel at Harvard Medical School. His latest published work focuses on the SUNDAR approach to tackle the gaps in mental healthcare. It is an acronym that can be broken down in an acrostic poem format stands for:

Simplify the message and remove confusing medical jargon.  
UNpack mental health intervention strategies that can be delivered easily and culturally.  
Deliver in a patient's local community.  
Available human resources should be recruited and trained locally.  
Re-allocate mental health professionals to design programs and supervise community health agents.

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<sup>21</sup> "About the Friendship Bench," The Friendship Bench, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://thefriendshipbench.org/>.

The SUNDAR approach is being trialed in various models and the results have been largely successful.<sup>22</sup> The growth of this innovative mental health approach is empowering, inclusive, equitable, and effective. Whether the trained lay counsellors are paid or unpaid, most feedback on an individual performing as a lay counsellor is fantastic because he or she feels empowered that they are making a positive difference in another person's life and greater community.

Best practices to learn?

Why is this information relevant to the JCR program? It is vital information to the JCR program because, as the primary youth organization above 60, the JCR plays a significant role in a Junior Canadian Ranger's healthy development whether it is obvious or not. For the JCR program to be successful, those who operate within it such as Rangers, RIs and other community leaders must be mental health informed for both youth and personal benefit. Northern and Indigenous youth survive multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that are treatable and recoverable. However, if not addressed, ACEs can lead to a variety of severe mental and physical ailments. Without healthy Junior Canadian Rangers, the program will not achieve its full potential. In short, a patrol is only as healthy as its Rangers. Essentially, Ranger RIs should not be counsellors, but be community leaders who can provide appropriate support for the communities they serve including in a mental health context. RIs must be informed to deal adequately with these challenges because they are going to reach the attention of the RIs without choice. The guiding ideology going forward is when Northern youth develop supported by their community, the impact will be a healthier Northern region for years to come.

The critical best practice to learn is that appropriate, informed, and simple conversations, like on a park bench, can go a long way in the positive health of a JCR. Mental health conversations can help JCRs and the overall success of the program. These skills should be understood by RIs, and then taught to Rangers and JCRs as part of the Life Skills circle.

## **6. Kids Help Phone**

Since 1989, Kids Help Phone has assisted youth in accessing virtual mental health services.<sup>23</sup> This organization provides youth the opportunity to access 24/7 e-mental health support that is free and confidential in either French or English. On their website, Kids Help Phone has great resources on designing safe spaces and self-help guides to practice a healthy wellbeing. Whether a young individual lives above or below 60, they can call 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868 any time on any day.

Best practices to learn?

Ranger Instructors should share this resource with their JCRs and Rangers. The number must be diluted to JCRs and the community to utilize when youth require professional mental health services. If there are questions about mental health practices or advice, RIs can use this resource

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<sup>22</sup> Vikram Patel, "SUNDAR: mental health for all by all," *BJPsych International* 12, no. 1 (2015): 21-23, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5619600/>.

<sup>23</sup> "About Kids Help Phone," About Us, Kids Help Phone, accessed July 11, 2023, <https://kidshelpphone.ca/>.



either by instructing healthy skills to their JCRs and Rangers or encouraging them to access this resource at their leisure.

## **7. Boys and Girls Club of Canada**

The Boys and Girls Club of Canada (BGC) is a leading youth organization across the country.<sup>24</sup> BGC was born in 1929 from Saint John's "public playground movement," in 1900 that centralized on constructing safe areas for disadvantaged children to play after-school who could not go home. BGC's mission is, "to provide safe, supportive places where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships, and develop confidence and skills for life." Moreover, their vision is, "All children and youth discover and achieve their dreams and grow up to be healthy, successful, and active participants in society." A key characteristic about BGC is that it fills the gap in what children and youth require. BGC is flexible and identifies where youth need extra support.

Today, in the North, there is one BGC in Whitehorse that offers programming such as LTD Early Years Program (ages 0-6), After-School All-Stars (ages 6-11), and Drop-In Youth Centre (ages 12-18). The Drop-In Youth Centre offers youth nutrition planning and instructions, cooking facilities, music centre, employment board, recreation activities, literacy programming, and fine arts from 3:00 pm until 9:00 pm from Tuesday to Saturday.

Best practices to learn?

BGC's best practices are being flexible to observe and react to fill gaps where youth require extra support. When RIs go into communities, they always have a plan. However, this plan needs to be flexible to adapt to what JCRs need while the RI is in the community. Maybe JCRs need help resume writing, and a RI can find a resource that points the Rangers and JCRs in the right direction. It is critical to observe and ask what the kids want out of the program to gauge a successful RI visit to the community. There might be something niche a JCR patrol requests, and a RI can assist in finding a JCR patrol an adequate resource or provide instruction on a various topic. Some RIs might think that some request might fall out of their scope, but for some youth, a RI might be the only opportunity they have to ask for a certain resource within the three circles. Try not to think of it as tasks out of scope, but rather community engagement and development. It is essential to be adaptable and open when dealing with adolescents for the program's effectiveness.

