

FEATURE STORY

Capacity Building for Peel Youth Workers



In April 2014, the Region of Peel and York University's Center for Education and Community (YCEC) launched a free Peel Youth Worker Training program for 24 youth workers representing 16 youth-serving agencies. The curriculum was informed by senior management and frontline staff through a consultation process to ensure that it was tailored to the specific needs, assets and trends that exist within Peel.

The 12 session program challenged participants to use a liberational approach to youth work "to do *with*, not for or about youth" as articulated in **Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"** a core reading that was weaved throughout the training.

The curriculum focused on:

- Understanding how structures impact youth work
- Critically examining the role of youth workers and youth-adult partnerships
- Research and evaluation methods

- Program development strategies
- Anti-oppressive and anti-racist frameworks and practices
- Social well-being and mental health
- Youth development principles

Throughout the training, participants re-evaluated their role and unpacked their understanding of youth and the value of youth work. They began to see themselves as advocates within their organizations and the social service sector.

"I looked forward every week to being part of the perfect energetic training environment filled with inspiring guest speakers and innovative topics for group discussion. I really hope you can schedule many more such trainings in future for the benefit of our youth worker community..."

-Radhika Sriram, Program Manager, Youth Outreach - CONFRNS

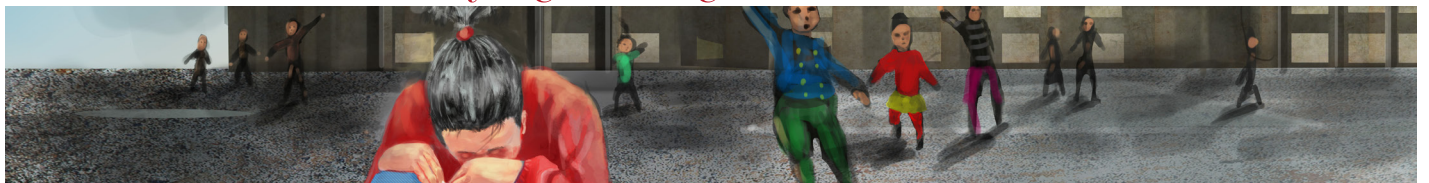
Congratulations to all the graduates of the Peel Youth Worker Training and to the facilitator Jabari Lindsay who brought the training to life through his vast experience in the field of youth work.

Evaluation of the training is ongoing and will involve a 6-month follow-up. Preliminary results will be available in October 2014 on peelthinkshare.ca.

For more information on current research and information on youth development check out **Stepping Stones, A Resource on Youth Development**.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

Current Trends in Bullying Among Peel Youth



Words Hurt by James Babarin

Bullying, a form of youth violence, is defined as unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated.¹ The harm or distress inflicted can be physical, social or psychological. Bullying can result in physical injury, long-term damage to self-esteem and increased risk for mental health problems such as depression and anxiety.^{2,3}

It affects all youth in the form of being a victim, perpetrator or a bystander.¹

Did you know that among Peel students between grades 7 to 12 in 2013⁴:

- 21% of students were bullied at school, with the most frequency occurring among students in grades 7 and 8 ▶

Peel Regional Police: Stand Up to Bullying

Peel Regional Police (PRP) has a long-standing role in our community to raise awareness and educate residents about bullying and how to safely avoid and intervene in bullying situations. They recognize that while the message of anti-bullying needs to be directed at youth, all community members have a role to play in prevention and intervention.



Some initiatives include:

Cyber Academy

A course for parents, caregivers, educators and other professionals focusing on the information, strategies and tools to help keep youth safe on the Internet.

What if Everyone Did Something?

A campaign launched two years ago with an Ontario Proceeds of

Crime grant in eight schools across the region. Its goal was to give students tools to deal with cyberbullying and increase their willingness to get involved as bystanders. Youth also participated in a video and poster competition depicting anti-cyberbullying messages. **Winning entries** were broadcasted in Peel Cineplex theatres and transit shelters in the summer and fall of 2013.

PRP is also developing a new initiative, based on **“Rachel’s Challenge”**, aimed at building a positive school climate to support both students and adults in schools.

For more information about how PRP is supporting elementary and middle schools with anti-bullying and safe school climates for the 2014/15 school year, contact: Constable Vanessa McHugh at 905-453-212, ext. 3641, vanessa.mchugh@peelregion.ca or Sergeant Natalie Hiltz 905-453-2121, ext. 3626, natalie.hiltz@peelpolice.ca.

To learn more about PRP visit peelpolice.ca or Twitter [@PeelCrimePrev](https://twitter.com/PeelCrimePrev).

Thank you to Constables Yvette Logan, Vanessa McHugh and Sergeant Natalie Hiltz for sharing this information in our newsletter.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

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- 5% of students reported being bullied on a daily or weekly basis
- 15% of students reported bullying others at school
- 15% of students experienced cyber bullying through the Internet

(Data source: 2013 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, Peel Enhanced Sample⁴)

The bullying trends for Peel are similar to what is observed in other regions in Ontario and in the province overall.

Check out the following resources to learn more about preventing bullying:

1. **Center for Disease Control and Prevention**

2. **Region of Peel, Health Services**

3. **PREV Net: Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network**

References

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2013). Understanding bullying. Retrieved from cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/bullyingfactsheet2014-a.pdf
2. Smokowski P. R., & Kopasz K. H. (2005). Bullying in school: An overview of types, effects, family characteristics, and intervention strategies. *Children and Schools*, 27, 101-109.
3. Reece, T. (2008). Bullies beat down self esteem. Retrieved August 7, 2012, from healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Bullies-Beat-Down-Self-Esteem.aspx
4. Peel Technical Report 2013: Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS). Peel Public Health, 2014. [Pending Release].

UPCOMING EVENTS

Conducting Situational Assessments Workshop

Date: Sept. 19 and 26, 2014

For more information or to register, please contact: 905-791-7800, ext. 2174 peelthinkshare@peelregion.ca

Do Your Part! Orillia 2014 - A Gathering to Celebrate Positive Youth Development in Canada

Date: Oct. 3, 2014

Location: YMCA Geneva Park, Orillia, Ontario

Learning sessions will focus on positive youth development from a Canadian perspective and are geared to youth, youth-serving professionals, asset builders, educators, families, parents, health and recreation, police services, research and evaluation and Early Years professionals.

Bullying Prevention Awareness Week “Stand Up!”

Date: Nov. 16 – 22, 2014

Check out bullyingawarenessweek.org for latest news and bullying prevention ideas to implement in your community.



THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Community Health Initiatives, Region of Peel
Pat Rosati, Administrative Assistant
Karen LeMoine, Research and Policy Analyst
Sophia Graham, Community Development Specialist
Judy Labelle, Manager
Mei Ling, Communication Specialist

Contact us at peelthinkshare@peelregion.ca