

# YOUTH WORKS PROGRAM 2017 – 2021 REPORT

Supported by RBC Future Launch and the Government of Canada



TROY - Youth Works program participant

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

Each year in Canada approximately 2,300 young people “age out” of the child welfare system<sup>1</sup>. At the age of 18 (or 19 in some provinces) they are considered to be adults and therefore are no longer eligible for the type of support they had been receiving while living in foster care or group homes. The odds are stacked against them. Young people aging out of the system face challenges most of their peers do not: all of them have experienced childhood trauma like neglect or abuse, more than 80% have been diagnosed with special needs and close to half of them require medication for health conditions, not to mention the instability and loneliness that typically accompany their time in care. While their peers continue through their twenties to benefit from their parents financially, emotionally and often physically by continuing to live at home, young people from care too often transition into poverty, underemployment, poor health and homelessness while faced with healing from childhood trauma.

Children’s Aid Foundation of Canada has committed to two key areas of focus to support youth transitioning from care: improving educational and employment outcomes. Positive outcomes in these areas can be achieved by supporting education and employment programming as well as initiatives aiming to remove barriers to pursuing their academic and career goals such as housing instability, physical and mental health difficulties and lack of social connections.

The Youth Works Program is Children’s Aid Foundation of Canada’s core employment initiative for youth transitioning out of care. Started in 2017, Youth Works is currently active in six cities across the country, and provides supports to youth in four key ways:

- **Employability skills supports** to help youth to develop the specific skills they need to reach their career goals.
- **Internships and job placements** to connect job-ready youth with work experience.
- **Employment training funding** to help youth access the courses, credentials, training or supplies they need to secure employment.
- **Wraparound supports** that would help both in making initial connections to access employment supports, and in subsequently maintaining employment and continuing to progress towards their goals.

## PROGRAM IMPACT SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the Youth Works evaluation data collected by the Foundation between the program’s inception in 2017 and March 2021. This evaluation highlights both the diverse experiences and needs of youth, as well as the impact youth and program staff felt the program had on youth’s employment readiness, confidence, and skills.

Overall, both program staff and youth participants indicate the Youth Works Program had a strong positive impact on youth.

**92%** of the youth exiting the program felt that they **achieved what they wanted to achieve from the program**, and **60% of youth exiting the program had successfully secured employment**. Analysis of evaluation results also showed that the longer youth remained engaged, the more likely they were to become employed.

In addition, the **majority of youth** (75% or more) agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of the program, they felt:

- **More knowledgeable about resources and supports available**
- **More prepared to enter the work force**
- **More motivated to achieve their career or educational goals**
- **More optimistic about the future**

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Conference Board of Canada* (2014). Investing in the Future of Canadian Children in Care

This evaluation also highlights the diverse experiences and needs within the population of youth from care, reinforcing both the critical need to maintain a flexible program model as well as the importance in the ability to offer a range of types of supports while ensuring that the program is youth-centered. At intake, while the majority of youth were either in school, working, or a combination of both, 24% of youth were Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET), compared with 11% of all Canadian youth in the same age range.

51% of Youth Works participants had not yet completed high school, while 23% had either completed some post-secondary studies or graduated from a post-secondary program.

33% of youth were employed at intake to the Youth Works Program, but only 9% of youth were working in jobs that were related to their career goals.

The majority of youth (82%) who participated in Youth Works had at least some previous work experience at the time of intake. However, more than half (57%) had one year of work experience or less, and nearly one-fifth had no work experience at all, meaning that most participants needed support to lay the foundation for their careers with pre-employment and employability skills.

Youth Works participants also had a range in the types of supports available to them upon entering the program. 22% of participants were still in care while accessing supports from the Youth Works Program and able to access child welfare supports, but nearly half (48%) had fully aged out of care and were no longer eligible for any child welfare support.

22% of Youth Works participants identified as either Black or Indigenous, populations that are overrepresented within child welfare.

Youth who are transitioning from care also experience barriers that can impact their employment trajectory, and the Youth Works Program and our program implementation partners recognize the importance of providing flexible wraparound supports to help reduce these barriers and mitigate the negative impacts on youth's employment goals. The majority of youth (72%) faced at least one barrier at intake, and 62% were experiencing multiple barriers, with the barriers most effectively mitigated or reduced by the Youth Works Program being: inadequate food (79% improved), financial issues (69% improved), inconsistent or precarious transportation (63% improved), limited social support network (60% improved), and precarious housing (53% improved).

## ABOUT THE YOUTH WORKS PROGRAM

---

Children's Aid Foundation of Canada's Youth Works Program grew out of the needs we heard and saw from students receiving funding through our longstanding national [Post-Secondary Education Program](#), from our Young People's Advisory Council, and feedback from our network of youth-serving partner agencies. Through funding secured in 2015, we were able to pilot a program model that involved funding specialized staff embedded in child welfare or youth-serving agencies that would focus on supporting youth transitioning out of care with knowledge and connections allowing them to progress towards their employment goals. Learnings from this initial stage of funding allowed us to refine this program model.

