

# YOUTH ASSISTING YOUTH

MENTOR • GROW • SUCCEED

EMPOWERING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

## 2019/2020 ANNUAL REPORT



# YOUTH ASSISTING YOUTH YAY

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## 2019-2020 was an inspiring year of deep impact for Youth Assisting Youth (YAY)

What a year it has been! Despite all of the challenges that COVID presented, we are so proud of the tremendous accomplishments of our staff and youth mentors, who have gone above and beyond to deliver our important program to communities, partners and, most importantly, our youth mentees in 2019-2020.

For more than 44 years, YAY has dedicated itself to investing in the leaders of tomorrow, by transforming the lives of at-risk youth today. We do it through the power of mentorship and relationships, and we continue to evolve and adapt our programs to meet the ever-increasing needs of our youth and communities.

It's clear from our evaluation data that our program, and our outstanding youth mentors, are helping mentees build resiliency and increase their strengths. We understand that mentoring and relationships are more important now than ever! We will not waver in our commitment to support and empower youth, so that they can reach higher, and achieve more.

As the world continues to change around us, our volunteers, donors and community stand by us. They continue to support YAY's mission of improving the lives of youth, and we are so very thankful. In 2020-2021, we will work even harder, giving youth the relationships, connections and support that they need to succeed in the face of adversity. Mentor. Grow. Succeed.



# 1,993

Young People  
Empowered

***We supported a total of 1,993 children and youth in communities across the City of Toronto and York Region, including an estimated 112,824 hours of volunteer service and one-to-one mentoring***



**Sally Spencer**  
Chief Executive  
Officer, YAY



**Darrel Zehr**  
Chair, Board of  
Directors, YAY

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## Mission Statement:

Youth Assisting Youth (YAY) is a voluntary community-based peer mentoring organization, committed to promoting the healthy growth and development of young people, strengthening families and responding to the changing needs of the community.

## Guiding Principles:

- Mentoring is an effective tool that allows all individuals involved to develop their full potential
- Youth have the power and potential to make valuable contributions in their communities
- Everyone in the organization is an ambassador who has the ability to seek out and create opportunities that strengthen the organization

## Strategic Goals:

- Enrich the Mentor Experience
- Bring the Power and Value of Mentoring to More Youth at-risk
- Grow our Brand and Attract Donors Who Want to Invest in Youth
- Transform our mentoring support, measurement, quality and evaluation

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## Who We Are

- Established in 1976
- 44 Years of Youth Mentoring
- Mentees ages 6 to 15
- Mentors ages 16 to 29
- One-to-One Peer Mentoring Program
- Group Mentoring Program
- Youth Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Training
- Youth Mentoring 101 Training
- Girls & Boys Empowerment Programs
- 10,000+ youth matched
- 30,000+ Group Mentoring Program participants
- 98% Success Rate of youth graduating high school



# LEADERS OF TOMORROW

# LEADERS OF TOMORROW

2019-2020 Impact

- 1,993 youth serviced
- 158 kids matched with a mentor
- 622 mentoring relationships supported
- 172 group mentoring activities delivered to over 2,500 youth
- 385 youth volunteers recruited, screened and trained
- 112,824 hours of mentoring support and volunteer service hours
- 6,167 youth and family support calls
- 206 youth civically engaged through The Empowerment Project



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## Measuring our Impact on Youth

- 96% related well to their mentor
- 96% said their mentor was a positive role model and influence
- 95% reported positive changes
- 91% increased confidence
- 83% improved social skills
- 82% developed stronger relationships
- 82% developed new interests in hobbies and extracurricular activities



# LEADERS OF TOMORROW

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## Measuring Strengths & Difficulties in Youth

Research across the globe continues to show the benefits of youth mentoring for both Mentor and Mentee, including increased enrollment in University, increased lifetime income and improved mental health. Mentoring works, and we're proud to contribute our own evidence-based outcomes. Our 2019-2020 data below clearly shows that our program is having a positive impact on our youth mentees.

