



Reporting on **Youth Employment** Strategies





Youth Employment Strategy Task Force

Reporting on Youth Employment Strategies

“In 2014, the Ontario unemployment rate for youth 15 to 24 was **15.8%**. We have a lot of young people looking for jobs and these meetings are the first step in developing a framework for our youth employment strategy.”

— *Mayor Bryan Paterson announcing the Youth Employment Strategy project*

Youth (defined here as persons between 15 and 24 years of age) are an important part of the labour force (about 20%) with roughly half of them in full-time jobs.

The youth unemployment rate (the proportion of the youth labour force that does not have a job but is actively seeking work) runs at 3 to 4 times the rate for older job seekers.

The action initiatives in this plan aim to do something about that!

Note that those who do not have a job and are not actively seeking work are considered “inactive” and are therefore excluded in unemployment statistics. Their inclusion would substantially increase the unemployment rate.



As we approach 2020, the number of youth entering the labour force will not be sufficient to replace those planning to leave through retirement.

— *Service Canada Client Segment Profiles.*

Background on the Strategy Development Process

Our vision is to empower youth with the skills and opportunities they need to build careers that create a better future for themselves and their communities.

In May 2015, Kingston City Council approved strategic priorities for its four-year term, including development of a youth employment strategy that would support a smart economy.

At the same time, the United Way of Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington was playing a lead role in the development of a Youth Homelessness Plan — and youth employment and skills development were identified as one of the areas of focus.

The City and United Way were supporting a working group of the Poverty Reduction Initiative, focused on employment and skills development. The working group agreed to work on a youth employment strategy in 2015-16.

Subsequently, in June 2015, a project to develop a community-supported Youth Employment Strategy was formally launched as a partnership led by the City of Kingston and the United Way of KFL&A, and engaged dozens of community stakeholders, including school boards, Pathways to Education, Employment Ontario agencies, KEDCO, Chamber of Commerce, Y2K and the Children and Youth Services Planning Committee. A comprehensive list is included in this report.

Process Overview:

- Three areas of enquiry provided focus for the work: What is already in place? What are the barriers to youth employment? Strategies: What do we need to do differently? And what will success look like?
- The approach was designed to complement the work being done through other youth initiatives and get to some of the root causes of youth poverty in the hope of ultimately reducing youth homelessness and increasing youth participation in various programs.
- The Youth Employment Strategy Task Force analyzed the barriers and challenges that youth face in preparing, entering and staying within the Kingston workforce. In this report, it proposes solutions together with next steps for implementation, timelines, lead coordinators and working partnerships.

Youth Employment By The Numbers:

What Does the Employment Picture Look Like for Youth in Kingston?

In the 2011 National Household Survey for the Kingston Census Metropolitan Area, about **1 in 5** youth age 15-24 were unemployed. This was four times the rate for older job seekers (25-64).

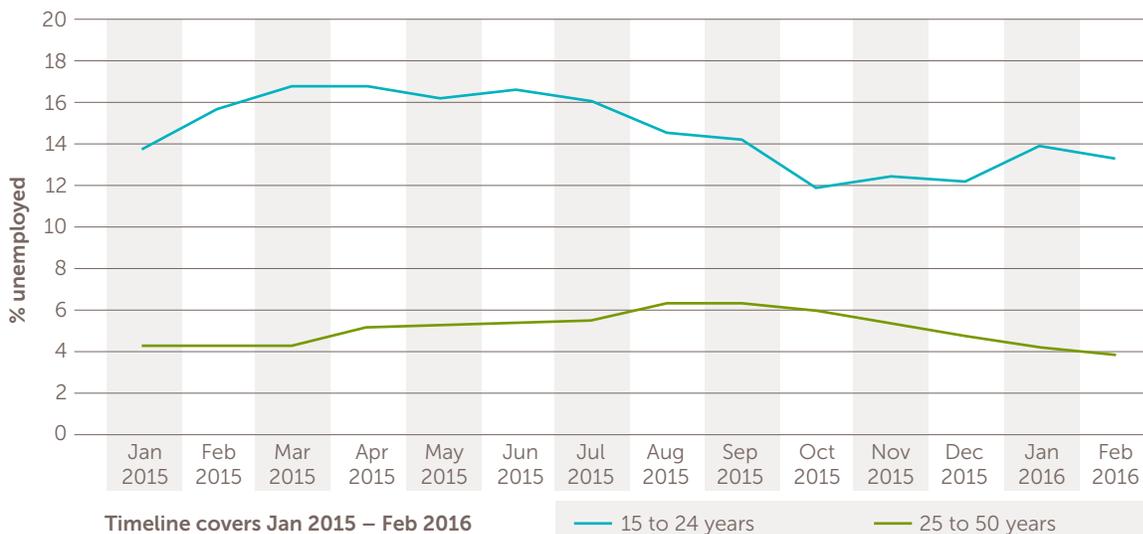
At that time:

