



Ontario Works: Supporting and Empowering Youth

Presented by: Mackenzie Dupont & Ashley Johns

What is the Trusteed Youth (TY) Program



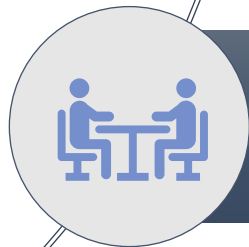
Created in 2017, the Trusteed Youth Program is a wrap-around service model, delivered in partnership with youth centered community agencies, providing enhanced service delivery to Ontario Works clients under the age of 18.



Caseworkers collaborate with the youth in navigating the many services they are involved with and promote reaching positive outcomes.



The caseload is based on a client-centered, value-added approach to client service by putting the focus on meeting the client where they are at.



A smaller focused caseload allows for intensive case management, ongoing 1:1 support and wrap around connection for clients and community partners.



Who is a Trusted Youth (TY)?

A youth aged 16-17 may qualify for Ontario Works (OW) if they meet the following criteria:

There are special circumstances that exist preventing them from living with their parents

They meet the financial and residential conditions for eligibility

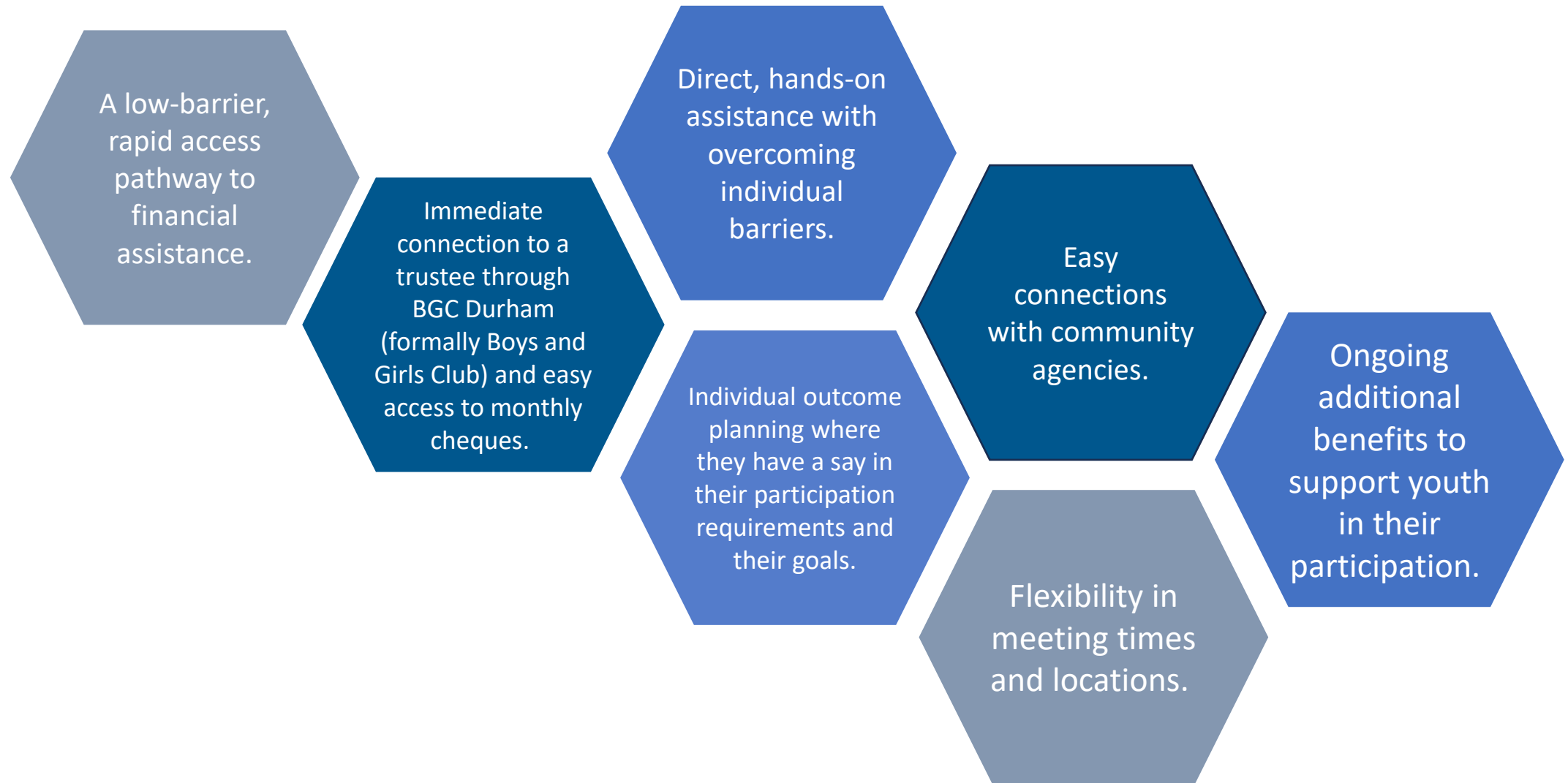
The living arrangements where they are currently staying are approved by the Trusted Youth Worker