- Pre and Post-test Evaluation
- 193 Youth Evaluated in 2019-2020
- Measures: Social, Emotional, Behavioural, Pro-Social, and Hyperactivity
- **What We Want to See:**
  - Increase in Low Difficulty Levels
  - Decrease in Medium Difficulty Levels
  - Decrease in High Difficulty Levels

	Low	Medium	High
Pre-test	43%	24%	33%
	↓ +30%	↓ -13%	↓ -17%
Post-test	73%	11%	16%

***"The program really helped my child communicate better, he gained confidence and found his voice. He's less anxious and doing better in school."***

- YAY Parent

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## 2019/2020 Highlights



- Winner of the *2019 June Callwood Excellence in Volunteer Management Award*
- Zach Smith *hiked 4,200 KMs (2,653 Miles)* across the *Pacific Crest Trail* in support of YAY and youth mental health, while *raising \$8,650K* for our mentoring program
- U of T professor, Andrea Cameron, ran a *Double Boston Marathon (26 x 2 = 52 Miles)*, while *raising \$5,477* for our mentoring program
- We *partnered with SHELL Canada* on the *2019 12 Days of Fueling Kindness Campaign*, *raising \$12,000* for our mentoring program
- In partnership with *The Orbach Family*, we launched the *Gil Orbach Joy Scholarship Program*, providing 3 outstanding YAY mentors with 2019 scholarships
- *The Empowerment Project* received a *2nd year 2019 grant* from the *Canada Service Corps* program, helping older youth in 3 underserved communities to get involved, gain leadership skills and obtain volunteer service hours
- With support from *Toronto Foundation*, we piloted our *Boys Empowerment Program*, giving boys across the city a safe space to be vulnerable, gain confidence and leadership skills. Based on it's success, the program is *now funded by IRCC* for the next 5 years to empower newcomer boys
- Organized the *8th Annual Spin-a-Thon*, *raising \$16,543* in 2019, *before converting the event to the Virtual YAY Move-a-Thon* due to *COVID-19*. Since 2013, our annual spin event has *raised more than \$244,000*
- With support from *Toronto Foundation*, we received a *2-year \$70,000 Deacon Legacy Grant* after our *live youth stage presentation* finished in *2nd place*



## Project Profile

# THE EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

TURNING SURVIVAL SKILLS INTO LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

**The Empowerment Project (TEP)** offers youth from the Jane / Finch, Malvern and Crescent Town communities, the opportunity to Volunteer, Get Involved and Create Positive Change for themselves and their community.

Youth build skills, leadership abilities and co-design positive activities for at-risk youth. They participate in skills-based workshops, in-depth training, networking events and mentor youth where they live.

**TEP** provides an enriching volunteer opportunity and valuable community service hours that contribute to personal growth, professional development and success.

- Funded January 2019
- Renewed January 2020
- 6000+ youth reached
- 206 youth civically engaged
- 8550+ Volunteer Hours
- 32 Training Workshops
- 6 Group Design Labs
- 8 Leadership Workshops
- 36 Group Activities with 200+ youth attendees
- 47 Matched with a Mentee



Funded by the Government of  
Canada under the Canada  
Service Corps program



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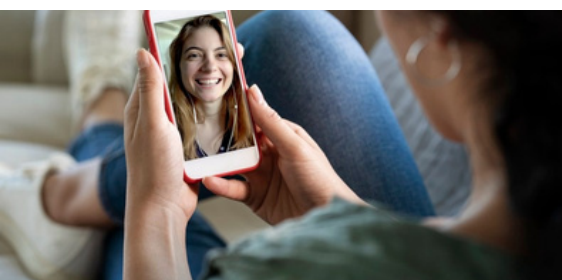


## COVID-19 Response 2020

### *Helping Youth and Families Stay Healthy and Connected*

We responded quickly to COVID-19, and have continued to provide mentoring, case management and family support to more than 800 youth and families during the pandemic. In a time of crisis and social distancing, it has become even more important for youth to remain connected and fully supported. We've seen first-hand the negative impact that COVID-19 is having on the mental health of our youth, their siblings and their extended family. Our outstanding youth mentors continue to go above and beyond to support their mentees virtually, and we have developed a full sleight of new virtual programs to respond to the new and emerging needs of our youth and our families.

