





# ***The Kit* for Centering Black Youth Wellbeing**



**YOUTHREX**  
Research &  
Evaluation eXchange





*“First, what we are dealing with, at root, and fundamentally, is anti-Black racism. While it is obviously true that every visible minority community experiences the indignities and wounds of systemic discrimination..., it is the Black community which is the focus. It is Blacks who are being shot, it is Black youth that is unemployed in excessive numbers, it is Black students who are being inappropriately streamed in schools, it is Black kids who are disproportionately dropping-out...”*

- Stephen Lewis, *Report of the Advisor on Race Relations to the Premier of Ontario*, Bob Rae, 1992, p. 2.



***The Kit*** for **Centering Black Youth Wellbeing** is an online hub that supports anti-Black racism **learning, action, and community engagement** in Ontario's youth sector.





## ***The Kit* provides the Ontario youth sector with the knowledge and tools to:**



**Understand** the historical roots and context of present-day manifestations of anti-Black racism.



**Engage** with research on the impact of anti-Black racism on Black youth and their families.



**Learn** critical practices for centering the wellbeing of Black youth and communities.



**Commit** to ongoing personal, professional, and organizational accountability.

# *The Kit* is built on five understandings of anti-Black racism:



**01. ANTI-BLACK RACISM IS REAL** and leads to a lack of equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for Black people. The consequences of this lack of equitable or fair access have been well documented by extensive research that show disparities in outcomes for Black youth and their families.

**02. AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT** of the **historical roots** of present-day manifestations of anti-Black racism.

**03. IF WE ARE TO** build communities where Black youth can thrive, we need to affirm that Black Lives Matter, that the **futures of Black youth matter**, and that showing up for Black youth wellbeing is a shared responsibility.

**04. THE EXPERIENCES** of Black youth are **multi-layered**, and class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and other social identities are intersectional and, therefore, cannot be separated from one another.

**05. CENTERING THE WELLBEING** of Black youth and communities requires **ongoing personal, professional, and organizational accountability**.

# *The Kit* for Centering Black Youth Wellbeing

## LEARN

### A Certificate on Combatting Anti-Black Racism

*The Certificate* provides the Ontario youth sector with the foundational knowledge to cultivate practices, policies, and alliances that challenge, disrupt, and combat systematic anti-Black racism.

[Learn](#)

## ACT

### Call-In-Cards for Anti-Black Racism Action

*The Call-In-Cards* centre critical self-reflexivity as the source and impetus to connect understandings of anti-Black racism to anti-Black racism action. Four decks of cards across four themes feature 16 scenarios with four prompts that guide critical self-reflexivity to support anti-Black racism action.

[Act](#)

## CONNECT

### Community of Practice on the Virtual Café

*The Community of Practice* is a virtual space to connect, share, learn, and centre the wellbeing of Black youth and their families in our individual practices and organizational policies. Connect with peers and share reflections, strategies, and struggles with learning from the certificate and using the Call-In-Cards to support anti-Black racism work.

[Connect](#)



## LEARN

### **A *Certificate* for Combatting Anti-Black Racism**

The certificate provides the Ontario youth sector with the foundational knowledge to cultivate practices, policies, and alliances that challenge, disrupt, and combat systematic anti-Black racism.



The certificate includes 17 lectures and 2 artistic performances organized around four modules:

**Module 1:** The Context of Anti-Black Racism

**Module 2:** Engaging with Research about Black Youth

**Module 3:** Critical Practices for Centering Black Youth Wellbeing

**Module 4:** Ongoing Accountability for Transformative Change

**[Learn More and Register](#)**





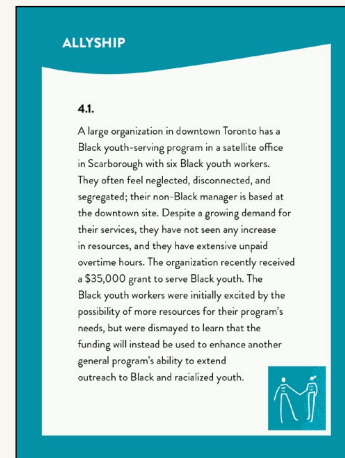
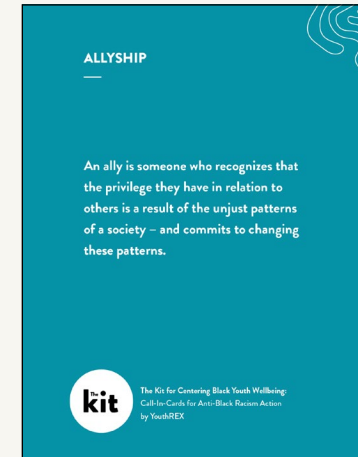
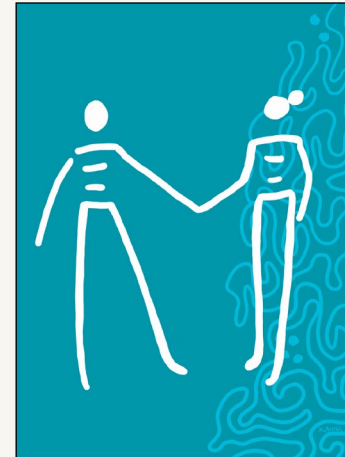
# ACT

## Call-In-Cards for Anti-Black Racism Action

The **Call-In-Cards** are four decks of 16 cards across four themes.

Each of the 16 cards features a scenario on one side and four prompts on the other.

