

# YEAR ONE ANNUAL REPORT



## PROVINCIAL HIGHLIGHTS AS OF MARCH 31ST, 2015



REACHED OUT TO OVER **146**  
YOUTH SERVING ORGANIZATIONS ACROSS ON



TO DATE, ORGANIZATIONS IN **17** CITIES  
ACROSS 4 REGIONS ARE REPRESENTED



**298** RSVPs TO OUR COMMUNITY EXCHANGE  
EVENTS ACROSS THE PROVINCE



**375** TWITTER FOLLOWERS  
**77.8K** TWITTER IMPRESSIONS



**1559** NEWSLETTER  
SUBSCRIBERS

## Executive Summary

On December 2, 2014, the Honourable Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Children and Youth Services, announced the launch of YouthREX, established as part of Ontario's Youth Action Plan to mobilize research on positive youth development, to increase understanding of youth development and invest in continuous quality improvement in Ontario's youth programming.

"Today's launch of the Youth Research and Evaluation Exchange is an example of how our government and its partners are working to help grassroots organizations deliver services more effectively to give Ontario's youth better opportunities," said Minister MacCharles.

Since then, YouthREX has been hard at work - focused on convening our province-wide team, establishing our hubs, building connections and relationships with our diverse stakeholders and laying the foundation for our 3 program streams: Knowledge Mobilization, Capacity Building and Customized Evaluation Supports.

The following report outlines our progress, accomplishments and areas of development from January to the end of March 2015. We have used a considerable amount of this time listening to, and learning from our diverse stakeholders - their questions, needs, concerns and interests.

We look forward to continuing these important conversations, facilitating opportunities for learning around research and evaluation, and developing responsive programming, tools and resources with and for the youth sector.

**Youth are the architects of knowledge; the work youth do IS the evidence. The knowledge is not other. Wise words from @Nat\_Dru**

#YouthREX2015 // 1195 impressions 9 engagements

What wisdom would  
you like to share with  
the YouthREX team  
as we embark on  
this journey with the  
youth sector?

On February 27th, YouthREX held out first events, a joint provincial launch and Central Hub Community eXchange event. This event welcomed over 175 youth sector stakeholders to learn about YouthREX and to share with us, their perspectives, needs and ideas around the role of research and evaluation in Ontario's youth sector.

Please visit our blog for highlights from the event and to read how community leaders responded to the question above during event  
<http://youthrex.com/community-wisdom-from-our-feb-27-community-exchange/>

Outputs 2012-2014

What were community inputs during development?

Need to learn!

How did you bring it?



high win

# REGIONAL HUBS

Year ONE was an exciting time of building relationships, introducing stakeholders to YouthREX and laying the foundation for Customized Evaluation Support services and all other YouthREX activities.

**ALL THE HUBS USED** our three months of Year One to launch their respective Hubs by holding Community eXchange knowledge mobilization events, compiling contact lists of relevant stakeholders and building (and strengthening) relationships with stakeholders. Hub Managers made a point to connect with networks and larger multi-service organizations in order to build and leverage key partnerships to support knowledge mobilization, while also strategizing around reaching more rural and smaller communities within their regions.

The Hub teams also all attended the YouthREX Project and Central Hub Community eXchange on February 27th. While in Toronto, the whole Provincial team met to get to know each other and to begin collectively building YouthREX. This included each Hub Manager giving an informal presentation on their respective region, highlighting youth organizations, distinguishing features of their regions, profiles of youth wellbeing and challenges in their region.

Taking this time to strategically and meaningfully learn about youth wellbeing and build connections with diverse stakeholders in each regions was, and continues to be integral to ensuring high-levels of engagement with our activities, and the success of our project as a whole.

Please see Appendix A for a complete outreach documentation from each hub, including organization names, service types, regional location, city and more.

