

# what's your path

What's Your Path is a project  
by Healthy Youth Network

All youth, regardless of where they live, need strong relationships and a sense of purpose in order to be healthy. And these assets are not only built at home and school – youth need caring adults investing in them throughout the community.

However youth in our community are not developing the tools and healthy relationships they need. A 2015 survey of grade 7-12 students in East Flamborough revealed that:

- **Only 32%** know how to plan ahead & make decisions
- **Only 26%** feel that adults in the community value them
- **Only 38%** are given useful roles in the community
- **Only 53%** of Grade 11 and 56% of Grade 12 students are optimistic about their future



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

# DISCOVER. EXPLORE. CREATE.

**“Canadian youth  
are set up to fail in  
the new economy;  
if they fail,  
we all fail.”**

– RBC Future Launch

Helping young people refine their skills, passions & interests in order to develop a path for the future based on their priorities and goals. Through building confidence, reducing barriers, and connecting them to the resources and support they need, we will ensure young people are future-ready.

Flamborough youth are isolated from opportunities to help them make positive and informed choices. With only one high school and limited public transportation, youth cannot access expanded or specialist programs.

Universities report escalating mental health demands because youth are unprepared for post-secondary education, and Flamborough youth attribute high levels of anxiety to the uncertainty of their future.

**The Globe & Mail reported up to 20% of students quit university and 25% quit college in the first year, while 20-50% drop out of the program they had initially chosen.**

In a recent Ontario Student Trustee Association survey, less than 30% of students felt that their school provided them with up-to-date information about career pathways and job opportunities. Students also note their parents do not have enough information to help them make decisions.

We want to provide the most up-to-date and extensive information, resources, supports and opportunities to our young people. We need to prepare parents, friends and caring adults to be able to properly provide guidance and encouragement. From 12 years old, they can begin to discover the possibilities, engage in school, build skills and confidence, learn how to plan ahead and make decisions, and be optimistic about their future. Throughout their journey, we will meet them wherever they are at and make sure they continue to move forward on a path that will ensure their success.

## MEET OUR YOUTH IMPACT TEAM

**Part of what makes our approach so different.**

We believe that youth are co-creators of their community and need to be empowered to fulfill that role. As part of our “train the trainer” model, we involve youth to advise strategy, generate solutions and train other youth themselves.



## DISCOVER

- Their strengths, passions and areas of interest
- The challenges high school students face and connect them to the resources, supports and information they need



## EXPLORE

- Their purpose and sense of self
- Career paths, experiential learning, skill building opportunities

**I**f we find new ways to support and unleash the skills of Canada's youth, they'll launch an amazing future – for themselves and for all of Canada”  
– Dave McKay, President & CEO, RBC

## CREATE

- A plan to help high school students reach their goals
- Mentoring opportunities
- A network of caring adults who are intentional in building Developmental Relationships
- Healthy relationships (peer to peer, parent/child, teacher/student, student/community)

## PARTNER WITH US!

We want you to be a part of the What's Your Path Project! As a member of our community, we know that you have a vested interest in seeing our youth succeed and making our community stronger.

As part of this network you are connected with likeminded community leaders and service providers. Being part of the WYP Project increases your exposure and opportunity for collaboration with others who share the same goals and vision as you do.

### Become a What's Your Path PROGRAM Partner.

Our program partners share a likeminded vision of healthy youth and support our network and programming through funding, in-kind services, and networking. As a funding partner, your investment goes to our front-line workers and developing the tools we need to support youth.

As a collaborative, our partners already provide:

- Office & meeting spaces
- Administrative support
- Website hosting
- Existing youth programming & skill building workshops

## WHAT MAKES THE HEALTHY YOUTH NETWORK UNIQUE? ←

- As a collaborative, we can leverage the strengths of our partners which include; The City of Hamilton, YMCA, HWDSB, HWCDSB, Chamber of Commerce, John Howard Society, Public Health, Hamilton Police. As well as community partners such as; service clubs, school councils, service agencies, faith communities, etc.
- Our Youth Impact Team, comprised of youth aged 18 – 29, play a valuable role as part of the Senior Leadership team.
- We don't want to chase grants or funding, but instead look to build long-term partnerships and explore a B Corp model
- We use The Search Institutes' Developmental Asset Framework to focus our efforts and evaluate outcomes.

## OUR TARGETS

- Create a youth portal where young people can;
  - connect to resources, supports and information they need (post-secondary, financial, mental health, etc.)
  - chat to peers and mentors
  - access assessment and skill building tools
  - provide ongoing feedback on the barriers and challenges they face
  - register for workshops & e-learning sessions to strengthen skills
  - find volunteer and employment opportunities
  - learn how to build developmental assets in themselves and their peers
  - develop an online portfolio
- Create a parent/mentor portal that:
  - provides tips, tools and resources to build a stronger “developmental” relationship
  - connect to resources, supports and information to help guide their student (post-secondary, financial, mental health, etc.)
  - learn how to build developmental assets
  - chat with other parents/mentors
  - provide ongoing feedback on the barriers and challenges they face
- Create a partner portal that provides the tools, resources and templates that can be used to support their interactions with youth to create better outcomes

[www.focusonthe40.ca](http://www.focusonthe40.ca) • [www.healthyouthnetwork.ca](http://www.healthyouthnetwork.ca)  
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YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford  
is our key administrative partner.

listen

laugh

inspire