

Coordinated & Youth-Friendly Communities

Developed from *Stepping Up: A Strategic Framework to Help Ontario's Youth Succeed* by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services

Stepping Up is a strategic framework from the **Ministry of Children and Youth Services** that strengthens the **Government of Ontario's** commitment to young people. **Stepping Up** consists of seven themes and 20 outcomes that help inform and align the work of service providers, community groups etc. with research and what youth themselves believe they need in order to succeed. **Coordinated & Youth-Friendly Communities** is one of the framework's seven themes and has two associated outcomes.

Why Coordinated & Youth-Friendly Communities?

Ontario's youth service sector is fragmented: The youth-serving sector in Ontario is made up of federal, provincial, municipal and First Nations governments, schools, health providers, community organizations and parents. In most communities, there is often no formal network that brings these sectors together and it can be challenging for families and young people to identify available supports and services.


Some communities are developing collaborative youth strategies: There are some communities across Ontario that have joined forces to create environments that support youth growth and development.

What outcomes do we want to see for Ontario youth?



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Ontario youth have access to safe spaces that provide quality opportunities for play and recreation.



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Ontario youth know about and easily navigate resources in their communities.

Why is this important?

Young people are better able to achieve their full potential when individuals, organizations and communities work together to support them. We must create youth-friendly communities and spaces that are accessible, inclusive, and prioritize the needs of young people. Increased academic, social, physical and emotional competence, reduced incidence of risky behaviours, reduced incidence of social exclusion, fewer crimes and mental health issues can be the benefits of community planning that is responsive to and inclusive of the needs of youth.

19/20 How can we support Ontario youth friendly programming?

We can support youth friendly programming in Ontario by:

- **Making youth a priority:** This means thinking about the services they most need and providing ongoing support to those that support youth.
- **Recognizing youth needs:** What types of activities, services and support matter most to young people? We need to strengthen the recognition of youth perspectives among community partners.

- **Providing youth-friendly spaces:** Youth benefit when they have access to safe spaces to grow, develop and connect with peers.
- **Improving coordination in Ontario communities:** This means making it easier to navigate supports, especially during times of transition.

20 / 20 How can we improve the information and coordination of Ontario's youth services?

We can improve the information and coordination of Ontario's youth services by:

- **Making it easier to navigate supports** by providing more online resources through social media and online directories such as Settlement.org or 211ontario.ca.
- **Enhancing collaboration across sectors** by integrating more collaborative services through government (federal, provincial, municipal, First Nations, schools, health services, community organizations, philanthropic sector and the private sector).

Learn More

This factsheet is part of a series of factsheets focused on the Government of Ontario's **Stepping Up** framework. Check out the other factsheets in the series by clicking on the links below:


- **An Introduction to Stepping Up**
- **Health and Wellness**
- **Strong, Supportive Friends and Families**
- **Education, Training and Apprenticeships**
- **Employment and Entrepreneurship**
- **Civic Engagement and Youth Leadership**
- **Diversity, Social Inclusion and Safety**


How can a youth program measure these outcomes?


YouthREX has curated measures directly related to the theme of **Coordinated and Youth-Friendly Communities**. Each one is youth-friendly and open access, making it easy to use when it comes to evaluating youth programs!


You can find YouthREX's measures [here](#).

Each measure includes the following information:

 An Overview


 Subscales


 Stepping Up Theme(s) & Outcome(s)


 Target Populations

 Length & How it is Measured

 Developers

 Good to Know

 Psychometrics

 Learn More

For more resources related to Stepping Up, don't forget to visit the eXchange!

The **eXchange** is YouthREX's online learning community. You can visit it anytime and find hundreds of intentionally curated and created resources focused on youth work, all in one place.