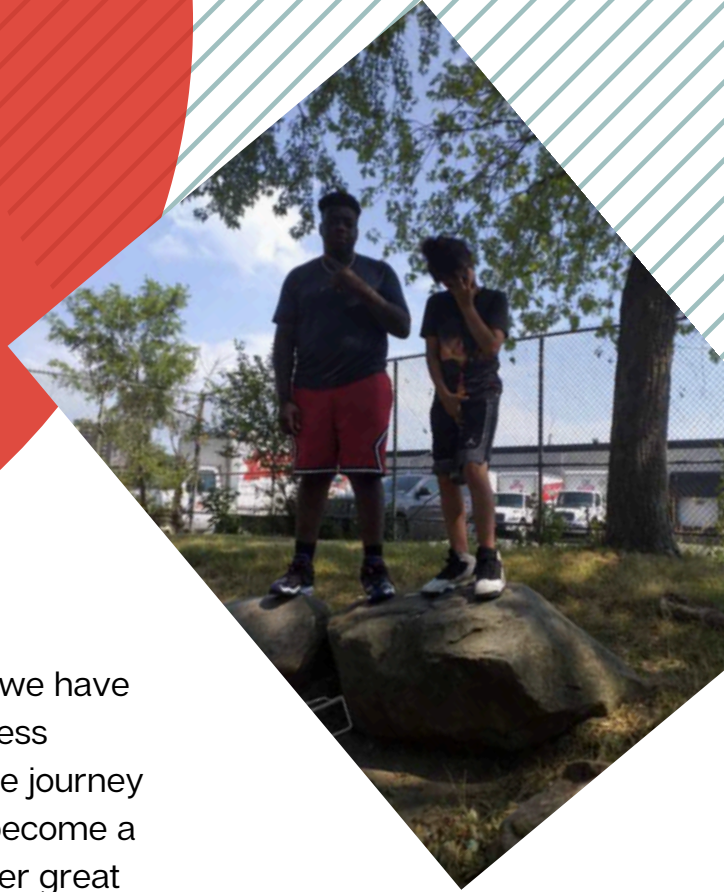
- Virtual Tutoring Program
- Virtual Parent Coffee Chat Group
- Youth LifeLine Program
- Virtual Kahoot Trivia Program
- Virtual Mentors Mix & Mingle
- Virtual Girls Empowerment Program
- Virtual Mentor Training
- Virtual Cooking Program
- Virtual Afterschool Program
- Virtual BINGO for Parents
- Virtual Short Stories & Poetry
- Virtual Boys Empowerment Program



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## Nathaniel's Story of mentorship



To understand the true impact of our program, all we have to do is take a look at one of YAY's countless success stories. One inspiring story from 2019-2020 tells the journey of our long-time mentee Nathaniel, who has now become a volunteer youth mentor himself. Nathaniel is another great example of how our program empowers youth to reach higher and achieve more.

Nathaniel was first referred to YAY 12 years ago in 2008, struggling with ADHD, low self-esteem and severe bullying at school. Nathaniel was matched with Duane, an amazing volunteer youth mentor who helped Nathaniel to overcome his learning disability and gain confidence.

Last year, Nathaniel decided that he wanted to help someone younger and be a positive role model himself. Nathaniel was matched with Ethan who was struggling with his own learning disability and a lack of confidence and social skills. During 2019-2020, Nathaniel and Ethan celebrated their 1 year anniversary, and Ethan is overcoming his learning disability and communicating more effectively with his family and friends. He's also gained confidence and is less anxious because of the support that Nathaniel has provided.

Nathaniel and Duane remain matched to this day, and have been matched for more than 12 years. Although Duane is now in the army, they still remain in touch via phone, text and online platforms.

*"Duane really became that positive role model that I needed in my life. He gave me confidence and taught me about life and myself. The relationship made me stronger! And still does!"*

*"I wanted to be a positive role model to a young person, the way Duane was and is to me. I want to share what I've learned from Duane, and I want to help Ethan be successful and happy!"*

*– Nathaniel, YAY Mentor and Mentee*