



THE **IMPACT** OF YOUTHREX QUOTES FROM **STAKEHOLDERS**



In the Fall of 2023, The Evidence Network (TEN) was retained to conduct an **external evaluation** of the impact of YouthREX on individuals and organizations that have used YouthREX's services.

Informed by a **theory-based approach** that seeks to understand the degree to which youth workers and youth-serving organizations have made use of – and been impacted by – YouthREX's

resources, programs, and services, the evaluation relied on an understanding of how a given intervention is expected to work by identifying the various steps – from the intervention activities to the desired outcomes and impacts.

YouthREX's Theory of Change below describes the short, medium, and long-term outcomes of the support, resources, and platforms provided by YouthREX.

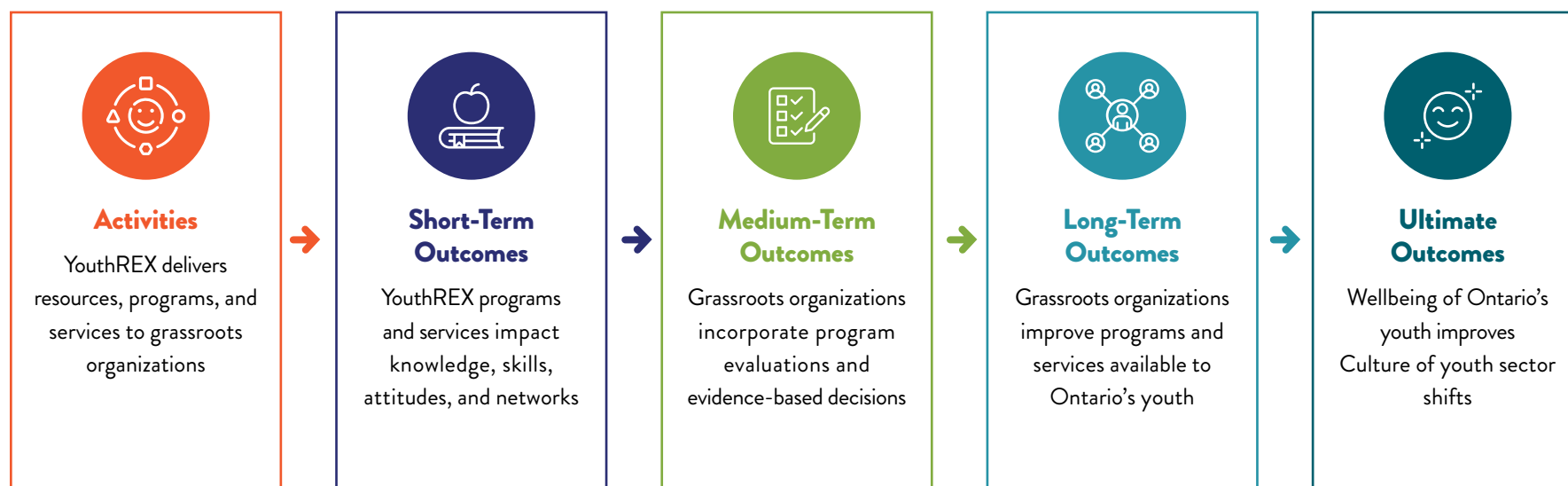


Figure 1. YouthREX Theory of Change

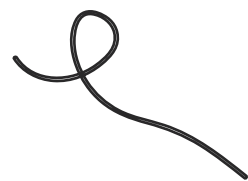
TEN distributed an online survey in December 2023 to the YouthREX community that was completed by **1,253** individuals. The open-ended responses in the survey highlighted the impact of YouthREX around four key themes as follows:

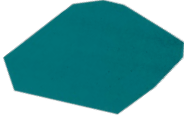
01. YouthREX Affirms + Amplifies the Experiences and Voices of Ontario's Youth Workers

02. YouthREX Supports Knowledge Sharing + Evidence-Informed Youth Work

03. YouthREX Supports Capacity-Building + Community-Building

04. YouthREX Supports Program Design + Development + Evaluation





01. YouthREX Affirms + Amplifies the Experiences and Voices of Ontario's Youth Workers

"I think providing an accessible space for people to learn is power. When people learn the truth, it is hard to ignore, especially if one is directly impacted. **I have never experienced an opportunity that has valued youth workers and youth to this degree** and even provided evidence-based workshops and lectures to support the importance."

1.1

"YouthREX encourages Ontario's youth sector to experiment with new approaches and strategies to drive innovation and change. They work with the youth sector to jointly design and implement innovative projects that **meet the needs and expectations of young people."**

1.2

"YouthREX is a support system to those providing services to youth. However, lack of government funding to programs is a huge constraint to everyone. Organizations are doing the utmost best with what little they have. **YouthREX helps organizations be the absolute best that they can be."**

1.3

“The **impact** on the service community is huge.”

1.4

“Our collaboration with YouthREX has been a **transformative experience for our organization**. It has opened up **new possibilities** and **expanded our capacity to serve youth** in need.”