The youth is willing to participate in activities which help them work towards their goals

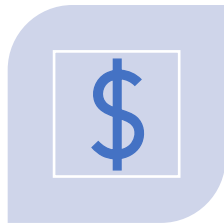
They have regular contact with a responsible adult or community agency



How does this benefit the youth?



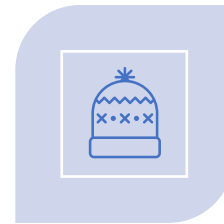
Ongoing Support for TY Clients



Youth will start to get basic financial assistance monthly through the trustee and will have regular contact with case co-ordinator and trustee through boys and girls club.



Throughout the duration of the program, monthly benefits were previously issued to provide ongoing assistance with cell phone bills (\$50.00) and transportation (\$46.90).



Funds issued yearly for winter clothing (\$100.00).



Funds issued directly related to the youth's education and employment goals.



A key factor in these client's success has been the ability to issue funds for social inclusion to reduce feelings of isolation and increase social capital and build positive, meaningful relationships.



Partnerships between TY Workers and Community Agencies

Partnership with BGC Durham who act as trustees for the youth. BGC trustees are Youth Outreach Workers and Youth Justice Workers.

Regularly collaborate with Probation Officers and Youth Justice Community Workers for future success planning regarding youth involved with the law.

Agreement between TY workers and Durham Schools so that workers may meet youth in their school. Also, TY workers regularly collaborate with school staff to fully support the youth (review attendance, assist with planning next steps, advocating for success).

Weekly on-site support visits for youth residing at Joanne's House

Regularly present to various community agencies to continue to build partnerships and ensure wrap-around service for the youth we serve.



Measures of Success

Education (OSSD attainment, post-secondary applications and acceptances)

Employment

Connection to Mental Health Professional and Wellness Supports

Housing

Financial Empowerment (bank account, tax filing, budgeting)