## **8. Right to Play**

Right to Play is an international charity that utilizes children and youth's desire to play and turns it into an inherent right that every child should enjoy.<sup>25</sup> Started in 1994, Right to Play's mission is, "to protect, educate and empower children to rise above adversity using the power of play." This organization "plays for change," in four areas: quality education, gender equality, health and wellbeing, and child protection. To achieve these goals, Right to Play takes three steps. First, Right to Play staff provides training, coaching, and resources to community mentors. Next, the

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<sup>24</sup> "Who We Are," BGC Canada, accessed July 11, 2023, <https://www.bgccan.com/en/>.

<sup>25</sup> "About Us," Right to Play, accessed July 12, 2023, <https://righttoplay.ca/en-ca/>.

organization hires a community mentor to serve the local area. Lastly, community mentors “deliver safe and inclusive youth programs and events.” Community mentors play games, sports, creative play, and free play.

Recently, Right to Play was introduced to Canada to assist in empowering Indigenous youth. During September 2021 to August 2022, Right to Play was active above 60 at Champagne and Aishihik First Nations in Yukon. Community mentors engaged 33 Indigenous youth in that community through organized play activities.<sup>26</sup>

Best practices to learn?

When in doubt, resort to the power of play with JCRs. For younger ages, play is a substantial tool to promote healthy living and stress relief. If RIs are in doubt and having trouble either running an activity or inspiring the community to engage with youth, use the power of play. Organizing play is easier than some activities and has tremendous benefits. Also, RIs should feel encouraged to engage with Right to Play directly to reach Northern and remote communities. There could be room for resource sharing and partnership in the far north.

## **9. Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada**

Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada (BBBS) is a well-known youth-serving Canadian charity.<sup>27</sup> For over 100 years, BBBS has worked to give children and youth from early as age 7, a better childhood through mentorship. BBBS’s vision is for, “All young people realize their full potential,” which coincides with their mission to, “Enable life-changing mentoring relationships to ignite the power and potential of young people.” Children aged 7 until their late teens are paired with local mentors who share 6 to 8 hours per month together doing various activities and building relationships.

Best practices to learn?

There needs to be more cohesion between the community, Rangers, and JCRs. BBBS informs us on the powerful impact of positive mentorship. Some communities are lacking in their ability to engage youth and keep youth involved in the program until they’re 18 years old. When RIs first visit their communities in a calendar year, they should work with Rangers and JCRs to pair JCRs with Rangers. The Rangers will be mentors and the JCRs mentees. This will aid in the community connection and the program’s harmony by designing in mentorship structure.

## **10. Regroupement des Maisons des Jeunes du Québec**

Le regroupement des maisons des jeunes (RMJQ) is a Quebec charity for youth that translates to Houses of the Youth.<sup>28</sup> Since its foundational discussions on December 11, 1978, the RMJQ has

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<sup>26</sup> Rachel Mishenene, *Promoting Life-Skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY) Program: 2021-2022 Year In Review*, (Toronto: Right to Play, 2022), [https://righttoplaydiag107.blob.core.windows.net/rtp-media/documents/2021-2022\\_PLAY\\_Year\\_In\\_Review\\_FINAL.pdf](https://righttoplaydiag107.blob.core.windows.net/rtp-media/documents/2021-2022_PLAY_Year_In_Review_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> “About Us,” Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada, accessed July 13, 2023, <https://bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/>.

<sup>28</sup> « Maison des Jeunes, » Le regroupement des maisons des jeunes, accès le juillet 13, 2023, <https://rmjq.org/>.

focused on prevention to combat youth social difficulties. The RMJQ’s mission is to “hold a lively meeting place where young people aged 12 to 17, in contact with significant adults, can become critical, active and responsible citizens.” This organization finds success with their youth centres scattered across Quebec. Youth centres are a community-based approach to helping youth overcome challenges in their life. These youth centres involve a cross-section of community leaders such as parents, elected officials, business leaders, Local Community Service Centres, police, and other community organizations. The RMJQ offers youth a chance to take responsibility and engage with their community.

The concept of a “youth house” is derived as an extension of a youthful street corner meet-up and welcoming home. Youth who enter youth centres provide adolescents the opportunity to learn life skills, soften family tensions, reduce physical and mental inactivity, eat nutritious meals, promote healthy behaviours, and access resources. Youth Houses are places where teenagers can convene in a healthy and supportive environment with mentors to assist them. Today, there are 227 member houses in Quebec.

Best practices to learn?

The best practices to learn from the RMJQ are the benefits of a routine meeting location. Creating youth centres, hubs, or houses focuses on the idea of a place where youth can congregate responsibly. For example, the youth house in Boucherville, QC, had a music room, library, games area, and kitchen for youth to relax and learn. This offers youth predictability and a haven to recharge and develop strategies to grow from their challenges. Youth centres, with sufficient adult leadership, can have a profound impact on youth mental and physical health and garner better outcomes for individuals long-term.

