

An aerial night view of a city, showing a complex highway interchange with multiple overpasses and ramps. The scene is illuminated by a variety of colorful lights, including blue, purple, orange, and red, creating a vibrant and dynamic atmosphere. The city buildings and streets are visible in the background, with their lights contributing to the overall glow.

THE NIGHT IS YOUNG

A toolkit shaping arts & culture
events from a youth perspective

INTRO

Hello there.

If you're reading this, you (and a team we hope, otherwise you have a lot of work ahead) are probably beginning the endeavour of planning an event at night time in Vancouver for young people living in the city. You want their voice and their needs to be echoed in your event - we are here to help.

The saying goes 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. The problem is, it is broken. The night time culture in Vancouver revolves heavily around drinking, clubbing, and outings to pricey restaurants and/or events. Young people want to go out at night and connect with the city and the people in it. BUT, the activities out there are impersonal, unwelcoming, unsafe, and expensive.

Enter - The Night is Young. The Night is Young is a toolkit designed to help event producers keep a student perspective in the planning process. Inside this toolkit you will find some great... tools (SURPRISE!) Jokes aside, following this guide will make for a great event period. What we've done differently is hone in on the things that we think (and research shows) young people NEED in events in the city of Vancouver (and you can trust us, because we are a group of young people).

If events produced according to The Night is Young are the entry point into Vancouver nightlife, young people will hold other activities to these standards, and see what they are missing out on in those Granville clubs.

HOW IT WORKS

The Night is Young focuses on guidelines within three areas that will make your event youth-friendly and just downright awesome -

PROMOTION

SAFETY

HOSTING + DESIGN

Each of these sections suggests ways to engage a diverse youth audience in an authentic and inviting manner, and to promote a safe and open environment where people can connect and have fun. The bolded headings and short paragraphs make it an easy read, we promise (there are even some jokes here and there). BUT if you want a quick take-away, check out page 5 where we list the 'must haves', or the non-negotiables to include in your event for young people. On the final page, you will find a helpful list of resources and contacts.

Upon the completion of the planning process, if your event has followed the guidelines in this kit and includes the 'must haves', stamp The Night Is Young stamp on your event and let young people know it's one they won't want to miss.

**Let's get started,
the night is young.**



**THE
NIGHT
IS
YOUNG**

PROMOTION

Get the word out.



POST, POST, POST. BUT DON'T RELY ONLY ON THE DIGITAL.

35% of Facebook's ad audience is under 25 – this makes it a great platform for promotion but don't ignore other social media platforms. Instagram has a youth user (18-29) base of roughly 59%. Capture short attention spans through Insta stories or Youtube ads where millennials are hanging out online. Lastly, email isn't dead (yet) – send an e-invite and send reminders. Your attendees will appreciate the personal touch.

Encourage word of mouth. Get out onto university campuses or transit hubs where young people exist to talk about your event with them face to face. Be authentic and honest – young people will respond to the transparency and connection.

ALLOW FOR INTERACTIVITY.

Cash in on trends of 'user-generated content' (check out the resources section to learn more). Start a trending hashtag, or create re-postable content to encourage and allow attendees to tell the story of your event. AND re-post your attendees content – young people like features.



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF INFLUENCERS.

Millennials trust the people in their feeds. 40% reported that their favourite influencer understood them better than their friends (side note: they need better friends). ROI for funds spent on social influencers can be \$6.50 for every dollar spent – use this to your advantage.

100K

KEEP IT SHORT & MAKE ACCESSIBILITY THE CORNERSTONE.

No one likes 4 minute ads – especially the Instagram generation. Keep your promo materials succinct, interesting, and engaging. Make it post-worthy for your attendees.

Promote transit and general accessibility of the venue. Let attendees know they have options when it comes to the price of the ticket. Emphasize a welcoming and friendly space.

SPONSORS WITH BENEFITS.

Everyone loves free stuff – especially young people who don't have a lot of expendable income. Find event sponsors who are willing to offer benefits and incentives for your attendees – it may be easier than you think as these brands are probably looking for opportunities to 'get in with the cool kids'.



SAFETY

P.S. This section is important.



GET YOUR STAFF TOGETHER.

Train your staff to recognize potential unsafe situations, AND to respond to them until professionals can intervene. Re outside security you hire -- make sure the priorities and conduct of the company/guards align with your event. Have well-trained peer volunteers as 'safety champions' scattered throughout the crowd, wearing lanyards or another clear identifier. These individuals may be more approachable and accessible should an attendee feel the need to reach out, but also takes the onus off individuals to come forward.

Harm reduction is paramount. There are a growing number of organizations (we list them in Resources) you can reach out to to help keep your attendees safe and having fun.



DESIGN FOR WELL-BEING & EASE.

The physical environment matters. Make sure corners and darker parts of the room are monitored or well-lit. Provide free water in a covered jug. Use clear signage to tell attendees that they are welcome to use whatever washroom they want. Have a monitored designated smoking area. Create space for people who are vulnerable or prone to social anxiety by having low-intensity areas.