In 2017, with support from RBC Future Launch, the Youth Works Program began with **four implementation partners across the country**. Each location hired a Youth Employment Mentor to focus on supporting youth in three primary ways:

- Working towards goals in **employability skills** – support for youth in individual or group settings to help develop the specific skills they need to reach their career goals.
- Securing **internships and job placements** – job-ready youth could be referred to employers, in some cases these were opportunities offered through the Foundation's community of donors and supporters.
- Providing **employment training supports** – discretionary funding to provide youth with courses, credentials, training or supplies needed to secure employment.

Following initial success with the program, in 2020 the Foundation was able to secure additional support from the Government of Canada that allowed Youth Works to expand to **two additional partners** and to provide youth with additional, **flexible wraparound supports** to help in making initial connections to available employment supports and in subsequently maintaining employment gained and continuing to progress towards their goals.

## COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Children's Aid Foundation of Canada partners with six youth-serving agencies across the country, chosen for their experience with and commitment to providing supports to youth from care, their capacity to expand their employment services for youth, and their ability to provide barrier-removal support or to help youth navigate how to access barrier-removal support in their communities. Youth Works partners are located in six cities:

- Richmond, British Columbia – Connections Community Services
- Calgary, Alberta – Trellis Society
- Brandon, Manitoba – Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba
- Toronto, Ontario – Pape Adolescent Resource Centre
- Ottawa, Ontario – Children's Aid Foundation of Ottawa<sup>2</sup>
- Fredericton, New Brunswick – Partners for Youth



While each of our partner organizations follow the Youth Works program guidelines, partners have flexibility to adapt their approach to their local contexts and to the needs of their youth. Often this leads them to work in partnership with other organizations to leverage what is available locally and to fill gaps as necessary. Team members from all partners meet regularly as a Community of Practice to share ideas, challenges, solutions, and learnings.

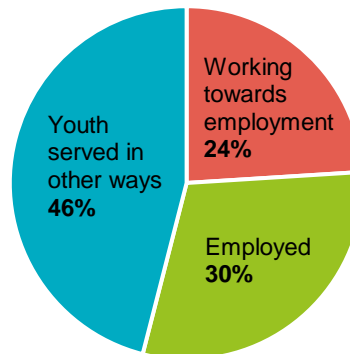
<sup>2</sup> Outcomes in this report do not include Children's Aid Foundation of Ottawa as they began the program after the evaluations included in this report were submitted.

## PROGRAM RESULTS

The Youth Works Program tracks high-level program results in three main categories:

- Youth who have secured employment
- Youth who are working towards employment
- Youth who were served in non-employment-related ways

Between the program's start in 2017 and March 2021, a total of 1,261 youth participated in the program.



	Richmond	Brandon	Fredericton	Calgary	Toronto	Post-Secondary Students*	Ottawa	TOTAL
<b>Working toward employment</b>	17	35	57	102	126	24	12	<b>373</b>
<b>Employed</b>	100	38	69	31	30	27	4	<b>299</b>
<b>Youth served in other ways</b>	219	65	165	76	44	15	5	<b>589</b>
<b>Total youth served</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1261</b>

*Program targets and numbers vary based on reach and capacity of each partner and the length of time the partner has been involved in the Youth Works Program.*

*\*Student numbers tracked separately to better understand connectivity between the Foundation's Post-Secondary Education supports and Youth Works.*

## YOUTH WORKS PROGRAM IMPACT MEASUREMENT

---

The Youth Works Program has a robust evaluation framework. While this program focuses on supporting youth in gaining skills that will help them achieve their employment goals, the Foundation also recognizes the value of tracking information that demonstrates the broader impact and value of this program. To enable this tracking, the Foundation developed customized program evaluation tools to measure impact on employment status and skills, to understand demographic information and metrics based on real results to help inform program delivery, and to document additional learnings and outcomes. In order to deepen our understanding of the barriers youth participants face and ways to mitigate these, the program evaluation tools also measure the impact of experiences and skill building that may not result in immediate employment, but which will better position youth to reach their goals. This evaluation framework was developed in consultation with program delivery partners.

Program evaluation is completed using aggregate quarterly reporting and forms completed by individual participants and program staff. Individual forms are completed at three key times when youth are engaged with the program: at intake, during programming, and when exiting the program. Surveys are completed by both participants and Youth Employment Mentors so both perspectives are included when assessing improved skills and barrier reduction. Program impacts were assessed using the retrospective pretest (RPT) method.<sup>3</sup>

Demographic and background information in this report were collected from 566 intake surveys completed, while outcomes in this report were collected from completed follow-up surveys for both participants and staff (a total of 110 participant surveys and 150 program staff surveys).