# EASTERN REGIONAL HUB

## ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

Dr. Sarah Todd

## HUB MANAGER

Lisa Barleben

## LOCATION

School of Social Work,  
Carleton University

Leeds and Grenville **Ottawa** Prescott and Russell **Lanark** Haliburton  
**Northumberland** Frontenac **Renfrew** Durham **Stormont** Prince Edward  
County **Kawartha Lakes** Dundas and Glengarry **Lennox and Addington**  
Hastings **Peterborough**

## AT A GLANCE



Convened an advisory with  
**40% youth representation**



Compiled over **90 individuals/organizations** in a contact list



Connected personally with  
over **15 organizations** around  
potential CES and capacity  
building supports



Met with **8 youth serving organizations** to develop  
partnerships and knowledge  
mobilization pathways

**“We see YouthREX as an opportunity to build on the existing strengths and expertise in research and evaluation that are in our region, and to provide pathways for groups to learn and share from each other.”**

- Dr. Sarah Todd, Academic Director



## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Eastern Hub Community eXchange

**FEBRUARY 25, 2015** The Eastern Hub Launch welcomed over 25 participants to learn about YouthREX, share their ideas and needs, and network with fellow youth sector stakeholders.

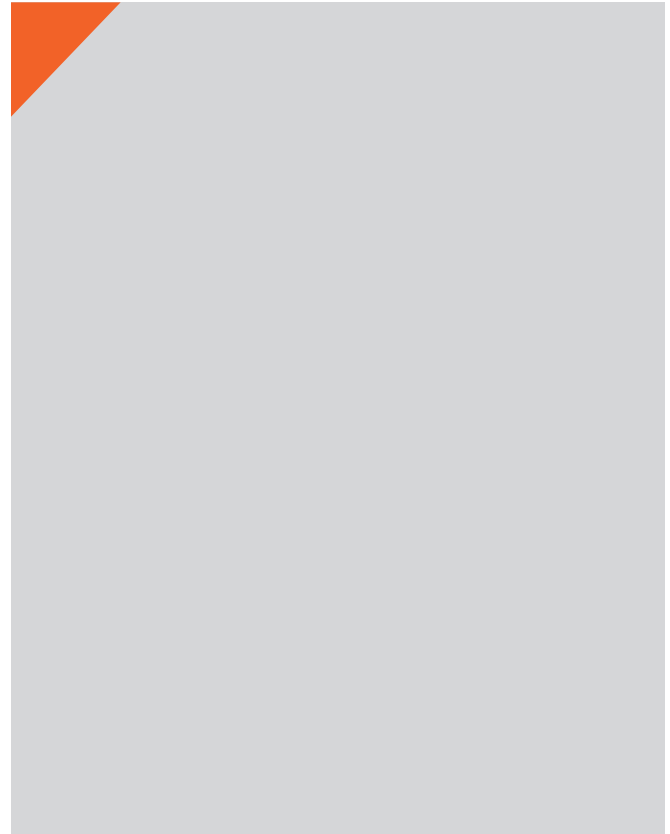
### Youth Centres Canada Conference

**MARCH 26 - MARCH 29, 2015** The Eastern Hub brokered a relationship between Youth Centres Canada (YCC) and YouthREX; YouthREX became a title sponsor of the conference and both the Eastern and Southwestern Hub facilitated workshops on evaluation-related topics.

The Eastern Hub workshop was called *Evaluation 101B: Supporting Youth Engagement and Leadership in Evaluation*. There were more than 30 people in attendance at the workshop and over 20 of the participants were under 25 years of age.

### Eastern Hub Advisory

Eastern Hub Advisory committee has a 40% membership of young people under 25 and also has representation of various minorities (trans, persons of colour, First Nations, rural, francophone) along with smaller grassroots organizations,



larger scale youth serving organizations, mental health, child welfare and national representation.

## CHALLENGES

There is a large section of Eastern Ontario that has a high francophone population – namely the eastern most part of the province. The lack of a francophone staff person makes engaging with francophone organizations and youth challenging. Also, Eastern Ontario has many urban areas - even parts of Ottawa are considered rural - and have barriers to services to young people mainly because of transportation issues.

## NEXT STEPS

In order to address our challenges, we intend to hire a francophone grad student to engage with the francophone population. We also intend to utilize our partnerships to help us engage with the First Nation, Metis and Inuit populations and will be sure to expand general outreach through events in areas such as Brockville, Kingston, Petawawa and Haliburton.

