



FACTSHEET

What Is KM? Defining & Putting Knowledge Mobilization Into Practice

Knowledge Mobilization (KM) is any deliberate effort to ensure that people have access to information that they need, when they need it, and in a format that they can use.

It is a technical term that refers to activities and processes that allow for the movement of social science research* into practice settings like community organizations, schools or government. The over-arching objective of any KM initiative is to ensure that the best research, practice, and experiential evidence informs action.

*Knowledge Translation (KT) is used to talk about the movement of scientific research knowledge into practice settings like clinics, emergency rooms, and government.

Knowledge Mobilization at YouthREX

YouthREX is guided by an expansive approach to KM. We facilitate the movement (or exchange) of knowledge between diverse stakeholders: youth, academic researchers, youth workers, policy makers, and organizational leaders. We are committed to facilitating connections between different types of knowledge producers and knowledge users with the goal of improving youth wellbeing.

Why KM?

KM started as a way to address the perceived and actual disconnect between the people producing and using knowledge. Without meaningful interaction between these two groups, the influence of research and evaluation evidence on practice, programming, or policy is diminished. It also takes too long for research knowledge to become useful!

In the youth sector, quite a lot of time, effort, and resources go into reporting. Unfortunately, final reports often sit on a shelf collecting dust, rather than informing changes to the way programs, services, and practice work. Valuable knowledge is produced, but don't ensure that the knowledge transformed into opportunities for organizational learning and change. Without KM, the knowledge produced in and by youth-serving

and youth-led organizations doesn't have the impact on youth wellbeing that it could have.

Who makes knowledge?

Officially: Professionals such as researchers and evaluators. While everyone has knowledge, those who produce and test knowledge as part of their professional practice are considered knowledge producers in KM lingo. Everyone else is a knowledge user.

At YouthREX: Everyone. We see this divide between producers and users as limited and artificial – all knowledge matters. As much as we want to see research influence practice, we also recognize that knowledge from practice and experience needs to inform research. As such, we focus on creating pathways for knowledge exchange.

Making it Happen

At YouthREX we recognize that the movement of information and ideas requires interactions between the people producing knowledge and those they hope will use it. In order to move from knowledge to action, people needed opportunities to come together, learn from one another, and find ways to share what and how they know.

Types of KM

Face to face opportunities to share information, co-construct and plan recommendations for next steps are productive knowledge-to-action processes. These include dialogue sessions, conferences, workshops and more.

Multi-media approaches ensure that new knowledge reaches wide and diverse audiences. These include summaries, briefs, mainstream media, case studies, social media, vlogs, blogs, theatre, visual art, poetry, and dance.

Useful Links

[KM at York University](#)

[Institute for Knowledge Mobilization](#)

[Knowledge Mobilization Toolkit](#)