## PROGRAM DELIVERY

---

Each program delivery partner has the flexibility to identify and address the unique needs of participants in their location, while also leveraging local supports and partnerships. Throughout implementation, the program team has highlighted a number of key lessons learned, with the following common values remaining consistent across all sites:

- **Flexible and youth-centered program approach.** Youth Employment Mentors tailor their approach to individual youth based on their unique needs and goals, including taking the time to build trust, meeting at times and locations that work for youth, and connecting them to supports that will help them address other barriers.
- **Variety of services available.** Youth can participate in a variety of ways, including case management, individual sessions, group programming and employment workshops, depending on their preferences and needs.
- **Range of employment goals.** Youth Works program participants have a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds and employment goals. Youth Employment Mentors can adapt their supports to address the needs of all participants, from youth who are still in high school and are trying to gain work experience, to youth who want to gain confidence and explore their career options, and youth who are enrolled in or have graduated from post-secondary programs and who want to refine their skills, leverage connections and secure career-track employment.
- **No time limit.** Program services are not transactional and youth can continue to participate in the program for as long as they wish. If a participant leaves the program, they can return at any time and continue to receive support.

---

<sup>3</sup> RPT collects both pretest and post-test data after the intervention by asking respondents to recall their knowledge, skills, and attitudes prior to the intervention, and compare with their current levels. This method is useful for measuring self-reported changes in knowledge, skills, and attitudes, particularly where the respondents' understandings of the construct being investigated evolves as a function of learning.

## FOCUS OF SUPPORT

Youth Works provided participants with support for a variety of employment-related needs:

Areas of Support	n <sup>4</sup>	%
<b>Pre-employment preparation (e.g., resume, interview skills, job search strategies)</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Finding a job</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>Soft skills/employability skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, organization, teamwork, etc.)</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Career exploration or awareness</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>51%</b>
Career counselling/coaching	67	45%
Keeping a job	44	29%
Completed a vocational assessment	24	16%
Practical work experience (e.g., opportunities for job shadowing, mentoring, volunteering)	18	12%
Career-specific training (e.g., CPR training, food handling certification, etc.)	13	9%

## PROGRAM DURATION

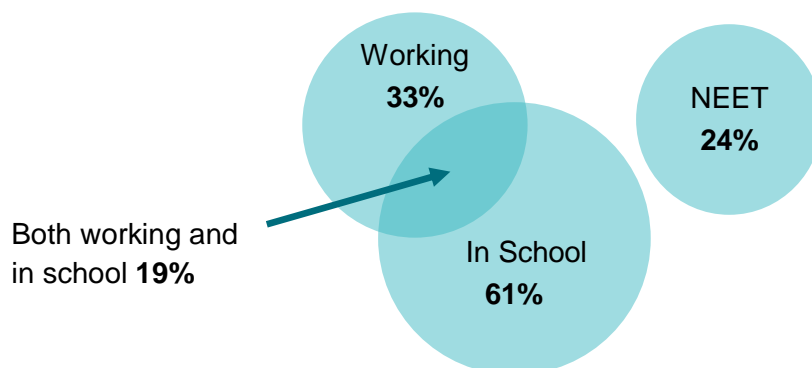
One of the important elements of this program is that support youth receive is not limited by time. Youth have the flexibility to access support for the amount of time they need and for as many sessions as they need without having to work towards a program-imposed deadline. Youth can also return to the program if their circumstances change and they wish to re-engage.<sup>5</sup>

Of the youth who exited the program, half were in the program for two months or less, one-quarter were in the program for three to six months, and the remaining quarter were in the program for longer than six months (See Appendix 1).

Participants received an average of ten hours of support from the program, while the total hours of support provided to individuals ranged from one hour to 61 hours.

## YOUTH PARTICIPANT EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Youth Works participants demonstrate a wide range of prior employment and education experience. At intake, 61% of youth were in school, 33% percent were working, 19% percent were both working and in school, 15% were volunteering and 24% were Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET).

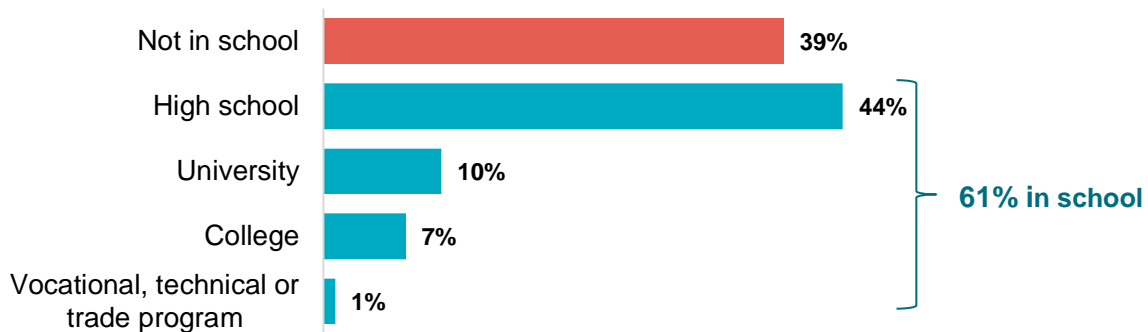


<sup>4</sup> n refers to the total number of survey responses received.