775
unemployed were
15-19 years (19.9% rate)

1,815
unemployed were 20-24 years
(21.9% rate)

The situation is not much improved today:

Youth Unemployment runs 3 to 4 times as high as rate for older job seekers



The **top** line shows rates of unemployment for youth seeking work.

The **bottom** line shows rates for older job seekers — who have a much lower rate of unemployment.

Of the **12,200** employed youth identified in the Dec 2015 CanSim statistics ...

5,600
worked full-time (more than
30 hours/week as their main or only job)

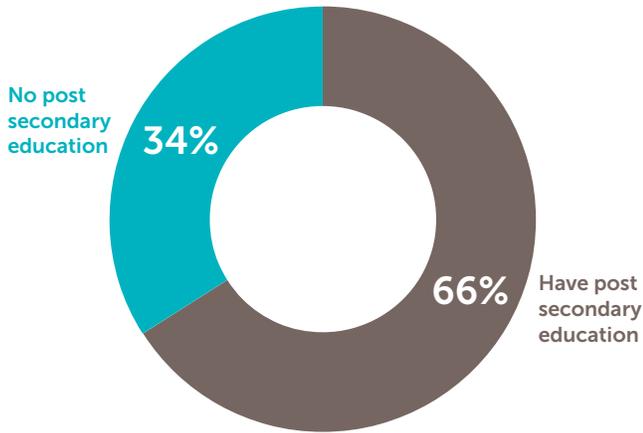
6,600
worked part-time
(less than 30 hours/week)

- It is noted that virtually all youth are obliged to attend school until age 18 or graduation. The numbers above include working students as well as older youth.

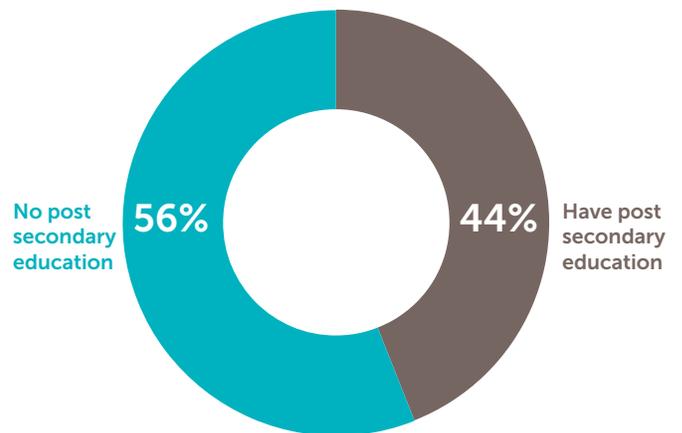
Youth Employment By The Numbers:

Will Education Make a Difference for Youth

Share of **Employed** (all ages) with/without Post Secondary Education



Share of **Unemployed** (all ages) with/without Post Secondary Education



Employment?

From the 2011 National Household Survey for Kingston Census Metropolitan Area

Education & the Unemployed

All Ages:

Five years ago **3,855** out of all **6,825** job seekers (56%) had no post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree.

1,440 of them were 20-24 years of age

- *Noted: Some of these students would still be completing their post-secondary education.*

When thinking about how best to help youth find employment, consider that:

- More than **half** of all youth (whether seeking work or not) are employed.
- About **1 in 5** youth work **full-time** (over a full year). About 2 in 3 of all youth reported they had at least some “employment income” (for example, including income from part time or seasonal jobs).
- A **third** of all youth are **not** in the labour force. (They may not be seeking work because they are still students not wishing / needing to work, are disabled and not able to work, or they have given up as “frustrated” job seekers.)
- Approximately **80%** of those youth who have some after-tax personal income earned less than \$20,000, while the average income is \$12,445.
- About **1 in 4** youth live with incomes under the Low Income Cut-Off After Tax (LICO-AT) level, which is the highest percentage of any age group.