Obtaining Sufficient ID

Social Inclusion



Challenges

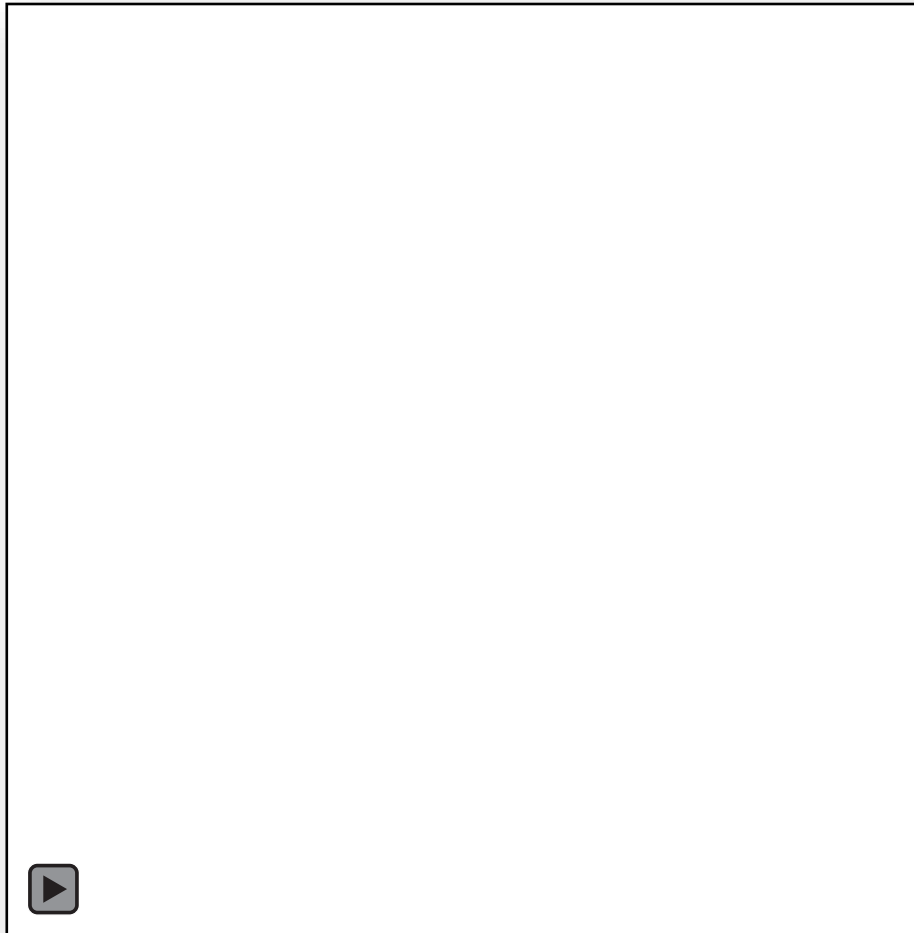
- Limited shelter space and lack of available and affordable housing for youth
- Limited support for youth in North Durham
- Waitlists for Health-Related Supports (family doctors, mental health professionals)
- Breakdown in family relationships causing barriers for youth in accessing required documents or services
- Lack of youth specific service hub that meets youth where they are at





Community Feedback

Durham Alternative Secondary School
December 2023



[Strengthening Systems for Youth in Durham Region A Way Home Canada - December 2023 Article](#)

A WAY HOME
VERS UN CHEZ-SOI

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS ABOUT US OUR APPROACH GET INVOLVED RESOURCES

Strengthening Systems for Youth in Durham Region

The A Way Home Training and Technical Assistance team has been working and supporting organizations in Durham region for the past six years. During this time, we have had the opportunity to support a variety of incredible individuals and organizations, but the most striking aspect is their dedication to creating systems and partnerships to support youth who are unhoused and experiencing homelessness. Their coordination and commitment to working better together has certainly served the youth in their community and taught us that systems can come together to end youth homelessness.

Our work in Durham started with a fidelity review of the Refuge, a youth outreach centre that offers Housing First for Youth (HF4Y) programming. We saw the way they transformed their programs and services in response to our recommendations, increasing their fidelity to the HF4Y program model. Six years later, some of the individuals we worked with then are still at the Refuge, now in leadership positions, passing on lessons

Other IEHSD Youth Focused Programming

LEAP Program

- For parents and expectant parents aged 16-25 who do not have their OSSD with a focus on Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP)
- Provides intensive case management and utilizes Individualized Service Plans to identify and set out measures to deal with barriers
- Connects participants to appropriate school programs and community agencies that focus on supporting young parents and their children
- Provides \$500 incentive and exit planning upon completion of the program
- Introduced to Durham in 2000, with 1160 LEAP graduates to date...that's approximately 50 graduates per year





Other IEHSD Youth Focused Programming

REACH

- Additionally, youth who are ages 18-24 and a dependent on a family unit receive specialized case management to support them and help break the cycle of poverty.
- A new pressure for Youth OW services in 2024 will be that Employment Service Delivery is changing due to the provincial Employment Services Transformation.
 - Employment benefits will be transferred to Employment System and not be available for most students in this program.
- To respond to this change, our existing youth employment programming and benefits are under development.





Contact Information

Mackenzie Dupont – Trusted Youth Case Co-Ordinator

289-927-3682

Mackenzie.Dupont@Durham.ca

Ashley Johns – Trusted Youth Case Co-Ordinator

289-830-8546

Ashley.Johns@durham.ca

durham.ca

[@RegionofDurham](#)