<sup>5</sup> For this reason, we do not track how many youth have permanently exited the program.

By comparison, according to a Statistics Canada profile, 11.1% of all Canadian youth aged 18-29 were categorized as NEET between 2015 and 2017<sup>6</sup>. Over one-third of young people aged 20 to 24 with a high school diploma are NEET. Statistics Canada explains that NEET youth are at risk for multiple long-term social, economic, and health difficulties compared to non-NEET youth, including poorer physical and mental health, poorer social well-being and poor labour market outcomes.

### EDUCATION STATUS AT INTAKE



Youth with any educational background can engage with the Youth Works Program. At intake to the program 61% of youth were in school (44% in high school and 18% in a post-secondary program).

### HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED

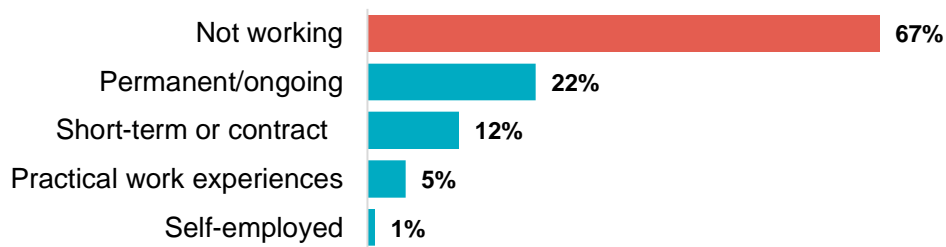


Of the youth who completed the intake survey, 51% had not yet completed high school, 26% had completed high school, 11% had completed some post-secondary studies, and 12% had completed a post-secondary program (e.g. university degree, college diploma or trade school) (See Appendix 2).

<sup>6</sup> *A Profile of Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) in Canada, 2015 to 2017* by Jordan Davidson and Rubab Arim, Statistics Canada, November 2019



## EMPLOYMENT STATUS AT INTAKE



33% of youth were employed at intake to the Youth Works Program, including 26% who were employed part-time and 14% who worked full-time. Some youth held multiple jobs and worked both full- and part-time, while other youth were included in multiple categories, such as working part-time and engaged in a practical work experience (e.g. internship, co-op placement, apprenticeship, job shadowing or mentorship).

**9% of youth were working in jobs that were related to their career goals.**

## PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE



The majority of youth who participated in Youth Works had at least some previous work experience at the time of intake. More than half (57%) had one year or less of experience in the work force (See Appendix 3).

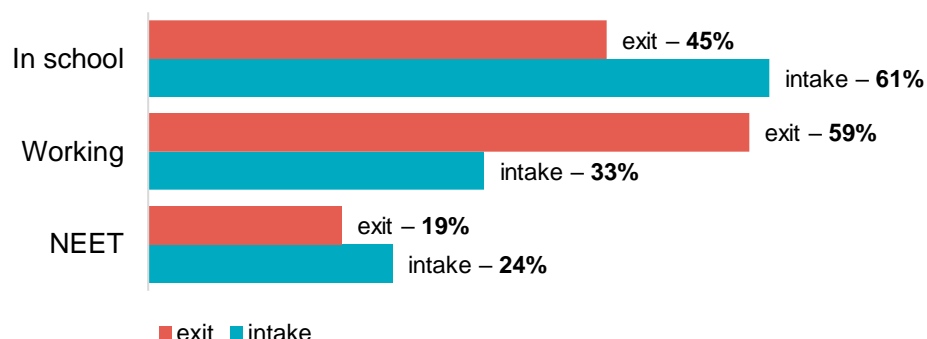
I loved the opportunity to refine my skills in different areas, this internship forced me to step out of my comfort zone and diversify my skills and knowledge.

– Youth Works participant

## PROGRAM IMPACT

Outcomes in this section of the report were collected from follow-up surveys for both participants and staff (a total of 110 participant surveys and 150 program staff surveys). The follow-up surveys included a range of questions to evaluate how Youth Works programming impacted the youth who participated in the program.

### EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS AT INTAKE VS. EXIT<sup>7</sup>



**60% of youth were working when they completed Youth Works.** 45% were in permanent positions, 12% were in short-term or contract positions and 5% were engaged in practical work experiences. Of the youth employed, 32% were working full-time and 29% were working part-time.

45% of youth were still in school when they exited the program (33% in high school and 12% in post-secondary school or training). A slightly higher proportion were engaged in full-time studies (24%) than part-time (21%).

There was little difference between program intake and exit in the proportions of NEET youth, and little difference in the proportion of youth who were volunteering.

### EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY PROGRAM LENGTH

An analysis by program length shows that youth who remained in the program for longer durations were more likely to be working at the end of programming. Only 33% of youth in the program for two months or less were working at exit, while 70% of youth in the program for six months or more were working at the end of programming.

