The SIDE Theory of Change for the Economic

Empowerment of Black Youth

The economic barriers facing Black youth in Ontario are deep-seated, found across sectors, and often intergenerational.

These barriers include economic marginalization, disproportionate outcomes in the education system, lack of access to critical social capital, and discrimination in employment.

What could transformative economic empowerment of Black youth in Ontario look like?

The SIDE Theory of Change takes a holistic approach to the economic empowerment of Black youth by recognizing that removing systemic barriers and building capacities must be explored together.

INDIVIDUAL CHANGE

Increase Equitable Shift Critical Access to Resources Consciousness and Opportunities for Black Youth **NFORMAL** Dismantle Enforce Equitable **Exclusionary Norms** Policies and Laws and Practices

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE



QUADRANT #1: Shift Critical Consciousness

There is a need for processes that overturn beliefs and expectations that limit the capabilities of Black people and challenge restrictive cultural and social norms that sustain racial inequity.

Examples

- Implementing Anti-Black Racism (ABR) training for staff in schools and workplaces
- Sharing positive work being done by Black youth and Black communities
- Building individual and collective sense of empowerment for Black youth



QUADRANT #2: Increase Equitable Access to Resources and Opportunities for Black Youth

Equitable access to physical, human, intellectual and financial resources including opportunities to learn, earn, and generate wealth.

Examples

- Increasing access and support for education (bridging programs, tutoring, etc.)
- Providing financial resources for professional development and education
- Offering strong financial commitments in the form of grants, subsidies, loans, and in-kind contributions



QUADRANT #3: Dismantle Exclusionary Norms and Practices

Informal practices within all levels of society that contribute to the exclusion of Black youth from accessing resources and opportunities. They are not policies and laws that are institutionally formalized, but they still exist within institutions.

Examples

- Challenging discriminatory practices such as weeding out applicants with an ethnicsounding name during recruitment
- Eurocentric standards of professionalism that deems a Black person wearing Black hairstyles as unprofessional based on such standards



QUADRANT #4: Enforce Equitable Policies and Laws

Equitable labour policies and laws need to be enforced with stricter regulations against discrimination in hiring and promotion practices, workplace racism, and financial lending practices.

Examples

 Addressing workplace policies, practices, and procedures related to equitable hiring and advancement that are already in place



If Black youth are to be truly economically empowered, changes towards racial equity must occur in all four quadrants simultaneously.

LEARN MORE

Outcomes Framework: The Economic Empowerment of Black Youth in Ontario https://youthrex.com/report/outcomes-framework-the-economic-empowerment-of-black-youth-in-ontario/



Logic Model for Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline

Situation: Black youth experience overt as well as implicit discrimination in their pursuit of education. Programs must support them to equitably access academic and professional opportunities, so they have the skills, knowledge, and supports to succeed in education and the job market, ultimately contributing to Ontario's economic prosperity.

INPUTS

Funding for activities by organizations that have the following characteristics that indicate they can effectively support Black youth:

- Black leadership and direction
- Diverse authentic representation
- Sustainability
- Responsiveness and accountability
- Focus on youth development

Youth involvement that prioritizes youth voices and paid opportunities for Black youth

Monitoring and evaluation supports

ACTIVITIES

ABR Training for educators

Supports for Black educators

Mentorship programming (ideally with Black mentors, in group settings and with incentives/compensation for mentors)

Academic supports & career preparation programming within educational institutions and out-of-school for Black youth

- Tutoring
- Bridging programs (to fill gaps in PSE requirements, provide wraparound services, financial assistance, etc.)
- Career guidance (information about careers, pathways to careers, income associated with different fields, ideally with placement opportunities, matching education with aspirations)
- Flexible PSE course scheduling
- Networking opportunities (volunteer and civic engagement programs; career-related networking programs at high schools and PSEs)

Trainings, resources, and networks to support and empower parents and caregivers in advocating for children

Financial supports for Black youth

 Scholarships, bursaries, work-based learning, student loans & financial capability programming

Short-Term > Intermediate

Improved knowledge & skills (academic, career-related & financial capability)

Increased career & professional mentorship opportunities for Black youth

Improved awareness of Black excellence

Increased advocacy knowledge and skills of parents and caregivers

Increased aspirations of Black youth

Raised critical consciousness

Increased selfconfidence and self-esteem

Improved sense of belonging

Improved encouraging and supportive environments

Increased number of role models

Increased social

capital

Long-Term

Decreased feelings and experiences of racial discrimination and targeting

Logic Model for Pillar #2: Jobs and Retention

Situation: Black youth are more likely to be unemployed, overrepresented in low-income and precarious employment, and experience racial discrimination in hiring, promotion, and within the workforce. They therefore require programs that equitably support them in their search for meaningful, safe, and dignified employment that is aligned with their career aspirations so they can succeed in the job market and contribute to Ontario's economic prosperity.

INPUTS

Funding for activities by organizations that have the following characteristics that indicate they can effectively support Black youth:

- Black leadership and direction
- Diverse authentic representation
- Sustainability
- Responsiveness and accountability
- · Focus on youth development

Youth involvement that prioritizes youth voices and paid opportunities for Black youth

Monitoring and evaluation supports

ACTIVITIES

Holistic employment support services

- Information
- Networking (e.g., job fairs, apprenticeship/ internship programs)
- Skill-based (e.g., job search, resume development, apprenticeship programs, sectorspecific)

ABR training for employers and employees so Black youth can have safe and dignified working conditions

OUTCOMES

Improved knowledge and skills that match

career choices

Short-Term

Increased opportunities and increased skill attainment (upskilling) within the workplace

Improved work environments that are safe and respectful and enable advancement and growth Intermediate

Increased number of Black youth and young adults feel supported and empowered in their workplaces

Improved sense of belonging for Black youth

Increased social capital

Long-Term

Increased number of Black youth in longer-term employment

Increased number of Black youth advancing within their workplaces

Increased number of Black youth in meaningful employment

Logic Model for Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities

Situation: Black youth are underrepresented in high-growth sectors and in business ownership; as such, programs are needed to support Black youth in succeeding in entrepreneurship and in STEM fields to diversify their economic opportunities so they can contribute to Ontario's economic prosperity.

INPUTS ACTIVITIES OUTCOMES Short-Term Intermediate Long-Term Funding for activities by Financial investment organizations that have the Improved knowledge Improved sense of Increased longevity ABR training following characteristics that belonging for Black of Black-owned and skills indicate they can effectively Business ownership training Business youth businesses support Black youth: Courses ownership · Black leadership and Greater access to Increased social Programs STEM concepts direction financial assistance capital Workshops Diverse authentic Improved encouraging Informational sessions Improved wellbeing Increased number of representation and supportive role models STEM programming Sustainability environments Responsiveness and Out-of-school programs Improved mental health Improved awareness of accountability knowledge and skills Black success stories Mentorship programs Focus on youth development Networks and resources Improved aspirations Black excellence events and Youth involvement that Improved access to prioritizes youth voices and paid media creation mental health supports opportunities for Black youth Mental health supports Monitoring and evaluation supports