



The Students  
Commission  
Centre of Excellence for  
Youth Engagement



# YOUTH SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM

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Being engaged in one's community, especially through volunteering opportunities, is a valuable experience all young people should have. Not all young people have the opportunity to volunteer, however, and not all volunteer opportunities are meaningful. The #CanadaWeWant gives young people the opportunity to explore and identify their interests through volunteering opportunities. The #CanadaWeWant is a place where young people volunteer from a young age. These experiences will reinforce young people's understanding that their voice matters and that they can positively impact change in their communities.



## SUMMARY

Research shows that youth engagement has positive outcomes for young people's health, skills development and personal confidence. This report calls for the youth policy to support strategies that increase youth engagement in communities across Canada through volunteering.

**Community** Highlighting the tangible impact youth can have during volunteering allows them to have ownership over their volunteering and know that they are contributing to strengthening and supporting their community.

**Relatedness** Youth look for opportunities that create connections with others and help build relationships. They enjoy meeting new

people and participating in volunteer activities with their friends. Volunteering can provide opportunities for meaningful relationship development and new connections.

**Meaning and Impact** Youth are full of energy and are aware of social issues. They look for meaningful opportunities to volunteer where they have an impact on their community and are contributing to social issues that resonate with them. Volunteering can empower youth and communities to fulfill their potential and contribute to social change.



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# #CANADA WE WANT



## The change we want to see:

- Meaningful volunteer opportunities are accessible to all youth
- A Canada in which long-term community engagement and volunteering exist for youth in their communities
- Volunteer opportunities that emphasize the impact/outcomes participation supports- this allows youth to increase their sense of sociopolitical control
- Ensure anti-racism and Indigenous representation are present in volunteer opportunities
- Youth in Canada are engaged in their communities

## The way we want to get there (Activity 1):

Online Volunteer Portfolio Platform

## Activity 2:

Workshop Programs

## Activity 3:

National Youth Forums (NYF)

## Activity 4:

Mentor to Mentee Community Meet Up Program

## Activity 5:

HR Consultant/Counselling Program

## Activity 6:

Providing Extra Supports for Those Who Need Them

## What we need to get there (Resources):

- Funding from the government to support the creation of volunteer opportunities in communities
- An Online Volunteer Portfolio Platform
- Adults that work *with* youth and act as mentors
- Collaboration between local actors to implement the youth policy

## Activity 7:

Community Service Integrated Education in Elementary

## Activity 8:

Community Champions Program

## Activity 9:

Redefining 'Volunteering'

## The way we want to get there (Resources):

- Collaboration between all levels of government
- Local governments that support service providers/organizations to create volunteer opportunities that address social issues
- Communities create opportunities based on youths' interests

What are the root causes of the problems behind Service and Volunteerism among youth?

## Understanding

Youth do not always understand the value in volunteering and the impact it has on our communities.

## Portrayal of Volunteerism

Youth often understand volunteering as merely a mandatory activity to graduate high school.

## Motivation/Engagement/Connection

Volunteer activities are not always as meaningful as they could be, so engagement less sustained.

## Opportunities lack accessibility

Volunteer opportunities are not always accessible to diverse young people.