# CENTRAL REGIONAL HUB

## ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

Dr. Carl James

## HUB MANAGER

Rebecca Hower

## LOCATION

York Centre for Education & Community, York University

Toronto Dufferin Halton Peel Simcoe  
Waterloo Wellington York

## AT A GLANCE



Over **150 attendees** joined us at the Central Hub/YouthREX Community eXchange



Compiled a contact list of over **900 youth led and/or youth-serving organizations** in the Central Hub region



Connected personally with **59 youth-led/youth-serving organizations**



Held a Knowledge Mobilization eXpo, that was attended by over **75 stakeholders**

**“The region is diverse, and therefore no single story can define the nearly 1.5 million youth that are growing in the central region.”**

Dr. Carl James, Academic Director





## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Central Hub / YouthREX Launch & Community eXchange

**FEBRUARY 28, 2015** This event welcomed over 150 youth sector stakeholders to celebrate the opportunity to work together on increasing access to research and evaluation for the youth sector. We made many community connections at the exchange which we followed-up with telephone conversations, email exchanges, and face-to-face meetings.

### Knowledge Mobilization eXpo

**MARCH 24, 2015** Featuring guest speakers from the youth sector, including youth leaders, this event was an opportunity for 75+ sector stakeholders to convene around the state of evaluation in the youth sector.

### Mentorship (re)Explained Webinar

**MARCH 11, 2015** The Hub brought together community members for a viewing and discussion of this University of Wisconsin Extension produced webinar on mentorship. This event provided a forum to hear from topic area experts and global and local practitioners. Attendees had the opportunity to discuss the opportunities and challenges of various approaches to structuring and supporting mentoring programs.



### Evaluation Basics and Logic Models Workshop

**MARCH 17, 2015** We held an initial workshop for the FCJ Refugee Centre's Uprooted U program. FCJ has requested CES services to support a program evaluation to be completed by December 2015.

## CHALLENGES

The density and connectedness of the youth sector in the GTA means that YouthREX services will be widely requested. In order to ensure resources are accessible to organizations across the region, and not just the GTA, the Hub will seek to carry a CES caseload that represents sector distributions.

## NEXT STEPS

In addition to implementing Customized Evaluation Supports across the region, in Year Two, the Central Hub will strengthen and build existing relationships and develop new ones with a particular focus on Simcoe, Grey, Wellington, and Dufferin. The Central Hub aims to visit organizations and host "Knowledge Exchanges" that invites local community members to learn about YouthREX and share their perspective and needs.

# NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL HUB

## ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

Dr. Diana Coholic

## HUB MANAGER

Vivian Oystriick

## LOCATION

School of Social Work  
Laurentian University

Timiskaming Nipissing Parry Sound Muskoka  
Greater Sudbury Grand Sudbury Algoma  
Manitoulin Sudbury Cochrane

## AT A GLANCE



Welcomed over  
**45 participants** to the NE Hub  
Community eXchange event



Met with youth organizations in  
**4 cities** across the region



Connected personally with  
**16 youth-led/youth-serving**  
organizations

**“In a word, we are  
hoping for connectedness.”**

- Dr. Diana Coholic, Academic Director



## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### NE Region Hub Launch & Community eXchange

**MARCH 4, 2015** Invitations were sent to more than 50 professionals and organizations within the Sudbury and surrounding area. The 45 attendees indicated an interest in participating in YouthREX in various capacities.

### North Bay Outreach

The Northeast Hub Manager spent a day in North Bay reaching out to some of the youth serving organizations in the area including, The North Bay Indian Friendship Center, Amelia Rising and Futures Residence.

### Connections w/the United Way and the Ontario Trillium Foundation

These organizations will be supporting the Hub in connecting with grassroots youth sector stakeholders across the region. The United Way in particular will co-host a knowledge mobilization event with the Hub in June and is eager to collaborate to develop concrete outcomes for organizations/ youth.

## CHALLENGES

Geographically, the Northeast region of Ontario is large, underserved and communities are separated by vast distances. Many towns are hours away from the Regional Hub base at Laurentian University, and few grassroots organizations exist across all of our communities. To date, we have not been able to engage Aboriginal communities in YouthREX activities and events. However, this engagement will need to be built on the development of trusting relationships and it will take time for Aboriginal peoples/professionals/youth to feel connected with YouthREX.

