Stepping Up A Strategic Framework to Help Ontario's Youth Succeed

Stepping Up is a first-of-its-kind framework developed by the Government of Ontario to help guide, focus and maximize our collaborative actions to support young people.

Stepping Up defines what we believe matters most to our young people. It describes what we are already doing to support them and what we can accomplish by working better together. Stepping Up is an evidence-based framework, developed through existing research on youth development and in consultation across government and with young people and their allies. It builds on past consultations and recommendations from a range of reports and initiatives.

Stepping Up articulates the government's sustained commitment to supporting the well-being of Ontario's youth. Stepping Up's vision, guiding principles and priority outcomes will influence how the government develops policies and designs programs relating to youth.

Stepping Up is also a call to action for those that look out for the well-being of young people in Ontario. It has been developed so that young people themselves, families, governments, foundations, philanthropic organizations, public agencies, charities, community organizations and private businesses can identify ways to help youth succeed.

Vision

Together, we will support all young people to become healthy, safe, hopeful, engaged, educated and contributing members of their communities and our province.

Guiding Principles

- A Positive, Asset-Based View of Youth: A young person's social, emotional, physical and cognitive competencies, along with their "self" or "spirit", prepare them for future wellbeing. We will work to understand and nurture young people's assets to support them to succeed.
- Targeted Support for Those who Need it: We will focus on youth who need help to overcome barriers, including: Aboriginal youth, youth in and leaving care, youth with disabilities or special needs, racialized youth, newcomer youth, LGBTTQ youth, francophone youth, youth living in rural and remote communities, youth from low-income families and youth in conflict with the law.
- Collaboration and Partnership: We will work to strengthen the leadership and accountability of, and connections between, service providers, foundations, community groups, governments, young leaders and families.
 - Meaningful Youth Engagement and Leadership: Young people have valuable perspectives and can offer keen insight into the issues they face. We will work collaboratively with youth to better support them and empower them to lead.
- Diversity: We need to respect and foster the diversity of Ontario's youth. We can do this by ensuring the way we provide services is barrier-free, inclusive, and culturally responsive.
- Evidence-Informed Choices: We improve the ways we support youth through research, evaluation and information from front-line workers.
- **Transparency:** We will listen openly to, and gather input from, all stakeholders including youth, parents, different levels of government, communities, agencies and groups.

Themes & Priority Outcomes

Themes	Priority Outcomes
Health & Wellness	 Ontario youth are physically healthy. Ontario youth feel mentally well. Ontario youth make choices that support healthy and safe development.
Strong, Supportive Friends & Families	 Ontario youth have families and guardians equipped to help them thrive. Ontario youth have at least one consistent, caring adult in their lives. Ontario youth form and maintain healthy, close relationships.
Education, Training & Apprenticeships	 Ontario youth achieve academic success. Ontario youth have educational experiences that respond to their needs and prepare them to lead. Ontario youth access diverse training and apprenticeship opportunities.
Employment & Entrepreneurship	 Ontario youth have opportunities for meaningful employment experiences. Ontario youth have the skills and resources needed to develop a successful career or business. Ontario youth are safe and supported at work.
Diversity, Social Inclusion & Safety	Ontario youth experience social inclusion and value diversity. Ontario youth feel safe at home, at school, online and in their communities. Ontario youth respect, and are respected by, the law and justice system.
Civic Engagement & Youth Leadership	Ontario youth play a role in informing the decisions that affect them. Ontario youth are engaged in their communities. Ontario youth leverage their assets to address social issues.
Coordinated & Youth- Friendly Communities	 Ontario youth have access to safe spaces that provide quality opportunities for play and recreation. Ontario youth know about and easily navigate resources in their communities.

Learn More

For more information on Stepping Up, and to see what more the Government of Ontario is doing to support positive youth outcomes, please visit www.ontario.ca/steppingup



Ontario's Profile of

Youth Wellbeing

Ontario youth are physically healthy.

- 79.9% of youth are a healthy weight.
- **6** 63.9% of youth are physically active.
- 44.9% of youth consume at least five servings of fruit or
- 33.0% of youth did not visit a doctor in the past year.

