



Mentoring Helps Youth Gain Employment

Youth employment has been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic: the unemployment rate of youth aged 15-30 rose by about 6 percent during the pandemic.¹ Young people in Canada, particularly those facing barriers and youth from equity-seeking groups, are struggling to connect with employment.

Mentors — including naturally occurring mentoring relationships young people develop with adults in their environment or formal relationships formed through mentoring programs — can play a pivotal role in supporting young people's employment and career pathways.

Mentors prepare youth for the job market

According to our 2020 study, *Mapping the Mentoring Gap*:

Close to half of young adults who were mentored during their adolescence acquired job-related skills with the support of their most meaningful mentor.

Over one-third reported that their mentor shaped their career aspirations.

Nearly one-third of young adults whose most meaningful mentor was a **formal** mentor reported that their mentor helped them get their first job.

Mentoring supports youth employment

Before the pandemic, young adults who had a mentor growing up were 59% more likely to be working and/or studying than young people who did not have access to mentoring.

92% of young adults who had a **formal** mentor were employed and/or studying.

96% of newcomer youth who were mentored growing up were studying and/or working.

Mentored youth were also more likely to report feeling positive about their career planning than their non-mentored peers.

Unfortunately, not enough young people have access to mentors when they need them most: more than half of young adults in our study can recall a time growing up when they would have wanted a mentor but did not have access to one.

Employers can help close the mentoring gap

Employers can help more young people access mentors. According to a recent U.S. study, when an employer directly supports youth mentoring, the proportion of adults who mentor triples in size.² Today, only 17% of employers in Canada support youth mentoring in some way compared to 28% in the United States.

Employees' desire to step up and mentor youth is already there. Close to two-thirds of adults in Canada who would be likely to become a mentor in the next 5 years reported that they might be persuaded to do so if their employer supported their involvement. That may include paid time off to mentor, or structured mentoring programs within an organization such as a co-op or work placement.

Contact Stacey Dakin at stacey.dakin@mentoringcanada.ca to learn more about the impacts of mentoring for employment, and how you and your organization can help close the mentoring gap.

1 Statistics Canada. (2021). The Daily. Study: Youth employment in Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210726/dq210726b-eng.htm>

2 MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership. (2018). The Power of Relationships. How and Why American Adults Step Up to Mentor the Nation's Youth. p. 34

About MENTOR Canada

MENTOR Canada is a coalition of organizations that provide youth mentoring. We are working together to build sector capacity and expand access to mentoring to empower every young person to reach their potential. *Mapping the Mentoring Gap* is one of three studies conducted by MENTOR Canada as part of the State of Mentoring Research Initiative. Between January and March 2020, we surveyed 2,838 young adults aged 18-30 about their mentoring experiences growing up and their current lives.

Learn more about MENTOR Canada and our research at [MentoringCanada.ca](https://mentoringcanada.ca).