

[Kennebecasis Valley youth centre first of its kind in New Brunswick](#)

By [Andrew Cromwell](#) Video Journalist Global News



WATCH ABOVE: There's a new place for young people to hang out in the Kennebecasis valley and it's not your traditional youth centre. As Global's Andrew Cromwell reports it's about a lot more than just fun and games.

It's the epitome of one-stop shopping for youth in the Kennebecasis Valley (KV), just outside Saint John — the K.V. Oasis Youth Centre has celebrated its grand opening in Quispamsis.

The unique facility offers entertainment, recreation, art and music all under one roof. On top of that, it offers a medical centre with services for young people who suffer from mental health problems, along with counseling and sexual health services, making it unique to the province.

Executive Director Yennah Hurley says they came to learn many young people in the KV had no safe place to just hang out.

“They were hanging out in the parking lot at Tim Horton’s and at McDonalds and we asked them why they were doing that, and there was just no safe space for them to go and hang out and communicate,” Hurley said.

The mental health aspect of this new centre is perhaps the key feature. Hurley says today’s youth are growing up in a very different world compared to previous generations.

“Social media has a huge part in what they are facing today,” she said. “A lot of them are suffering with some minor anxiety to depression, to some of them even walking around with a suicide note in their pocket.”

The youth centre is expected to receive thousands of visitors from the Kennebecasis Valley but is open to anyone, anywhere between the ages of 12 and 25.

“We’ve got an awesome games room and I know they’ve got a lot of different programs that are going to be going on like arts and crafts and music,” said program director Jenna Meagher.

It’s also a place where face-to-face communication is encouraged in the age of cellphones and texting.

“They’re worried that we’re going to take their phones away,” said Jacqueline Gallant. “We want to encourage them to interact with each other instead of texting each other and [using] social media because it’s a very important part of life.”

K.V. Oasis has a three-year fundraising goal of \$1 million. More than \$350,000 has already been raised.