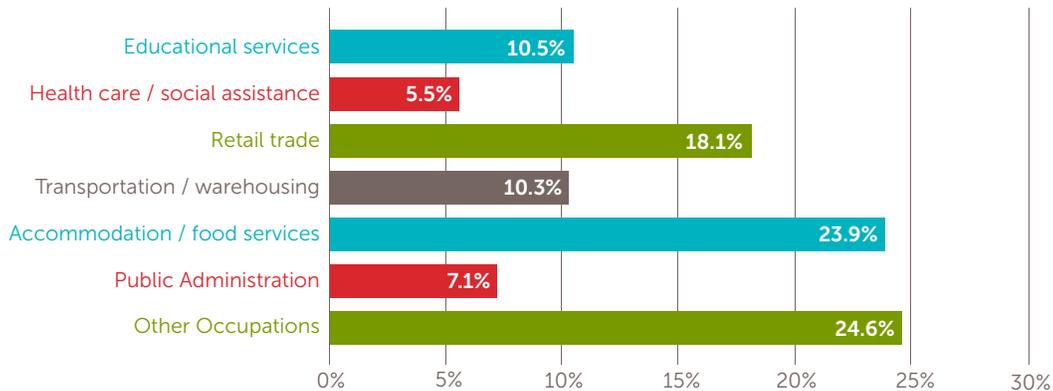
Data from the City of Kingston is based on Statistics Canada National Household Survey data via the KFL&A Community Data Consortium.

Where Do They Work?

Almost 24% of employed youth work in accommodation and food services, 18% in retail, and 10% in transportation and warehousing.

While public administration occupations represent 13% of all employment in Kingston, only 7% of youth work in that sector.

% of Youth Who Work In...



"Other Occupations" includes a variety of different occupations!

Youth work in a wide variety of occupations including construction, educational services, arts/culture, recreation, health care and social assistance, waste management, finance, insurance, real estate and professional, scientific and technical services.

How Do Needs and Barriers Vary For Youth Populations?

The work of the Youth Employment Strategy Task Force identified a range of needs to be served and barriers to be overcome if we are to help youth find work and build meaningful careers. They fall into two main groups:

- **Prepared & Ready with Education and Skills:** These youth have developed entry-level technical or academic skills, some work/volunteer experience, and basic life skills: their challenges are mainly in finding suitable opportunities for work.
- **Preparing to Be Workplace Ready:** These youth may lack role models, knowledge of workplaces/career opportunities, or have basic needs (financial, housing, health, education, transportation etc) that undermine their employability. Supports are needed to help them become employable and ready to enter the labour force.

Where and How Can We Make a Difference?

Dozens of partners have contributed to the Youth Employment Strategy. This broad dialogue has identified four areas of effort that are not only important but also pivotal to making a difference for youth seeking work in our community:

- **Provide Mentoring:** Youth can benefit from experiences, connections and advice on how best to pursue employment opportunities. The practical preparation needed by youth is broad, ranging from understanding work culture and expectations, to how to connect with others to discover and pursue opportunities, and how to skillfully manage their careers (personal finances, dress, job interviews etc).
- **Make Employers Part of the Solution:** Even when youth are skilled, ready and able, they need job opportunities. Job structure, entry requirements, hiring practices and awareness of incentives for business are all factors of interest.
- **Support An Early Start:** Helping youth to plan and prepare early for working life can have significant payoffs — for example, learning about potential jobs and careers that might be a good fit for their interests and skills; identifying sectors with good employment possibilities; and seeking insights from informed counsellors.
- **Help Develop Pre-employment Skills:** Most youth have many things to learn before they start their first job — and there are many ways to learn them: online, in “boot camps” and through youth employment programs and agency services.

A Strategic Framework to Support Local Youth Employment

Note: These actions, and others like them to support the employment of youth, are not intended to compete with the Kingston Youth Strategy or duplicate efforts under that or other initiatives – rather, these actions have been designed to connect with, complement and “feed into” the Youth Strategy and other youth initiatives.

Strategies for All Youth (Preparing & Currently Workplace Ready)

1.0 Helping Youth Start Planning Early:

Action 1.1 Analyse and share data on trends, changes, gaps and emerging opportunities in the labour market (e.g. trades sector) and develop a resource to **inform youth on the best forecasts of jobs that will need to be filled** in future.

Lead(s): 1000 Islands Region Workforce Development Board to lead, working with City of Kingston, KEDCO and school boards.

First Step: Pull together existing reports, studies and forecasts; distill the findings and present them in a “communications-friendly” manner.

Timeline: Underway now, and on-going with regular milestone updates.

Action 1.2 Help youth acquire and highlight their transferable skills (i.e. skills, work and practical experience that may be valuable in the workplace gained through volunteering & involvement in the community).