The 16 scenarios are examples of experiences with anti-Black racism by Black youth in different areas of their life – school, work, play, etc.







**ACT**

## **Call-In-Cards for Anti-Black Racism Action**

*Anti-Black racism work is  
a continuous journey of  
transformation that requires  
ongoing reflection, learning,  
and unlearning.*

**Call-In-Cards** centre critical self-reflexivity as the source and impetus to connect understandings of anti-Black racism to anti-Black racism action – at the individual, program, and community levels.

The **Call-In-Cards** foster dialogue by encouraging the identification of deep-seated assumptions *without being called out*, and the development of actions for centering Black youth wellbeing.





***“There’s no systems change without organizational change and no organizational change without individual change.”***

- John Kania, Mark Kramer & Peter Senge,  
*The Water of Systems Change*, 2018, FSG.



**ACT**

## ***Call-In-Cards* for Anti-Black Racism Action**

### **Call-In Vs Call-Out**

When we ‘call-in’ rather than ‘call-out’, we invite ourselves, colleagues, and peers into a conversation that draws attention to bias, prejudice, microaggressions, and other forms of discrimination as well as power and privilege to facilitate learning, growth, and change.

These conversations require gracious spaces that are supportive and nonjudgmental. More importantly, critical self-reflexivity is always an action-focused project, never still and only useful when followed by thoughtful, transformative action.

**[Check out the Guide to the Call-In-Cards to Learn More](#)**



A black, handwritten signature or mark, possibly reading 'JX'.



*“Gracious Space is safe and comfortable for your members; it promotes healthy discussion, debate, and friendships. Most important, Gracious Space invites all members to share freely and work together, despite differences in age, class, gender, race, or ethnicity. What you need to remember in establishing Gracious Space is that no one can impose any single definition of Gracious Space on your group; it should arise organically out of the needs and understandings of your members and their community.”*

- Innovation Center for Youth and Community Development,  
*Collective Leadership Works*, 2008, p. 68.





**ACT**


## ***Call-In-Cards* for Anti-Black Racism Action**

### **Call-In-Card Themes**

- Black Youth Voice
- Black Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Intersectional Identities
- Allyship

**Check out the Guide to the  
Call-In-Cards to Learn More**

### **Call-In-Card Prompts**



**BLACK YOUTH MENTAL  
HEALTH AND WELLBEING**


**QUESTION 1**  
What's happening here?

**QUESTION 2**  
What are the assumptions I'm making in  
describing what's happening?

**QUESTION 3**  
What are the harms for Black youth,  
families, and communities?

**CALL TO ACTION**  
How can this be made right?  
What can I/we do to support racial healing?

**The  
kit**



*Racial Healing: “a process that restores individuals and communities to wholeness, repairs the damage caused by racism and transforms societal structures into ones that affirm the inherent value of all people. This process provides an opportunity to acknowledge and speak the truth about past wrongs created by individual and systemic racism and addresses present-day consequences for people, communities, and institutions.”*

- W. K. Kellogg Foundation



## Call-In-Card

# BLACK YOUTH VOICE

“That is what the Black Youth Voice means to me. It contains hardship and joy. Restraint and expression. Sincerity and silliness. It contains multitudes and explodes any box someone might want to put us in. As my youth concludes I want to empower the ones who follow me to find their own voice and use it. We’ll be amazed at what they say.”

– Donovan Hayden

*How might we support the meaningful representation, engagement, inclusion, and belonging of Black youth? What are strategies and processes for authentically centering and amplifying their voices and experiences?*

[Watch Donovan on Black Youth Voice](#)





## Call-In-Card

# BLACK YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

The mental health of Black youth and their emotional wellbeing is impacted by experiences of anti-Black racism, including being stigmatized and marginalized, with a lack of accessible, affordable, and culturally responsive supports – as well as interventions that can promote their wellbeing.

*How might we develop practices, programs, and policies that merge mental health literacy with an intersectional and healing-centered approach specific to Black youth?*

Watch Namarig on Black Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing





## Call-In-Card

# INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES

The identities of Black youth are multilayered and nuanced. Anti-Black racism interlocks with other structures of oppression, and intersections of race and colour, gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, and religion, etc., to shape the experiences of Black youth. The narrative of Blackness or of Black as a monolithic category ignores the diversity among Black communities.

*How might we centre the whole stories of Black youth in our practices and programs?*

**Watch Shawnette on Intersectional Identities**



## Call-In-Card

# ALLYSHIP

An ally is someone who recognizes that the privilege they have in relation to others is a result of the unjust patterns of a society – and commits to changing these patterns.

*How might non-Black allies/accomplices/advocates centre the voices and experiences of Black youth, families, and communities?*

Watch Kearie and Likwa on Allyship



## CONNECT

### Community of Practice on the Virtual Café

*The Community of Practice* is a virtual space to connect, share, learn, and centre the wellbeing of Black youth and their families in our individual practices and organizational policies.



The Virtual Café provides registered members – youth leaders, youth workers (frontline and management), policy makers, and researchers-with an opportunity to participate in critical conversations in **Communities of Practice (CoPs)** on issues that can improve the wellbeing of youth.

Connect with peers and share reflections, strategies, and struggles with learning from the certificate and using the Call-In-Cards to support anti-Black racism work.

#### Connect on the Virtual Café





## Acknowledgments

YouthREX is grateful to all our community partners and funders who have provided resources and supports that made The Kit for Centering Black Youth Wellbeing possible:

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[info@youthrex.com](mailto:info@youthrex.com) | [youthrex.com](https://youthrex.com)

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