	Short program (0- 2 months)		Medium program (3-6 months)		Long program (6+ months)	
<b>Volunteering</b>	9	14%	6	15%	3	6%
<b>In school</b>	8	13%	19	49%	13	28%
<b>Working</b>	21	33%	24	62%	33	70%
<b>NEET</b>	10	16%	6	15%	9	19%
<b>Both working and in school</b>	8	13%	12	31%	9	19%
	64		39		47	

<sup>7</sup> Methodological note: Youth’s education and employment status was available for youth entering the program (Intake Form, n=566) and for those exiting the program (Follow-up Survey for Program Staff, n=150). Because the exit sample is only a subset of the larger intake sample (the remaining youth are presumably still engaged in the program), direct pre- and post-test comparisons of these data cannot be made. Instead, we can compare the trends for the samples as independent groups.

## CHANGES RESULTING FROM YOUTH WORKS PROGRAMMING

Youth were asked if anything had changed in their employment or education status as a result of participating in Youth Works, and 82% indicated that their status had changed, with 55% starting a new job, 34% having participated in practical work experience, and 25% having started or finished an educational or training program.

I got the opportunity to connect with important people in the social work industry and expand my network.

– Youth Works participant

Has anything changed as a result of the program?	n <sup>8</sup>	%
No, nothing changed	20	8%
Yes,	90	82%
• I started a new job	61	55%
• I changed an existing job (e.g., changed role or status)	18	16%
• I changed career path or job goals	22	20%
• I got practical work experience (e.g., volunteering, internship, co-op placement, practicum, apprenticeship, job shadowing, mentoring)	37	34%
• I started and/or finished an education or training program	27	25%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>110</b>	

## PRE-EMPLOYMENT SKILLS AND TOOLS

Youth Works participants received support in developing nine foundational pre-employment skills and tools:

- Resume
- Cover Letter
- List of References
- Letter of Reference
- Interview Skills
- Job Search Strategies
- Networking Strategies
- Labour Market Information/Knowledge
- Clear Career Goals

The program helped me to stay focused on my career goals and plan ahead.

– Youth Works participant

When asked to rate the support they received in these skills and tools, youth listed the support they received with **resumes, job search strategies and interview skills** as the most helpful in their career development (See Appendix 4).

<sup>8</sup> n refers to the total number of survey responses received.

Program staff were also asked to assess participants' pre-employment skills and tools at both intake and after completion of the program. For all nine pre-employment skills and tools, there was improvement after completing the Youth Works Program (See Appendix 5).

The youth who completed programming were **most prepared** with their:

1. Resume
2. Interview Skills
3. List of References
4. Job Search Strategies
5. Clear Career Goals

The **greatest gains** were in the development of:

1. Labour Market Information/Knowledge
2. Networking Strategies
3. Cover letter
4. List of References
5. Interview Skills

I enjoyed the fact that the program helped me to build courage in pushing towards my goal.

– Youth Works participant

## EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The Youth Works Program focuses on supporting participants in developing nine core employability skills:

1. Communicating
2. Problem-solving
3. Organizing
4. Work Ethic
5. Being Adaptable
6. Leadership
7. Working with others
8. Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours
9. Learning

Youth were asked to rate the first seven skills, while workers were asked to rate all nine. Youth who completed Youth Works programming rated their employability skills before and after participating in the program (scale of very weak to very strong). Over 80% of youth believed their employability skills had increased as a result of the Youth Works Program (See Appendix 6).

Youth who completed programming felt **most prepared** with their skills in:

1. Work ethic
2. Communicating
3. Working with others
4. Problem-solving

Youth felt they made the **greatest gains** in:

1. Problem-solving
2. Communicating
3. Being adaptable
4. Organizing

Program staff rated youths' employability skills before and after the program, using a retrospective pretest method (scale from very weak to very strong). Staff noted improvement in all eight of the employability skills (See Appendix 7).

Program staff indicated youth's **strongest skills** after the program were:

1. Working with others
2. Learning
3. Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours
4. Communicating

Program staff indicated that youth made the **greatest improvements** in:

1. Communicating
2. Problem-solving
3. Being adaptable
4. Organizing

I enjoyed the approach everyone who helped me took. Being able to understand my situation, along with the goals I have, and helping me reach them was appreciated.

– Youth Works participant

## CAREER AWARENESS AND JOB SEARCH SKILLS

Youth also rated their learnings regarding specific career or workplace awareness and job search skills (Appendix 8).