## NEXT STEPS

The Hub will focus on strengthening relationships across the region in order to host events areas outside of Sudbury. This will come to fruition as our capacity develops.

# SOUTHWESTERN REGIONAL HUB

## ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

Dr. Siu Ming Kwok

## HUB MANAGER

Laura McDiarmid

## LOCATION

School of Social Work  
King's University College  
Western University

Essex Middlesex Haldimand-Norfolk Brant Hamilton  
Bruce Oxford Lambton Huron Chatham-Kent Perth  
Elgin Niagara

## AT A GLANCE



Began working with **4 youth organizations** around developing evaluation tools



Compiled a contact list of **200+ organizations** across the Hub region



Held over **20 in-person/phone informational interviews** with youth serving organizations to introduce YouthREX

**“Our vision is to translate the value of social services in a language that people understand!”**

- Dr. Sui Ming Kwok, Academic Director



## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### SW Hub Launch & Community eXchange

**FEBRUARY 5, 2015** This event drew together approximately fifty representatives from the community to learn about YouthREX.

### Youth Centres Canada Conference

**MARCH 26 TO MARCH 29, 2015** The SW Hub facilitated a workshop on evaluation in the non-profit sector, developing curriculum on the basic concepts in program evaluation and activities to work through the initial stages of planning for program evaluation. Evaluation results suggest 100% of the attendees agreed the workshop met their expectations, and the workshop content was useful.

### Ignite London

**FEBRUARY 4, 2015** The SW Hub, including two research assistants involved in the project, presented at Ignite London. Ignite London is a local event hosted in the community during which presenters are invited on stage to share their stories. Attendance at this event helped to increase the profile of YouthREX within the London and surrounding area.

### Mentorship (re)Explained Webinar

**MARCH 11, 2015** The Hub brought together community members for a viewing and discussion of this University of Wisconsin Extension produced webinar Mentorship. The Hub Manager facilitated discussions with attendees afterwards, in order to further engage participating individuals.

### Began Customized Evaluation Support Activities

The Hub worked with four organizations: The Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration (MRCSSI), The United Way of London and Region (UW), Coalition Against Trafficked Individuals (CATI) and NGen Youth Centre. Activities included creating an evaluation plan, leading discussions on current data tools, processes and analysis options and creating a plan to develop a logic model.

## CHALLENGES

Targeting grassroots youth-serving organizations has been a slight challenge in the sense that many of the smaller organizations are not as easily identifiable, especially those in more rural areas. That being said, as more organizations learn about the CES services we offer, it may be difficult for the Hub to manage given capacity of only one person.

## NEXT STEPS

The Hub is planning to hold a knowledge mobilization event in the coming months, in partnership with Fusion Youth Activity and Technology Centre. Intentional outreach to cities outside of London aimed at strengthening relationships, ensuring CES services are distributed throughout the region and laying groundwork for future events outside of London will also be a key focus for Year 2.

# KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

Along with co-hosting the project launch/community eXchange event, the KM team also undertook two main activities during Year 1: a knowledge mobilization eXpo and the State of the Youth Sector survey and report.



## Year 1 Activities Status (as of March 31, 2015)

Launch Website	Completed
Build and Pilot Research Hub/Database	In Development
Build Annual Youth Data Book	In Development
5 Knowledge Mobilization Events	Completed (1 per hub)
2 Training and Informational Webinars	1 Completed, 1 in Development
Yell the Truth Competition (10 winners)	Completed

### KM eXpo | Beyond Measure? Evaluation & Action in Ontario's Youth Sector

This event brought together diverse stakeholders to engage in strategic conversations that can lead to action around how to best position Ontario's youth sector to better utilize research and evaluation practices to improve youth wellbeing. The event was designed around the interim results of the YouthREX 2014 *State of Youth Sector* survey; the resulting discussions and brainstorming will inform the pending report and recommendations from that survey.

Please see Appendix B for the concept note developed for the event, and visit [www.youthrex.com/kmexpo](http://www.youthrex.com/kmexpo) to see the complete harvest and outcomes from the event, including a post-event report and videos.