Lead(s): United Way to coordinate an annual facilitated Youth Summit working with school boards, employment agencies, youth organizations, educators and school guidance counsellors.

First Step: Youth Council, supported by United Way, to work on identifying skills and workshops that will help youth with future employment & future workforce development.

Timeline: First Youth Summit was completed in May 2016. Planning now begins on the next.

Action 1.3 Create an annual forum to provide guidance counsellors and others who advise youth (including coaches, families etc) with up-to-date, relevant assessments of workforce opportunities, gaps and barriers to employment.

Lead(s): United Way to facilitate, working with school boards, employment agencies, and youth.

First Step: First forum was completed in April 2016. Planning now begins on the next.

Timeline: Focus / Milestone in Q2 – 2017.

2.0 Developing Pre-employment Skills:

Action 2.1 Work together to coordinate a collaborative and sustainable series of pre-employment initiatives (“boot camps”, pre-career and summer programs, for example) that reach out to youth, at different levels, to help them develop life / workplace skills expected and required by employers before hiring.

Lead(s): Employment agencies to lead, working with KEDCO, the Chamber, school boards and local employers.

First Step: Identify ways to scale up existing programs with proven success.

Map opportunities to development pre-employment skills and look at best timing for early interventions.

Review how they fit within the existing framework of programs & services. This might include reference to an “employability skills framework”.

Timeline: Underway now, and on-going with special focus in Q3 – 2016

Action 2.2 Establish more student-targeted opportunities for both paid and non-paid apprenticeships*, co-op placements and internships.

* Note: “Apprenticeships” is used here in a general sense, not necessarily as the term may be defined in ways specific to various grants of funding programs.

Lead(s): City of Kingston to lead, working with other public sector organizations, school boards, post-secondary education institutions, and community agencies. (United Way is to assist with agencies.)

First Step: Explore options for these programs, which would target youth enrolled in school.

Timeline: Special focus in Q 3 & 4 – 2016, continuing beyond.

Strategies for Youth Prepared & Ready with Education and Skills

Youth who are “prepared and ready” have the education and skills needed to thrive in a work environment, and the focus for this set of strategies is to find opportunities that help them demonstrate their skills and talent.

Goals: The actions identified below will support employment-seeking youth on many fronts, with the aim of reducing youth unemployment / underemployment and increasing the retention of youth in the workforce. It will also help youth overcome discouragement when entering the labour force and/or reduce migration out of the region.

3.0 Mentoring Initiatives:

Action 3.0 Develop plan to facilitate youth-friendly networking and mentoring opportunities for young professionals; forums/channels for peer mentoring; and entrée to organizations such as those in the non-profit, social, private and local start-up / innovation / entrepreneurship sectors.

Lead(s): *Coordinators* will be the City of Kingston and United Way.

Partners will include Queen’s AMS & the St. Lawrence College Student Association, working with the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Kingston, Innovate Kingston, Queen’s, KEDCO, United Way Next Gen, CYSPC, various not-for-profits, Innovation Park, St. Lawrence College 10,000 Coffees, and Employment Ontario.

First Steps: Create a formalized strategy to showcase networking and mentoring opportunities and link recent graduates with small business, community leaders, heads of organizations, and HR professionals

Develop specific opportunities with existing networking events and find ways to make youth feel welcome and connected.

Determine how to reach out to recently graduated young professionals.

Timeline: Focus / Milestone in Q1 – 2017.

4.0 Making employers part of the solution:

Action 4.1 Review hiring requirements for public sector / non-profit jobs and reduce unnecessary barriers (e.g. requiring 5 years experience for entry level jobs).

Lead(s): City of Kingston to lead, working with various major public sector employers such as local school boards, hospitals, post-secondary education, employers in the not-for-profit and other sectors.

First Step: Work with the employers to identify specific opportunities to be reviewed, options to reduce entry barriers, and develop action plans for change.

Timeline: Special focus / milestone in Q 3 & 4 – 2016.

Action 4.2 Develop more internships that are paid and flexible.

Lead(s): City of Kingston to lead, working with public sector employers, including education institutions, as well as large private sector employers.

First Step: Bring employers and educators together to explore options to increase paid experiential learning opportunities.

(Note: Similar experiential opportunities often include unpaid placements & co-op opportunities – all may be promoted, but with emphasis on paid opportunities.)

As part of the process, brief employers on the incentives and supports available to make implementation easier.

Timeline: Special focus / milestone in Q 3 & 4 – 2016, and on-going.

