



Durham Region Health Department Youth Engagement Strategy

Health & Social Services Committee
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Public Health Mandate

- Deliver health promotion strategies that are responsive to the needs of the population, including youth, and to collaborate with school boards and community partners to support health and well-being
- Engagement with priority populations to understand their unique needs and perspectives to inform public health programs and services



Youth Engagement



Empowering young people in addressing and making decisions about issues they believe to be important

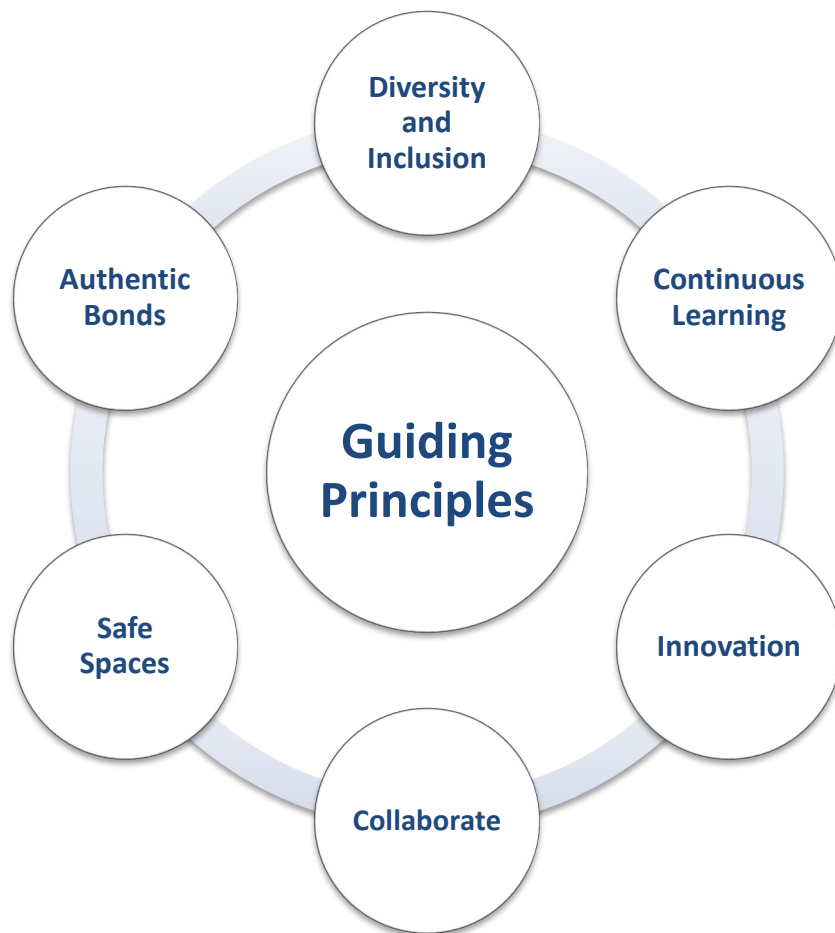


Inspiring a mentorship program for youth to engage their peers





Youth Engagement Framework





Benefits of Youth Engagement

Youth

- ✓ Improved mental health and well-being
- ✓ Greater health literacy and advocacy
- ✓ Leadership and life skill development
- ✓ Community connectedness



Organizational

- ✓ Innovation and fresh perspective
- ✓ Improved program effectiveness
- ✓ Increased reach and impact
- ✓ Community trust and transparency



Durham Youth Drug Awareness - Student Leadership Conference

Goal: Secondary students in Durham Region will implement youth led school health action plans addressing substance use prevention and the connection to mental health

 <u>Collaboration</u>	 <u>Plan and Implement</u>	 <u>Evaluate and Celebrate</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School boards• Secondary schools• Community partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student leadership teams• Action plan development• Implementation of youth-led health initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre and post evaluation surveys• Student feedback• Leadership certificates and school celebration



What the youth are saying:

“I liked the opportunity to be hands-on and learn about so many different topics and connect with students from other schools to hear their experiences”

“The opportunity to discuss topics that are usually ignored like drug use and hear other students’ opinions and lived experiences was so important”





**Are you 12-18 and looking to
get involved in your community?**



We are looking for youth who are interested in:

- Having a voice in their community
- Informing youth services and programs
- Gaining skills and knowledge in various health topics

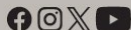
Benefits of joining:

- Get community service hours
- Gain skills and experiences
- Help to develop youth social media
- Connect with other youth
- Free training opportunities

**Interested in joining or want to
know more? Visit: durham.ca/youth**



Durham Health Connection Line
905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729
durham.ca/health



If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

M424

Durham Youth Health Group

- Recruitment May 2024
- Over 300 applicants!
- Formation of the Durham Youth Health Group



Durham Youth Health Group



Objective:

- Support the development and implementation of a plan led by Durham Youth Health Group to address their identified topic of mental health



Anticipated Results:

- Promote health education and well-being among Durham Region youth (ages 12–18)
- Collaborate with the Durham Region Health Department to ensure youth voices help shape relevant programs and services



Current Youth Group Activities

- Promoting mental health at community events
- Planning social media strategy including logo development for social media handles
- Creating a promotional video to showcase the group's mission and activities





Durham Youth Health Group Next Steps



Social Media

- Launch Instagram to engage and inform youth
- Content development



Community Collaboration

- Feedback on youth-targeted health resources
- Facilitate mental health conversations with youth at community events



Impact Summary

- Share insights and outcomes from group initiatives



What the youth are saying:

“This has been a great opportunity to learn more about our local communities.”

“It has been really fun so far, and we are excited to plan for ways we can promote health messages to youth and participate in more events!”





Thank you!