1.5

“Big fan of YouthREX and all the resources your organization offers to the sector to continue to support us youth. I appreciate how **organized, accessible and informative** all your workshops/webinars, website, and Knowledge Hub are. **I don't think I have ever left less than inspired and empowered in my work after one of your workshops**. Thank you so much!”

1.6

“The YouthREX support team is very **knowledgeable and experienced**. They always provide me with accurate and useful information.”

1.7

“Working with YouthREX has been a **great experience overall**. It's been professionally challenging and **personally rewarding** at the same time.”

1.8





“...the YouthREX resources are **consistently excellent**. They are one of the resources that I suggest new staff at my organization monitor and make use of, and **I don't know of another resource that offers the breadth of content with this lens**. YouthREX is an incredibly **valuable resource in the youth services space**.”

1.9

“YouthREX offers **great services, and opportunities to deepen learning for young leaders** that are looking to address current issues. Their services are **accessible**, making it easier for us to share it along with those that are curious, without any funding and those that are looking to grow their skill set.”

1.10

“The YouthREX resources are **extremely useful** for my work with children and youth. I would recommend YouthREX to other professionals in my field. The support, resources, and platform are **all top-notch**.”

1.11



“The emergence of YouthREX has **provided us with great help** and **given us new solutions** in our work...”

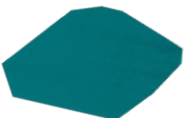
1.12

“By **being a leader in a role that no one is filling** in Ontario or anywhere outside of Ontario (rest of Canada).”

1.13

“My engagement was a few years ago with support in research for our organization. I did not end up on a mailing list and I wish I would have so I could follow more with the supports available. I have since reengaged with YouthREX and **LOVE the work that they do.**”

1.14





02. YouthREX Supports Knowledge Sharing + Evidence-Informed Youth Work

“YouthREX is an **invaluable resource**. ... These resources help me **stay ahead of the curve** in terms of what is happening with youth and the field of youth services. I have **learned new approaches to make my work better**. ... I don't always have the time to search for academic sources and **the summaries are a godsend** when I am time bound. **YouthREX is my go-to for trustworthy, valuable information** when I need it.”

2.1

“It **keeps me up to date** on youth trends and topics that impact youth. It's also helped be **a resource for my own wellbeing** and mental health.”

2.2

“...your resources are **so high quality and comprehensive**, while still remaining **very accessible** for non-research backgrounds.”

2.3

“YouthREX shared data and resources that are relevant to the needs, issues and experiences of young people. They provide information that's **digestible** and **accessible**. ... The staff team are readily available to extend supports and provide resources adequately.”

2.4

“I admire YouthREX’s approach to knowledge-sharing and mobilization very much. ... You legitimize participatory approaches outside of the university, which is very helpful, as I find people in power and working in youth-serving sectors aren’t familiar with it...”

2.5

“YouthREX offers evidence, and stories that **reinforce what is being experienced by young leaders, and youth workers.”**

2.6

“Given that we are a funder, the impact that YouthREX has on our program is **the data they share, and **the best practices they develop** on youth models that we can share with grassroots leaders to deepen their learnings.”**

2.7

“YouthREX staff are **highly professional and responsive to any questions that I may have had. Knowledge from supports have really helped me in my work to help the Black community. As mentioned, **there is nothing like this out there** that is focused on the needs of Black Canadians specifically. As a **clearing house of information**, YouthREX helps meet the needs. And not just for Black Canadians. Information on Indigenous Youth, and other youth of Colour are well-considered in YouthREX offerings. To get rid of this program is to say that we are not important in this society. BIPOC Youth already feel and know that no one cares about them. Broader society lets them down daily. Taking away tools from those that help support them further emphasizes the notion that they are not wanted. Getting rid of this program would just be another way of letting down BIPOC communities.”**

2.8





03. YouthREX Supports Capacity-Building + Community-Building

“YouthREX has been a great resource for my own work and resources to share with colleagues. I started working as a youth worker a little over a year ago and I've appreciated attending workshops/webinars that are specifically targeted for youth workers. Also, as someone who works in youth-focused roles sometimes at big institutions that largely uphold white supremacist capitalist colonialism, it has been **a comfort** to know that there are organizations and networks of people in this field who are trying to challenge this status quo. **YouthREX has made me feel less alone in trying to live into my values as a youth worker.**”



3.1

“By communicating and learning from them, we not only **gain new knowledge and skills**, but also **learn how to communicate and work better with young people**. This growth and development has not only enhanced the capabilities of our organization, but also **laid a solid foundation for our future growth.**”

3.2

“...their engagements and delivery helps to **strengthen the toolbox of the sector**, and also **understand emerging needs**. Many young people who have taken up their workshops and trainings **applaud** what they have learned, and the strength of the curriculum and dialogue.”

3.3



“I recommend your evaluation certificate **to almost every new evaluator I meet!**”

3.4

“Significant **positive impact** from knowledge and resources available to train staff working with youth.”