The JCRs can achieve this best practice’s goal by finding consistent places to meet and creating them into youth hubs in their communities. Whether it be an old house that could be repurposed or the local parish, these places can turn into JCR youth hubs with funding and support from the local community. Providing billiard sports, board games, books, and a television to these JCR youth hubs can mean Northern adolescents have a place to escape problems, recharge, consult a mentor, and determine the best path forward. Youth houses are a transformative concept to help Northern youth in remote communities.

## **11. Rotary International**

Rotary International has numerous programs to serve youth and others around the world.<sup>29</sup> This group’s mission is to “provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through our fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders,” with a vision to “see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change — across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.” Active Rotary clubs have strong youth networks that support EarlyAct Clubs for elementary students, Interact Clubs for junior and high school students, and Rotaract Clubs for university students. From those groups, Rotary’s youth programming goes further into organizing various camp opportunities.

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<sup>29</sup> “Youth Programs,” Our Programs, Rotary International, accessed July 14, 2023, <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/youth-programs>.

Multiple Rotary Clubs sponsor the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN), the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), Rotary Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp (RAYEC), New Generations Service Exchange, and short and long-term student exchanges. These opportunities challenge youth to grow in leadership and better themselves through experiences and learning sessions.

Best practices to learn?

Best practices to learn from Rotary are about engaging young people with frequent opportunities to challenge themselves and foster leadership skills. When youth participate more frequently in diverse and challenging programming it helps sustain their interest and involvement in the larger organization. The more reciprocal the exchange is between participant and organization, the greater the exchange overtime will result in the participant giving back to their community. Essentially, if a young person receives numerous opportunities and observes personal development from an organization, they are more likely to continue with that organization and volunteer their time into growing it further for the next generation.

In the JCR's case, older JCRs around sixteen years old are dropping off, particularly males. Of course, this can be contributed to a plethora of reasons such as employment, video games, romantic relationships, and others. However, one of the best ways to keep JCRs involved is through offering older JCRs new challenges, responsibility, and leadership opportunities. For example, encouraging JCRs to accept leadership roles in their patrols and making them feel their voice is heard can promote lasting JCR involvement. Another example is permitting JCRs to join Canadian Rangers on their exercises and learn advanced skills to spark their interest and show the relevancy of what they are learning.

Additionally, challenging tasks that promote individual empowerment and engagement opportunities that are relatable and relevant to youth should be used at Enhanced Training Sessions (ETS), Type 1s, Type 3s, and other times JCRs convene. RYPEN, RAYEC, and RYLA teach youth how to be leaders in their communities, accept themselves, acknowledge their self-worth, and encourage youth to break out of their shells. Those camps are relevant and relatable to youth in their target age range. Therefore, the same social development goals should be applied to ETS and in JCR patrols.

## **Conclusion**

As you reviewed each of these organization, the hope is that you take away best practices and both tailor and distill them to your JCR patrols. Use this document to encourage horizontal partnerships and collaboration in local communities throughout the North to develop a network for Northern youth to optimize. Feel free to continue researching and understanding other youth organizations in Canada.

Here are the top best practices to learn from each of the eleven organizations reviewed.

1. Scouts Canada: Age division, tangible affirmation, and physical activity.
2. Girl Guides of Canada: Empower intersectionality and individuality.

3. Cadets: Promote effective leadership and predictable schedules.
4. Jack.org: Be an ally in youth mental health with Be There.
5. The Friendship Bench: Have healthy conversations.
6. Kids Help Phone: Share resources that can help Northern youth.
7. Boys and Girls Club of Canada: Be flexible and adaptive to assist youth.
8. Right to Play: Play is always an option for healthy JCR activities.
9. Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada: Mentorship leads to healthy youth.
10. Le regroupement des Maison des jeunes: Provide youth a consistent location to decompress.
11. Rotary International: Develop challenging and new opportunities for JCRs to sustain involvement such as getting them out on CR exercises.

### Optimum Timetable for Combined CR and JCR Patrols In-Community

Days/Time	D1 (W)	D2 (Th)	D3 (F)	D4 (Sa)	D5 (Su)	D6 (M)	D7 (Tu)	D8 (W)	D9 (Th)	D10 (F)	D11 (Sa)	D12 (Su)	D13 (M)	D14 (Tu)	D15 (W)
Morning 9h00 – 12h00	Depart from YK	Travel	Brief-in with Ranger Sergeant and patrol leadership	Verify stores, prep for CR X	Start CR X	CR X	CR X	CR X	Prep for JCR X	Start JCR X	JCR X	JCR X	Admin	Leave	Travel
Afternoon 13h00 – 17h00	Travel	Travel	Meet with RCMP, nurses, school staff, students, mayor, elders	Prep for CR X	CR X	CR X	CR X	CR X	Prep for JCR X	JCR X	JCR X	JCR X	Admin	Travel	Travel
Evening 18h00 – 21h00	Travel	Arrive	JCR Act, hand out kit, new enrollees	Meet with Rangers, hand out kit, new enrollees	CR X	CR X	CR X	End CR X, AAR, Post-X	JCR Act.	JCR X	JCR X	End JCR X, AAR, Post-X	Admin	Travel	Return to YK



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