



BCYI ANNUAL REPORT



2022-
2023



BLACK CREEK YOUTH INITIATIVE

OUR STORY

Welcome to the Black Creek Youth Initiative. A group of young people realized the need for a community program that engages young people in the Black Creek community. The plan was to keep the children and youth busy over the summer of 2018. The management of 25 Martha Eaton Way, the Artisan Charitable Foundation was kind enough to renovate let us use the common (Party) room to run weekly after School drop-in sessions.

However, as the group grew bigger and bigger from 3 youth on day one, to about 50 youth who currently participate in our programs, there was a need to continue to provide resources and services that meet the needs of the young people. Today, we enjoy partnerships with numerous organizations in our community and beyond, as well as an able team of volunteers and placement students





BLACK CREEK YOUTH INITIATIVE

OUR VISION

A world in which all young people have the opportunity to fully achieve their potentials,



OUR MISSION

Impact young people with tools needed to address systemic barriers, social determinants of health and leadership skills, through community building.





WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

WEEKLY YOUTH PROGRAM

The Black Creek Youth Initiative (BCYI) provides a safe and inclusive space for youth in the Black Creek communities in Toronto, offering programs and services aimed to address and prevent challenges faced by youth.

As our core programme, BCYI runs a 2-hour weekly program (every Thursday evening) at the 25 Martha Eaton Way building common room space, open to youth, aged 12 to 29. (Since December 2018 Program offers engaging activities and workshops intended to foster identity building, community engagement, leadership skills, positive supportive networks among peers and the promotion of positive youth development. (Specific workshops on time management, cooking on a budget, organization skills, self esteem/confidence, conflict resolution)



Our programs are aimed at providing youth and young adults with tools and resources, needed to effectively navigate systemic barriers and improve on their mental wellness.



WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

THURSDAY YOUTH GROUP

We work from a youth-led/youth decided model where youth voices are prioritized, and encourage young people to be community champions by taking action through specific innovative community projects, carried out by the youth.

Our team is made up of staff, volunteers and at all times, at least, 2 placement students from the Social Service Work / Human Rights and Equity and Child and Youth Care departments of our partner colleges or universities (York university, Toronto Metropolitan University, Seneca College). The team plans and facilitates these weekly workshops, but also organizes the delivery of certain workshops for the group with external facilitators from our community partners, legal organizations or other mentors who have preferable, personal or lived experience and professional expertise in such specific topics (For example: Cooking on a budget)

The programs and program supplies are offered to participants at no charge, with a regular week attendance of 25 to 30 youth.





WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

RACIAL JUSTICE HUB

The RJH is a safe and inclusive space for young people who meet bi monthly to share and address experiences with racism, while conducting projects related to advocacy for their human rights.



The Hub seeks to increase youth participation in human rights, with a focus on racial justice, and to foster collaboration with decision-makers regarding inclusivity, respect and equity - Supported by Equitas, the International Centre for Human Right Education



WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

RACIAL JUSTICE HUB

The RJH is a safe and inclusive space for young people who meet bi monthly to share and address experiences with racism, while conducting projects related to advocacy for their human rights.



The Hub seeks to increase youth participation in human rights, with a focus on racial justice, and to foster collaboration with decision-makers regarding inclusivity, respect and equity - Supported by Equitas, the International Centre for Human Right Education



WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

OUTINGS & ACCESS TO CULTURALLY SENSITIVE SPACES

In our efforts to promote positive youth development through our programs, BCYI facilitates access to culturally sensitive spaces through bi-monthly excursions and short outings to museums, parks, and other relevant socio-cultural events for the youth we serve. This has improved outcome of the youth, including lower levels of depression and anxiety, and opportunities to engage with recreational and educational opportunities.





WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

GREAT NEWS!!!

We are part of an extensive research project on access to education for youth, through a 6-year funding, provided by Ontario Trillium Foundation and in partnership with two other youth-serving organizations. (Justice for Children and Youth and S4 Collectives). The project aims to collect data on barriers to education young non-status individuals in Ontario experience and its associated impacts.



Through this project, BCYI hired a project coordinator, specifically assigned to coordinate and fulfil the deliverables for this project, which in the first year of the project, includes creating a solid collaboration mechanism between the three partners and setting up the foundation for the project. So far, work activities of the access to education project include setting up a youth advisory committee, creating the project branding tools (logos, landing page, tool kits and some audio-podcast content).

Further work in this first year of the project includes; establishing our potential collaborators the planning of the project launch event; monthly newsletters, creation of a website and to hold focus groups with youth from BCYI around the intersection of challenges they face with accessing education.

The aim of this project is provide efficient data that will inform policy, that can improve the access to education for young people in Ontario, at all levels.



NEW TO THE TEAM



Project Coordinator: Brantella Williams joined our team in July 2022. As an advocate fighting for equitable access to education, Brantella facilitates and participates in many conferences, workshops, toolkits, and research projects challenging Toronto universities and the Canadian education system to be more inclusive for precarious migrants. She is currently on the S4 Board of Directors, and a member Black Parent Advisory Committee in Peel Region. Brantella also serves as a community representative and assisted in the community Engagement Toolkit to combat racism within the Peel District.



NEW TO THE TEAM



Board Member: Leanne Rabinowitz joined our board on December 2022, a trained Chef and nutritionist, Leanne utilizes her love for food and community to promote wellness and access to food resources for vulnerable communities. She is currently the Food Services Coordinator at Eva's Youth Initiative, a youth homeless Shelter in the City of Toronto.



Placement Institution Partners

York University (2 students) *as seen in image Jabril and Dorcas*

Toronto Metropolitan University (1 student)

Seneca College (1 student) *Izehi*

As a human rights and equity placement student working with youth at Black Creek Youth Initiative, I have gained a range of skills that are invaluable in the field of social justice. I have learned how to effectively communicate with youth from diverse backgrounds

and understand the unique challenges they face. I have also developed skills in community leadership, organizing, advocacy, and program development, as I have worked to research and understand the needs of youth in the area through the Racial Justice Hubs. Additionally, I have gained a significant amount of experience in research and data analysis through the CNA, which is essential for understanding the root causes of social inequities and designing effective interventions to address them. Overall, this placement has provided me with a wealth of knowledge and experience that will be invaluable in my future work in the field of human rights and equity.





BLACK CREEK YOUTH INITIATIVE

FINANCES

Here are the summary of our finances for the past year



	Income		Income	
Grants:		\$76,000.00	Grants:	
Donations:		\$2,623.00	Donations:	
Total:		\$78,623.00	Total:	
	Expenditure		Expenditure	
Salaries		\$56,816.55	Salaries	
Administration		\$3,088.88	Administration	
Program supplies		\$2,853.90	Program supplies	
		\$62,759.33		
Total		\$62,759.33	Total	
Surplus/ Carry over for 2022	15,863.67		Surplus/ Carry over for 2023	15,864.67