While the majority of youth found the program to be helpful or very helpful in all aspects, the components they rated **most helpful** were:

1. Understanding which of their interests, skills and abilities could help them to find a job
2. Knowing what to do to achieve that goal
3. Understanding workplace or employer expectations
4. Improving or expanding their job search strategies

## CAREER AND JOB PREPAREDNESS

**92%** of the youth who completed the program felt that they **achieved what they wanted to achieve with the program**.

In addition, the majority of youth expressed that as a result of the program, they felt:

- More knowledgeable about resources and supports available
- More prepared to enter the work force
- More motivated to achieve their career or educational goals
- More optimistic about the future
- More confident about their employment skills

(See Appendix 9)

The Youth Employment Mentor is a professional, but caring worker who goes up and beyond for her clients. She is always doing anything she can to help me succeed. I really appreciate that! It made the program extremely great.

– Youth Works participant

## BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Youth who are transitioning out of care are faced with many barriers that can impact their employment journey. Program staff were asked to indicate barriers that youth were experiencing before and after the program and whether the program contributed to improvement for this youth. The majority of youth (72%) faced at least one of the barriers listed below, and 62% were experiencing multiple barriers. While the items included represent common barriers, this is not a comprehensive list of all barriers faced by youth transitioning out of care.

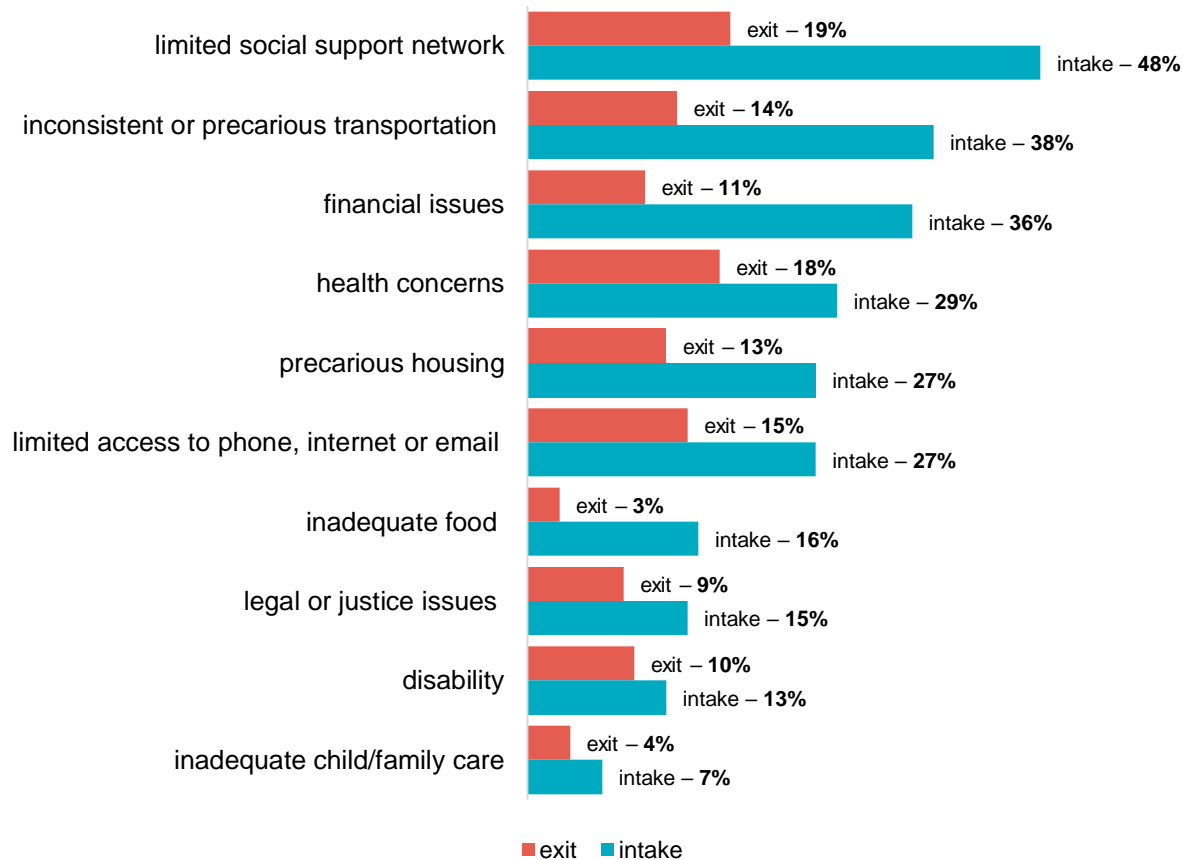
The **most frequent barriers** faced by youth were:

1. Limited social support network
2. Inconsistent or precarious transportation
3. Financial issues
4. Health concerns

The barriers **most effectively mitigated or reduced** by Youth Works programming were:

1. Inadequate food (79% improved)<sup>9</sup>
2. Financial issues (69% improved)
3. Inconsistent or precarious transportation (63% improved)
4. Limited social support network (60% improved)
5. Precarious housing (53% improved)

### Barriers to employment faced by youth before and after the program



<sup>9</sup> The percentage improved refers to the number of youth indicating improvement with each barrier divided by the total number of youth reporting facing that barrier.