### How do we think about space and place in the context of all of this? The 'youth sector' looks different in different regions.

#SoYS2015 // 223 impressions, 3 engagements

#### Highlights from the Evaluation Results:

- 100% of attendees strongly agreed or agreed that the design of the day was effective
- 100% of attendees strongly agreed or agreed that the topics discussed were important and relevant to their work
- 75 % strongly agreed that they gained valuable insight into the state of evaluation and action in the youth sector

### We're getting such insightful responses to our #SoYS2015 survey on evaluation in the ON Youth Sector. Add your voice!

#SoYS2015 // 1143 impressions, 26 engagements

#### Attendees indicated:

- They would like more opportunities to convene around issues like evaluation with funders and youth organizations together
- Information on collaborative evaluation, more tools, and sharing around evaluation and the needs of the sector is needed

Please see Appendix X for the full evaluation results from this event.

### Annual State of the Youth Sector Survey & Report Beyond Measure? Evaluation & Action in Ontario's Youth Sector

The 2015 YouthREX State of the Youth Sector report will be based on the findings from a province-wide survey of approximately 200 youth-serving/led organizations across Ontario and approximately 50 key informant interviews with leadership staff at such organizations. The report will provide a snapshot or 'point-in-time' description of evaluation issues in the youth serving sector - current practices, barriers, capacities, perceptions and aspirations that relate to evaluation. In Year 1, the report concept was developed, as well as the survey, which was sent out to over 1200 organizations across the province.

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## How can we bring in evidence of responsiveness to innovation?

#evaluation #SoYS2015 // 227 impressions, 1 engagement

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Preliminary findings from the report were shared at the YouthREX Knowledge Mobilization eXpo on March 24th, 2015; the full report, including feedback from community and stakeholders will be released in early Fall 2015.

*Please see Appendix C for the concept note developed for the State of the Youth Sector survey and report.*

In addition to these deliverables, the KM unit also began planning out designs, concepts and templates for other KM materials such as the synthesis reports, factsheets, infographics and more.

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## We are officially accepting submissions to #YelltheTruth! If you're a youth org/group in ON we want to hear from you!

4400 impressions, 113 engagements

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### Yell the Truth

Yell the Truth for Year 1 showcased examples of how grassroots youth-serving organizations are facilitating opportunities for youth leadership and participation in Ontario communities, acting as powerful agents of change in one (or more) of the seven themes outlined in the *Stepping Up* framework. Launched at the joint Provincial and Central Hub community eXchange, the submission requirements included an explanation of which *Stepping Up* theme the organization was applying under, a description of how the organization “yells their truth,” what youth leadership/engagement looks like at their organization, and the option to add a creative element such as a video to their submission.

10 winners were chosen from across the province based on quality of their submission and regional representation. Winners were announced on March 30th, 2015 and featured on the YouthREX website in a blog post: <http://youthrex.com/yellthetruth-winners-announced/>

The beginning of Year 2 will include the disbursement of prizes for Yell the Truth winners. Following, we will develop and plan for our Year 2 Yell the Truth contest, which will have an evaluation focus.

## YEAR ONE Yell the Truth Winners

**DILA Youth Program**  
Eastern Hub

**FCJ Refugee Centre**  
Central Hub

**NGEN Youth Centre**  
Southwestern Hub

**Dream Catchers**  
Eastern Hub

**F-You: The Forgiveness Project**  
Central Hub

**Grassroots Youth Collaborative**  
Central Hub

**London Youth Advisory Council**  
Southwestern Hub

**Sudbury Youth Rocks**  
Northeastern Hub

**Toronto Emerging ARTivists**  
Central Hub

**Volunteer YA!**  
Southwestern Hub



## Communications

One of the key accomplishments of YouthREX during Year One is the establishment of a YouthREX brand identity and communications strategy. Because YouthREX is providing and creating many different kind of resources and opportunities for stakeholders to engage with us, having an identifiable and recognizable presence – both online and in our materials is key to our engagement and growth strategy. For having such a new presence, we have quite a high level of engagement with both our website and twitter account, with thousands of engagements and hundreds of link clicks.