Embody tolerance and diversity with your event, and embrace everyone who shows up with open arms.



BE IN THE KNOW.

Take complaints seriously – ensure they get systematically recorded and documented. This is the time to write things down. BUT don't only rely on or expect your attendees to come forward. Be aware of what's going on in the space, equip volunteers properly, and watch for any signs of excessive intoxication, overdose, or harassment issues.

Stop problems before they even start.



YOUR JOB ISN'T OVER WHEN THEY LEAVE.

Make sure your attendees know where to find the closest skytrain or bus station. Have volunteers offer to walk with them there (there is power in numbers, and maybe new friends new). Or, ensure volunteers or staff have the number for a cab on hand.

Vancouver was ranked twelfth safest in a list of fifteen cities in Canada – do everything in your control to help improve this statistic about our city.

HOSTING + DESIGN

It's more than
aesthetics.



GOOD VIBES.

If even funerals have music, your event probably should too. Ensure it fits the theme and determine ahead of time if you are going more for a dance party, or something more low key. Determine the same for lighting and décor – young people will appreciate a cool, welcoming, and well-designed space.



DESIGN FOR BELONGING & CONNECTION [TO ART + PEOPLE].

Good hosts engage with attendees at multiple points during the event. Your entry and exit points are important. A greeter or a liaison to welcome people into the event space creates a personal touch and helps to make people showing up alone feel comfortable.

Integrate dynamic and engaging spaces throughout your event. Areas of high intensity (such as dance floors) should be balanced with areas of low intensity (such as a patio, or another social area). Think critically about HOW art is included in your event. Is it welcoming? Does it invite conversation? Is it meant to be observed alone? Or is it interactive? Make these expectations (or lack thereof) clear to attendees so they feel relaxed and at-ease.



MILLENNIALS LOVE FOOD [AND DRINKS].

Almost everyone likes fruit and cheese – or just free food in general. Food is a great motivator for young attendees. Many young people also like alcohol – have options for the ones who don't. Encourage DDs to stay DDs by having trendy alternatives like 'zero-proof cocktails' so they can order more than just water from the bartender.

Aim for an event that is art-centric, NOT bar-centric.



LIFE IS EXPENSIVE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

They are living on their own. They are paying for rent, and groceries, and school, and the list could go on and on. Help them out. Events cost money -- BUT have a student price. Offer early bird specials. Young people love (and NEED) discounts.



THERE'S A REASON THE NIGHT IS YOUNG.

Young people are often busy with school, work, and homework during the day. When the sun sets, they want to get out, have fun, and connect with friends or new people. Young people also like spontaneity – night time lends well to this. Inexpensive events pair well with spontaneity. Give them a place to go.

TL;DR (TOO LONG DIDN'T READ)

The 'MUST HAVES' for your event.

PROMOTION.

1. UTILIZE MULTIPLE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS & WORD OF MOUTH
2. FOCUS ON USER-GENERATED & RE-POSTABLE CONTENT
3. PARTNER WITH SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS
4. HIGHLIGHT THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE EVENT (TRANSIT, WHEELCHAIR, ETC.)
5. PROMOTE YOUR STUDENT PRICE OPTION

SAFETY.

1. HAVE YOUTH SAFETY CHAMPIONS IN THE CROWD (CLEARLY IDENTIFIED)
2. PROVIDE ACCESS TO A FREE (COVERED) JUG OF WATER
3. MONITOR OR ILLUMINATE DARK CORNERS & THE SMOKE PIT
4. RECORD ANY AND ALL COMPLAINTS
5. PROVIDE ACCESS TO SAFE RIDES HOME

HOSTING + DESIGN.

1. MAKE ART CENTRAL
2. PLAN *WITH* YOUTH (NOT FOR YOUTH)
3. HAVE LOW INTENSITY AREAS (OTHER THAN THE SMOKE PIT)
4. PROVIDE (AT LEAST ONE) APPEALING VIRGIN DRINK ALTERNATIVE
5. WE REPEAT: HAVE A STUDENT PRICE



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RESOURCES

Let us hook you up.

PROMOTION.

- Check out **THESE** social media stats on Hootsuite
- Read more about user-generated content **HERE**
- Check out **THIS** list of influencers in Vancity
- Find help with event production & creative strategy **HERE**

SAFETY.

- Read more about safe cities in Canada **HERE**
- Harm Reduction Organizations:
GOOD NIGHT OUT
@_GOODNIGHTOUT
INFO@GOODNIGHTOUTCAMPAIGN.ORG
RED FROGS SFU
@REDFROGSSFU
SFU@REDFROGS.COM
KARMIK
@KARMIK.CA

HOSTING + DESIGN.

- Find young & popular Vancity DJ's **HERE**
- Check out **THIS** article on recipes for 'zero-proof' cocktails
- Find potential help with funding **HERE**
- Other cool events (for inspo):
LUMIERE YVR
PUBLIC DISCO (VANCOUVER)
ART BOOK FAIR (VANCOUVER)
NUIT BLANCHE (CANADA)