## INCREASING OUR REACH

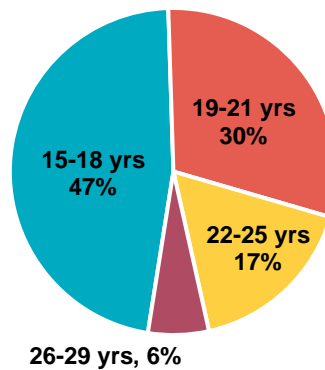
Children’s Aid Foundation of Canada is working to better understand the diversity of the youth we support, and the extent to which we are reaching populations who are overrepresented in the child welfare system across the country.

Youth who participate in the Youth Works Program are asked to provide demographic information, and the following section includes data collected from the 566 youth participants who had completed program intake survey.

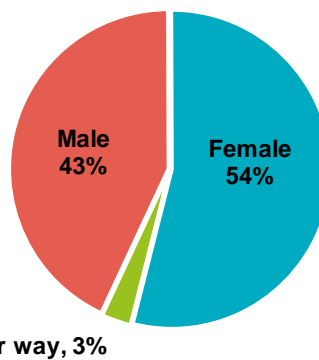
8% of the youth in the Youth Works Program are parents.

### PARTICIPANTS’ AGE

Youth participants ranged in age from 15 to 29 years old. The average age for the program is 20 years old, with 48% of youth between the ages of 15 and 18 years old.



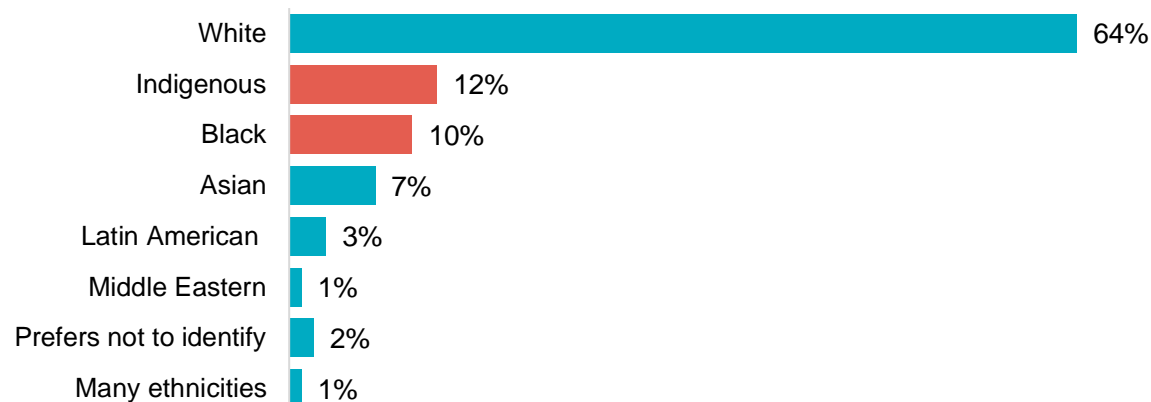
### PARTICIPANTS’ GENDER



Describes self in another way, 3%

## RECIPIENTS' RACIAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITIES

The Foundation has committed to increasing funding and supports for populations overrepresented in child welfare: youth who identify as Indigenous or Black. 22% of Youth Works participants indicated that the ethnicity they most identified with is either Indigenous or Black. The majority of participants (64%) answered that the ethnicity they most identified with is White.



## MAIN SOURCES OF INCOME

Participants enter the program with varying sources of income. The most common form of income was government supports, with the most frequent government supports listed as child welfare supports such as Continued Care and Support for Youth or Agreements with Young Adults, or other government supports such as disability supports or Ontario Works. These forms of support come directly from the child welfare providers or through provincial government supports. A quarter of youth were earning employment income when they started the program.

Sources of Income	n	%
<b>Government Support</b>	304	48%
<b>Employment</b>	158	25%
<b>Family/Partner/Spouse</b>	125	20%
<b>Student Assistance</b>	50	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>637 *</b>	

\*Many reported more than one main source

## PARTICIPANTS' CHILD WELFARE STATUS

Child Welfare Status	n	%
<b>In care</b> Temporary or Permanent Care	112	22%
<b>Youth in Transition</b> Young Adult Agreements (e.g., CCSY, AYA, etc.)	151	30%
Alumni (no longer receiving support)	243	48%
<b>Other</b> Other (e.g., family being supported by CAS, adopted)	14	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>509</b>	

While 22% of participants were still in care while accessing supports from the Youth Works Program, nearly half (48%) were no longer eligible for any child welfare support.



## LESSONS LEARNED

---

The Youth Works Program forms the core of the Foundation's work to improve employment outcomes for youth transitioning out of care, and the Youth Works Program model has been adapted over years of experience providing support to youth transitioning out of care, and listening to the feedback provided by youth themselves and from our youth-serving agency partners.