### OUR WEBSITE

Our website [www.youthrex.com](http://www.youthrex.com) officially launched on February 27th, 2015. The following statistics were compiled using Google Analytics and are based on the time period from March 4, 2015 to March 31, 2015.

1098

VISITORS

1802

SESSIONS

10,919

PAGEVIEWS

6

PAGES PER SESSION

### ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

The majority of users enter the site directly by typing in the URL – approximately half of site visitors enter either from referral links or via YouthREX social media channels.

Approximately 61% of visitors are new; the rest are returning visitors.

On average, visitors spend over 4 minutes on the site.



### OUR TWITTER @REXforYouth

847

IMPRESSIONS PER DAY

77.1K

IMPRESSIONS OVERALL

334

RETWEETS

459

LINK CLICKS

375

FOLLOWERS

11,762

PROFILE VIEWS



### OUR NEWSLETTER

We use the Mailchimp platform to manage our contact lists for communications purposes. We compiled over 1500 subscribers from across the province. Our first monthly newsletter went out in March, highlighting the Yell the Truth contest, State of the Youth Sector survey, highlights from the Provincial and Hub launches.

1559

SUBSCRIBERS

37.7%

OPEN RATE  
22.4% higher than the  
industry average

9.4%

CLICK RATE  
7.7% higher than  
industry average

### **N.O.I.S.E (Youth Innovation Lab)**

For our Youth Innovation Lab, YouthREX continues the work of the New Opportunities for Innovative Social Engagement (NOISE) program, which brings together youth fellows from Emery CI with York undergraduate and graduate fellows to learn about community-based research, develop and execute social action projects in the Jane-Finch community.

This year's NOISE program brought together 10 high school students with 28 York University students to work together to this engaged learning opportunity both at York and in the community.

#### **NOISE 2014-2015 Participants included:**

- 9 Graduate Assistants
- 19 Bachelor of Social Work Students
- 8 Grade 10 students
- 12 Grade 11 Students

### **Pod 1: Legacy Pod**

POD LEGACY focused on the issue of policing practices in the Jane and Finch Community and how it impacts racialized youth. Where police presence is heavily documented, POD LEGACY chose to initiate their own research after asking the question: "What are the youth's current perception of policing in their community"? After ethics approval, countless hours of preparation, recruiting, data collection, transcribing, analyzing and summarizing, this pod is ready to share the results of their research.

### **Pod 2: Pod Squad 2.0**

POD SQUAD 2.0 project's goal was to further their understanding of food security in the Jane and Finch Community. The project was a community food event, inviting community members for a meal prepared by the pod and a discussion on what healthy eating and food security means to them. The pod connected with Black Creek Community, which provided a speaker at the event, who discussed community farming as a viable option for healthy food in the J&F community.

### **Pod 3: Team Y.O.U.T.H.**

#### **(Young Optimists Uniting Together for Humanity)**

Team YOUTH chose to raise awareness of the statistics and legislation surrounding carding. By utilizing education and consciousness raising they used word of mouth and social media channels to provide the latest information surrounding the new policy changes to the practice of carding in the Toronto Police.

### **Pod 4: C.A.S.H. Pod**

CASH POD looked at the topic of homelessness in the Jane & Finch Community, by raising awareness of current statistics at a planned basketball tournament and bake sale. CASH PODS end goal was changed when POD members flexibly responded to challenges with the turn out at their event. Despite these challenges they were successfully able to raise funds for Covenant House.

# CAPACITY BUILDING

In Year One, the YouthREX team spent time reviewing existing evaluation capacity building models and resources.

Year 1 Activities	Status (as of March 31, 2015)
Inventory of Youth Services in Ontario	In Development
Survey of Youth Serving Sector	In Progress
Launch of Regional Hubs	Completed
Local Communities of Practice	In Development
Develop Online Certificate course on Program Evaluation	In Development
Develop 5-week course on Critical Youth Work	In Development
Develop Evaluation Toolkit	In Development

**WE DEDICATED CONSIDERABLE EFFORT** to brainstorming, planning, and proposing different approaches, frameworks, curricula and schedules for our Capacity Building courses (an online certificate course on Program Evaluation and a face-to-face Critical Youth Work course, Praxis, Theory, Policy and Research for Youth), workshops, webinars, and podcasts, circulating these ideas to members of the YouthREX team and Capacity Building working group for feedback.

