

# The YEBDC Small Business Information Column

by Sue Gingerich, Business Advisor

## "Taking Advantage Of Our Youth"

You are only young once! And for most of us, those days are long since past! How many of you remember what it was like to be young and fresh out of school? What was your first job? How did you get it? Was anyone willing to give you a break? Didn't you wish someone had?

So maybe you didn't get that break when you were a kid, but that doesn't mean you can't give a kid a break today! Our rural communities have many promising young individuals graduating from our schools. Yet where are these young people? Well, some are going on to college or university. Some are leaving to work in the city -- leaving to work in the city, because there are few job opportunities for them at home. Or the jobs that are here just pay minimum wage.

So, why are there so few job opportunities for these young adults? Is it because we don't trust them to work hard? Or because they have no experience? Is it because we don't have the time to train fresh, young minds? Or is it because we are just not hiring? (Perhaps, due to a lack of financial resources in our businesses.)

If we want to keep our growing communities, then we need to keep our youths from leaving the community. Can we find a way to upgrade these young people's skills, without costing our businesses too much? Can we create more jobs for them? Sure we can -- BECAUSE HELP IS HERE!

The Yellowhead East Business Development Corporation is excited to have been awarded the contract for the Youth Connections program. Youth Connections assists youth between the ages of 16 - 24 with career exploration, job shadowing, furthering education, mentorships, resumes, and interview skills. The Whitecourt service area contract covers the communities of Fox Creek, Whitecourt and Mayerthorpe and the Barrhead service area contract covers the communities of Barrhead, Swan Hills, Onoway and Sangudo. Our Youth Connections offices are location in the Whitecourt (Rm 206, 5115 - 49St.) and in Barrhead (4923 - 50 Ave.).

The services provided include; Support Services, Career Counselling, Personal Marketing Portfolio (Action Plan), Ongoing Employment Support, various workshops, Mentorships, and Volunteer Experience.

The philosophy of the program is partnerships. Partnerships with the Youth and the Business /Education community. The goals of the project are straight forward:

- To improve employment prospects for Alberta's youth between 16-24, who have not gone on to post secondary learning;
- To work with Alberta Learning to enhance the career planning process for students;
- To get the business community involved in providing opportunities for youth;

**AT YOUTH CONNECTIONS - YOU MAKE THE CALL**

If you have a small business and have a question or problem that you think The YEBDC could help you with please call or write to: The Yellowhead East Business Development Corporation, Box 249, Sangudo, Alberta, T0E 2A0  
1-800-556-0328 or 1-780-785-2900, e mail: [yebdc@yebdc.ab.ca](mailto:yebdc@yebdc.ab.ca) or access our Website at:  
[www.yebdc.ab.ca](http://www.yebdc.ab.ca)

**"Takin' Care of Business... Takin' Care of You!"**