In addition to understanding the impacts of the Youth Works Program, the evaluation data gathered over the length of the program highlights the diverse experiences and needs within the population of youth from care. These data and learnings reinforce the importance of maintaining and strengthening employment supports for youth transitioning out of care, including the following key elements:

- **Flexible and youth-centered approaches**, tailored to individual youth based on their unique needs and goals.
- Connecting youth to supports that will help them **address barriers to their employment** in order to facilitate securing and maintaining their jobs.
- Supporting the needs of youth from care **across the country**, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of youth who identify as being part of a community overrepresented in child welfare.
- Continuing to convene the program implementation partners as a **Community of Practice to share learning and knowledge** to improve programming.
- Creating more **connectivity between Foundation Post-Secondary Education grant recipients and employment supports**, particularly helping connect our graduates with career-track opportunities.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – Total time youth engaged in the program

Total length of program	n	%
less than 1 month	20	21%
1-2 months	25	27%
3-6 months	24	26%
more than 6 months	25	27%
	94	

### Appendix 2 – Highest level of education completed

Highest Level of Education Completed	n	%
Less than high school	288	51%
Graduated high school	145	26%
Some post-secondary	64	11%
Graduated post-secondary (Trades certificate, College diploma or University degree)	67	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Appendix 3 – Previous work experience

Previous work experience	n	%
None	103	18%
Less than 1 year	146	26%
1 year	74	13%
2 years	84	15%
3 years	40	7%
4 years	36	6%
5 or more years	83	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>566</b>	

### Appendix 4 – Pre-employment skills and tools – Youth ratings

Youth ratings	% helpful or very helpful
<b>The program helped to develop or improve my:</b>	
Resume	83%
Job search strategies	78%
Interview skills	77%
List of references	69%
Knowledge of the labour market	61%
Cover letter	59%

Appendix 5 – Pre-employment skills and tools – Program staff ratings

Program staff ratings	Intake	Exit	% difference
<b>Pre-employment skills/tools</b>			
Resume	70%	<b>86%</b>	+16%
Interview skills	62%	<b>81%</b>	<b>+19%</b>
List of references	58%	<b>80%</b>	<b>+22%</b>
Job search strategies	58%	<b>71%</b>	+13%
Clear career goals	59%	<b>70%</b>	+11%
Labour market info/knowledge	40%	68%	<b>+28%</b>
Networking strategies	42%	68%	<b>+26%</b>
Cover letter	34%	57%	<b>+23%</b>
Letter of reference	27%	43%	+16%

Appendix 6 – Employability skills – Youth ratings

Youth self-ratings of employability skills	Before	After	% improvement
Work Ethic	54%	<b>88%</b>	+34%
Communicating	42%	<b>84%</b>	<b>+42%</b>
Working with Others	57%	<b>83%</b>	+26%
Problem-solving	39%	<b>82%</b>	<b>+43%</b>
Being Adaptable	39%	80%	<b>+41%</b>
Organizing	36%	71%	<b>+35%</b>
Leadership	43%	67%	+24%

Appendix 7 – Employability skills – Program staff ratings

Staff ratings of youth employability skills (strong or very strong)	Before	After	% improvement
Working with others	57%	<b>74%</b>	+17%
Learning	49%	<b>68%</b>	+19%
Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours	48%	<b>67%</b>	+19%
Communicating	42%	<b>66%</b>	<b>+24%</b>
Work ethic	47%	64%	+17%
Being adaptable	40%	62%	<b>+22%</b>
Problem-solving	31%	54%	<b>+23%</b>
Organizing	31%	53%	<b>+22%</b>
Leadership	26%	36%	+10%

## Appendix 8 – Career awareness and job search skills – Youth ratings

<b>How helpful was the program in developing your career or workplace awareness? The program helped me to:</b>	<b>% helpful or very helpful</b>
<b>Understand which of my interests, skills and abilities could help me find a job</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Know what to do to achieve that goal</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>Understand workplace or employer expectations</b>	<b>74%</b>
<b>Develop an employment/career plan</b>	68%
<b>Develop a clear idea about the type of work I want to do</b>	66%
<b>Get practical hands-on experience</b>	50%

<b>How helpful was the program in improving your job search? The program helped to:</b>	<b>% helpful or very helpful</b>
<b>Improve or expand my job search strategies</b> (e.g., using job search agencies or recruiters, social media, online resources, direct contact, volunteering, etc.)	<b>75%</b>
<b>Improve or expand my networking strategies</b> (e.g., using online discussion boards, social media, following organizations or professionals on Twitter or blogs, conducting informational interviews, joining or attending professional associations, activities or events, volunteering, etc.)	69%
<b>Increase my professional contacts</b>	66%

## Appendix 9 – Career and job preparedness – Youth ratings

<b>As a result of participating in the program,</b>	<b>% agree or strongly agree</b>
I know more about resources and supports available	84%
I feel more prepared to enter the work force	79%
I'm more motivated to achieve my career or educational goals	76%
I'm more optimistic about the future	75%
I'm more confident about my employment skills	73%
I feel less stress	60%