We worked closely with the Customized Evaluation Supports team to ensure that our efforts to devise Capacity Building opportunities supported and aligned with the Customized Evaluation Services workflow and deliverables. By March 31, 2015, we had completed and circulated drafts for both of the YouthREX certificate courses.

We also developed a number of ideas for podcasts, webinars and other capacity building resources for discussion and development. Two Hubs also delivered two workshops at the Youth Centres Canada conference.

Starting in April, we will begin to produce our monthly webinar series, starting with the topic Positive Youth Development. We will continue developing the two courses that will launch in the fall of Year 2, and developing workshops based on relevant topics as identified by stakeholders and through observations from YouthREX Hub Managers and team members.



# CUSTOMIZED EVALUATION SUPPORTS

Year 1 Activities	Status (as of March 31, 2015)
Develop eligibility criteria	In Progress
Develop/build standardized assessment tools/process for intake & follow up of agencies	In Progress
Develop Evaluation Continuum Framework	In Progress
Engagement/Outreach to recruit possible client agencies	Ongoing
Develop infrastructure to deliver tiered services including coaching, research and evaluation support	In Progress

**IN ORDER TO ENSURE** that YouthREX provides meaningful CES services, the team undertook the following activities in Year One:

1. A review of evaluation capacity building initiatives
2. Consultation with stakeholders about their evaluation capacity needs
3. Development of an evidence continuum framework for monitoring and evaluation capacity across the sector
4. Development of the CES service flow process including policies, procedures and forms
5. Coordination of CES focus and YouthREX Capacity Building stream activities

Where suitable, Hub managers began initial conversations and planning around CES supports with appropriate grassroots youth organizations (please see Hub Overview section for more information on this).

The first part of Year Two will include developing a YouthREX CES application process and guide for Hub Managers as well as Provincial team training session with all the Hub Managers together.



# THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

In addition to providing services, facilitating opportunities and developing tools/resources with and for the youth sector, YouthREX also sees our role as being developing thought leaders in the area of research and evaluation in the Ontario youth sector.

**WHILE THIS INCLUDES** continued high standards of knowledge and professional development within our team, it also means consistently engaging others to learn with and from.

With this in mind, we welcomed the Co-Director of Project Oracle and the Social Innovation Partnership, Stephen Bediako, and his colleague, Genevieve Laurier to not only speak at our knowledge mobilization eXpo, but also facilitate two workshops with the YouthREX team, supporting the development of our evidence-based evaluation continuum. Additionally, we facilitated roundtables for two groups of stakeholders: young social entrepreneurs/innovators in partnership with CatalystsX, and a funders roundtable with over 20 key changemakers and stakeholders in the GTA.

Please visit our blog to view a video of Stephen Bediako speaking on evaluation and action in the UK context and to learn more about their work in relation to ours at YouthREX: <http://youthrex.com/comparing-contexts-the-state-of-evaluation-and-action-in-the-uk-youth-sector/>

## **Additional Notable Engagements:**

- We have met regularly with the Youth Opportunities Fund team at the Ontario Trillium Foundation to share activities, insights, and promising practices and brainstorm ideas for different questions and challenges the teams may be grappling with. We plan to continue

consistently meeting and may include other sector leaders and funders in future meetings.

- When developing the *State of the Youth Sector* survey, we connected with Johanna Maririu, Director of the Innovation Network, which conducts a national survey on evaluation practices in the non-profit sector in the United States.
- We also connected with a number of youth-serving organizations in the province for feedback on the survey, including: Delico Family Services (Thunder Bay), Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa, Success Beyond Limits (Toronto), Tropicana (Toronto) and New Beginnings (Windsor)
- For CES planning, we have connected with a number of individuals, including: Dr. Tabia Akintobi and Dr. Elleen Yancey of the Morehouse School of Medicine, who developed the Pfizer Initiative, a evaluation capacity building program for Pfizer grantees and Joanna Kocsis, a participatory research methods specialist and PhD research at the University of Toronto