3.5

“Your courses are **free**, which can be life-changing to someone who is maybe precariously employed in the youth sector and is looking for ways to expand their skills and opportunities.
...I also **deeply appreciate your focus on caring for workers** and understanding what it means to work with and love young people in a variety of challenging circumstances. **You’ve helped me see that I don’t need to quit.**”

3.6

“It makes me **more interested in my work.** It makes me **more confident and efficient** in my work.”

3.7

“From Northern community with no resources so **YouthREX has been a contact.**”

3.8



“...we encourage young leaders to participate in the trainings they offer and webinars, as it can **support their work and strengthen their ability to engage with community.**”

3.9


“I have completed two certificates through YouthREX and, although not recently, I did find this to be **an excellent way of learning.** The pace was **manageable** for someone working a full-time job, but kept the **information alive and usable.**”

3.10

“**Grateful** for the depth of knowledge gained from Workshops, Webinars and Certificate Program offerings organized by YouthREX. **Appreciate the diversity in ways the information and knowledge is disseminated,** i.e. webinars, text, emails, blog posts, videos, etc.”

3.11





“Engaging with YouthREX and building capacity through the various tools on the platform has **helped me streamline my service model** when working with young people and other service providers.”

3.12

“YouthREX does **great work**. They have done a great job of **engaging the community** and have shared a lot of knowledge.”

3.13

“The information specifically that deals with the Black community is beyond valuable. Especially that which focuses on the Canadian Black community. **There is no one else that provides this level of sophisticated yet incredibly useful work.**”

3.14





04. YouthREX Supports Program Design + Development + Evaluation

“By working with YouthREX, we have **successfully improved** the way our programs are designed and implemented to **better meet the needs of young people**. At the same time, we also **learned a lot** about project management, research and evaluation knowledge, which will be **very helpful for our future work**.”

4.1

“I appreciate how YouthREX resources and training makes program evaluation very **accessible** to workers who don't have research background to measure their programs' impact.”

4.2

“The supports we received from YouthREX in developing our logic model was invaluable. We had a draft, which was reviewed with feedback and our team was trained on how to develop it and use it. It was **immensely useful** for the progression of our organization's work.”

4.3



“The resources have proven to be **invaluable** when we are considering program planning, evaluation, and development.”

4.4

“Providing **excellent customized evaluation supports** that reflects the seven standards that make up **service pledge**.”

Check out the [YouthREX's Service Pledge](#).

4.5

“I'm a researcher by trade. At my previous community-based organization, I did all of our PE [program evaluation], data collection, etc., all of which was **informed by** the Program Evaluation for Youth Wellbeing Certificate and the follow-up certificate on spreadsheets. One of my colleagues used the Evidence Brief services for his portfolio, and he was **thrilled** with the result. Now I work at a school board and am introducing program evaluation concepts to my superiors (my colleagues get it already). The certificate was **invaluable**. I have a Masters with a qualitative research focus, but definitely hadn't had any formal education in designing and using program evaluation, which is non-profits' bread and butter. **I am so grateful for the knowledge you share.**”

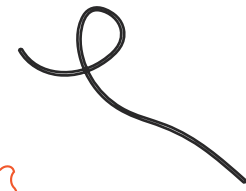
4.6

“We found the resources on collecting data on gender and identity **very helpful** and the **youth perspective** particularly so.”

4.7

“Terrific organization that offers **effective evaluation** of programs and also gives **timely feedback** when contacted with questions.”

4.8



“This service was **extremely helpful** for the work we were doing and was utilized on more than one occasion. **We could not have done the work we did over the 6 years without this support.**”

4.9

“Guidance in developing evals and analyzing data has been **very helpful to our small team** that doesn’t have the capacity to do this work well currently.”

4.10

“The data analysis was very **comprehensive**, and we are very **grateful** for it.”

4.11

“Helping to understand how the project objective might shift and effective ways of using your set evaluation metrics to **refocus on your objectives.**”

4.12

“Learning and understanding how to collect information that helps evaluate our programs has been a **good way to see what is working or not working and make adjustments accordingly.** COVID has impacted not only the way we relate to the world, but how we relate to each other. Does hybrid work? What are the impacts of going fully online or offering in-person? Am I meeting the needs of all my program participants? What about those with disabilities or speak a different language? These are the things we have asked and have received answers to through evaluation. Programs were then adjusted to meet the needs.”

4.13





“INCREASED
PRODUCTIVITY
IN OUR
ORGANIZATION”

Thank you to the 1,253 individuals who took the time to complete the survey and those who provided these rich qualitative responses!

Your feedback means so much to us ♥

OUR VISION is an Ontario where shared knowledge is transformed into positive impact for all youth!

OUR MISSION is to make research evidence and evaluation practices accessible and relevant to Ontario's grassroots youth sector through knowledge exchange, capacity building and evaluation leadership!

YouthREX is primarily funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services with contributions from the York Research Chair in Youth and Contexts of Inequity held by Dr. Uzo Anucha at the School of Social Work, York University.

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