Ontario youth feel mentally well.

- 6.0% of youth are experiencing anxiety and/or depression.
- 33.6% of youth are experiencing elevated psychological distress.
- 10.3% of youth had serious thoughts about suicide in the past year.

Ontario youth make choices that support healthy and safe development.

- 8.7% of youth smoke cigarettes.
- 22.3% of youth have recently consumed excessive alcohol.
- 22.3% of youth have used any illicit drug.
- 3.9% of youth have had a sexually transmitted infection.

Ontario youth have families and guardians equipped to help them thrive.

- 4.2% of families live in deep poverty and are struggling to afford housing.
- 8.1% of caregivers can't afford to feed their families balanced meals.
- 13.8% of children and youth live in low-income households.

Ontario youth have at least one consistent, caring adult in their lives.

Ontario youth form and maintain healthy, close relationships.

- **89.5%** of youth have at least one parent who usually knows
- 4.6% of youth do not get along with their mothers.
- 6.9% of youth do not get along with their fathers.
- 19.7% of youth feel lonely.
- 95.5% of youth have someone they are comfortable talking to about problems.
- 98.7% of youth have family and friends who help them feel safe, secure and happy.

Ontario youth have access to safe spaces that provide quality opportunities for play and recreation.

- **♦** 62% of parents feel recreation opportunities in their community meet their child's needs.
- 67.2% of youth feel there are good places in their community to spend their free time.

Ontario youth know about and easily navigate resources in their communities.

• 12% of callers to 211 looking for community referrals are young people.

Ontario youth play a role in informing the decisions that affect them.

Ontario youth are engaged in their communities.

Ontario youth leverage their assets to address social issues.

- **♦** 38.2% of youth voted in the last federal election.
- 10% of youth are unpaid members on a board or committee.
- and fundraised as volunteers.
- 7% of youth volunteered with schools, religious organizations or community associations.

help a cause they personally believed in.

Civic Engagement and Youth Leadership

Diversity,

Social Inclusion

& Safety

Coordinated &

Youth-Friendly

Communities

Strong,

Supportive

Friends &

Families

Employment &

Entrepreneurship

Ontario vouth experience social inclusion and value diversity.

Ontario youth feel safe at home, at school, online and in their communities.

Ontario youth respect, and are respected by, the law and justice system.

- **●** 69.3% of youth feel a sense of belonging in their community.
- **る** 87.8% of students have positive attitudes toward diversity at school.
- 76.9% of youth have a happy home life.
- 95.6% of youth feel safe at school.
- 22% of youth have been bullied online.
- **◆** 95.8% of Ontarians feel safe in their community.
- 8.0% of youth participate in antisocial
- 4.6% of youth who police have reported as committing a non-traffic related crime.
- 53.6% of youth believe officers in their local police force do a good job at treating people fairly.

Ontario youth achieve academic success.

Ontario youth have educational experiences that respond to their needs and prepare them to lead.

Ontario youth access diverse training and apprenticeship opportunities.

- **♦** 84% of English-speaking and 78% of French-speaking students enrolled in academic math meet the provincial standard.
- 44% of English-speaking and French-speaking students enrolled in applied math meet the provincial standard.
- 82% of high school students graduate.
- Ontario ranks 6 out of 75 jurisdictions on overall reading achievement (PISA).
- 7.2% of youth are enrolled in the Specialist High Skills Major program.
- **◆** 290,197 students have Individual Education Plans.
- 45.9% of high school course credits are available through e-learning.
- 65% of adults have completed post-secondary education.
- **19,600** youth were served through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

Ontario youth have opportunities for meaningful employment experiences.

Ontario youth have the skills and resources needed to develop a successful career or business.

Ontario youth are safe and supported at work.

- 14.7% of students are enrolled in co-op placements.
- **♦** 60.1% of youth are in the labour force.
- 9.5% of youth are not in education, employment or training.
- 75.6% of youth are satisfied with their job.

• 1.8% of youth are self-employed.

• 11.0% of WSIB claims are for youth employees.





arrows represent the direction to which we desire the indicator to change