

Stepping Up in 2013-14: Executive Summary

The *Stepping Up* framework promoted youth wellbeing, supported collaboration across government and within communities and informed the design and delivery of new and existing initiatives for youth in 2013-14.

2014 Profile of Youth Wellbeing

Data was updated for 30 indicators and 14 outcomes.

- ⬆️ 23 indicators showed small changes in the desired direction
- ⬇️ Seven indicators showed small changes against the desired direction
- 🔄 Five indicators were replaced
- ★ Two new indicators were added

What the Numbers Say

- Ontario invested in 58 new, expanded or enhanced initiatives for youth since the release of *Stepping Up*.
- The Premier's Council on Youth Opportunities met 12 times to share the perspective of vulnerable youth and provide insight into government's programs and policies for youth.
- 19 provincial ministries collaborated to support youth and capture progress in the *Stepping Up* annual report.
- *Stepping Up* was downloaded more than 15,000 times and more than 1,000 copies were shared with community organizations, parents, teachers and youth workers to better align efforts to support youth.

Supporting Youth Wellbeing

Informed by *Stepping Up*, Ontario invested in all seven themes of youth wellbeing this year. Key initiatives include:

➔ Health and Wellness

- Launched eight new initiatives as part of [Ontario's Healthy Kids Strategy](#)
- Ongoing implementation of the [Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy](#)
- Developed a new [Youth Suicide Prevention Plan](#)

➔ Strong, Supportive Friends and Families

- Released [Realizing Our Potential: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) (2014-19): increases to [Ontario Child Benefit](#) and [minimum wage](#), expansion of the [Student Nutrition Program](#)
- Introduced [new benefits and supports for youth transitioning](#) from care, including youth-in-transition workers, aftercare benefits, and postsecondary education supports

➔ Education, Training and Apprenticeships

- Released [Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario](#)
- Implemented the [Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework](#)
- Launched new and expanded specialized programs for vulnerable youth in secondary and postsecondary education, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit students

➔ Employment and Entrepreneurship

- Created 20,000 jobs through Ontario's [Youth Jobs Strategy](#)
- Expanded the [Jobs for Youth](#) After-School Employment Program
- Launched the Private Sector Jobs and Mentoring Initiative

➔ Diversity, Social Inclusion and Safety

- Launched the [Youth Opportunities Fund](#); 23 projects funded in 2013-14
- Delivered on all 20 commitments in [Ontario's Youth Action Plan](#)
- Improved developmental services and enhanced supports for youth with special needs
- Promoted community safety and wellbeing through [Safer and Vital Communities Grants](#)

➔ Civic Engagement and Youth Leadership

- Supported 26 fellows to participate in [Studio Y: Ontario's Social Impact and Youth Leadership Academy's](#) first cohort
- Created [volunteer opportunities for youth with the 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games](#)
- Supported 40,000 youth to volunteer 210,000 hours at over 700 community events during Change the World: [2014 Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge](#)

➔ Coordinated and Youth-Friendly Communities

- Launched the [Special Needs Strategy](#)
- Expanded and enhanced the Youth Outreach Worker Program
- Improved transition planning supports for youth with special needs

Ontario's Profile of Youth Wellbeing 2014

Ontario youth are physically healthy.

- 77.9% of youth are a healthy weight.
- 70.5% of youth are physically active.
- 42.9% of youth consume at least five servings of fruit or vegetables daily.
- 90.1% of youth are attached to a primary care provider.

Ontario youth feel mentally well.

- 6% of youth are experiencing anxiety and/or depression.
- 26% of youth are experiencing elevated psychological distress.
- 13.4% of youth had serious thoughts about suicide in the past year.

Ontario youth make choices that support healthy and safe development.

- 8.5% of youth smoke cigarettes.
- 19.8% of youth have recently consumed excessive alcohol.
- 30.7% of youth have used any illicit drug.
- 3.9% of youth have had a sexually transmitted infection.

Ontario youth have families and guardians equipped to help them thrive.

- 5.1% of families live in deep poverty and are struggling to afford housing.
- 10% of Ontario families experience food insecurity.
- 13.6% of children and youth live in low-income households.

Ontario youth have at least one consistent, caring adult in their lives.

- 92.3% of youth have at least one parent who usually knows where they are.
- 4.4% of youth do not get along with their mothers.
- 6.5% of youth do not get along with their fathers.

Ontario youth form and maintain healthy, close relationships.

- 19.7% of youth feel lonely.
- 95.5% of youth have someone they are comfortable talking to about problems.
- 98.7% of youth have family and friends who help them feel safe, secure and happy.

Ontario youth achieve academic success.

- 71% of English-speaking and 75% of French-speaking students enrolled in academic math meet the provincial standard.
- 36% of English-speaking and 41% of French-speaking students enrolled in applied math meet the provincial standard.
- 77% of English-speaking and 88% of French-speaking students completed 16 high school credits by the end of Grade 10.
- 83% of high school students graduate.
- Ontario ranks 9th of 65 jurisdictions in overall mathematics achievement (PISA).

Ontario youth have educational experiences that respond to their needs and prepare them to lead.

- 9.8% of youth are enrolled in the Specialist High Skills Major program.
- 309,384 students have Individual Education Plans.
- 71.8% of high school course credits are available through e-learning.

Ontario youth access diverse training and apprenticeship opportunities.

- 65% of adults have completed postsecondary education.
- 24,209 youth were served through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program.



Ontario youth have access to safe spaces that provide quality opportunities for play and recreation.

- 62% of parents feel recreation opportunities in their community meet their child's needs.
- 67.2% of youth feel there are good places in their community to spend their free time.

Ontario youth know about and easily navigate resources in their communities.

- 78% of students use social media to find information about news, health issues, or relationships.
- 14% of callers to 211 looking for community referrals are young people.

Ontario youth play a role in informing the decisions that affect them.

- 38.2% of youth voted in the last federal election.
- 10% of youth are unpaid members on a board or committee.

Ontario youth are engaged in their communities.

- 13.1% of youth canvassed, campaigned and fundraised as volunteers.
- 7% of youth volunteered with schools, religious organizations or community associations.

Ontario youth leverage their assets to address social issues.

- 17.8% of youth started volunteering to help a cause they personally believed in.

Ontario youth experience social inclusion and value diversity.

- 77% of youth feel a sense of belonging in their community.
- 87.8% of students have positive attitudes toward diversity at school.

Ontario youth feel safe at home, at school, online and in their communities.

- 76.9% of youth have a happy home life.
- 95.7% of youth feel safe at school.
- 19% of youth have been bullied online.
- 97% of Ontarians felt "very safe" or "safe" in their communities.

Ontario youth respect, and are respected by, the law and justice system.

- 7% of youth participate in antisocial behaviour.
- Ontario's total youth crime rate is 3,366 per 100,000 youth.
- 53.6% of youth believe officers in their local police force do a good job at treating people fairly.

Ontario youth have opportunities for meaningful employment experiences.

- 12.1% of students are enrolled in co-op placements.
- 60.8% of youth are in the labour force.
- 9.4% of youth are not in education, employment or training.
- 75.6% of youth are satisfied with their job.

Ontario youth have the skills and resources needed to develop a successful career or business.

- 1.9% of youth are self-employed.

Ontario youth are safe and supported at work.

- The annual WSIB Lost Time Injury rate for youth employees is 1%.

LEGEND

- Decrease since 2013 report
- Increase since 2013 report
- No change in data since 2013 report
- No new data since 2013 report
- Replaced indicator from 2013 report
- New indicator since 2013 report
- A blue circle means the indicator has changed in the desired direction
- A red circle means the indicator has changed in the opposite direction