Action 4.3 Help the private sector take advantage of new working methods in areas where youth have strengths (e.g. embracing technology/social media).

Lead(s): Innovate Kingston to lead, working with local employment agencies and business, professional or trade associations.

First Step: Prepare key messages and a support process for interested businesses.

Timeline: Launch in Q3 – 2016.

5.0 Helping Youth Start Planning Early:

Action 5.1 Broaden students' knowledge of various types of labour market opportunities that can flow from education programs (e.g. Police Foundations courses prepare you not only to become a police officer but also for bylaw enforcement and other work), and help them learn to research which specific fields have declining, limited or growing employment opportunities.

Lead(s): KEDCO and/or 1000 Islands Region Workforce Development Board to lead, working with educators and guidance counsellors (e.g. the My Blueprint program), school boards, Queen's Career Services, St. Lawrence College and employment agencies to provide guidance on future job opportunities.

First Step: Share information about jobs of the future with youth, guidance counsellors and others advising them.

Timeline: Special focus in Q 3 & 4 – 2016, and on-going.

6.0 Developing Pre-employment Skills:

Action 6.1 Further develop opportunities for youth to learn skills by engaging with social enterprises, entrepreneurship centres, or youth programs/centres.

Lead(s): KEDCO to lead, working with entrepreneurship programs and business start-up centres / incubators, the Youth Council, Pathways to Education, the Youth Strategy, Boys and Girls Club of Kingston & Area, and the Community Foundation for Kingston & Area.

First Step: Identify and develop the best initial opportunities to better engage youth who are prepared and ready for the work environment.

Timeline: Special focus in Q4 – 2016, and on-going.

Strategies for Youth Preparing to Become Workplace Ready

For whatever reasons, not all youth seeking employment are adequately prepared yet to compete for positions in the workplace. They may first need to meet basic needs (financial, housing, health, education, transportation etc) that undermine their employability. They may lack opportunities to learn from role models or gain knowledge of workplaces/career opportunities. Supports are needed to help them become employable and ready to enter the labour force.

The actions noted below recognize these additional dimensions of support needed by these employment-seeking youth.

Goals: The methods may be different from supports for those youth already able and ready to seek employment, but the goals are the same – reducing youth unemployment / underemployment, helping youth keep jobs once they find them, helping them overcome factors that discourage them from entering the labour force, and/or reducing their migration to other employment centres.

7.0 Mentoring Initiatives:

Action 7.1 Develop tools and other means to help youth learn the key personal skills, work habits and global competencies needed for jobs of the future (e.g. “soft” skills like conflict management needed to understand and fit into workplace cultures / roles and to meet responsibilities to employers; similarly, help employers to better understand and work with youth.

Lead(s): Employment agencies to lead, working with innovative employers and community programs such as Pathways to Success, public health etc.

First Step: Identify a framework of specific points about workplace culture and employing younger employees that would provide the basis for toolkits. (This might align with the province’s “Six Learning Skills”: Responsibility, Independent Work, Collaboration, Organization, Initiative, and Self-Regulation.)

Timeline: Underway now, with an emphasis on “soft” skills, and on-going with further development as this initiative expands to involve more partners.

Action 7.2 Promote and build financial literacy skills, starting in grades 7/8 with basic concepts (like calculating unit rates, working with percentages and fractions), that will be useful or needed later for budgeting, managing money, taxes and basic financial life skills.

Lead(s): School boards to lead, working in liaison with community partners such as credit counselling agencies.

First Step: Build on programs already being offered by educators, credit counsellors and other agencies to extend development of these skills to more youth.

Timeline: Underway now and on-going milestones, working with community partners.

Action 7.3 Help ensure individuals can first meet their basic needs, creating a strong, stable foundation to support their development and employability.

Lead(s): United Way and City of Kingston to lead, working together with other community partners.

First Step: Using an employability “lens”, explore options to connect wrap-around supports more effectively for youth coping with instabilities in their lives.

Timeline: Special focus in Q1 – 2017, and on-going.

8.0 Making employers part of the solution:

Action 8.1 Increase employer awareness of the existing range / types of programs, tools, training/supports and incentives already available to assist them to hire youth who may not yet be as mature, ready and able to work as some of their peers. (Support is attached to specific youth participants.)

Lead(s): Employment agencies to lead, working with KEDCO, start-up programs, Innovate Kingston, the Chamber, Downtown Kingston and other business groups.

First Step: Compile the information and design a simple, concise guide or tool for distribution to employers (especially smaller employers who usually do not have HR coordinators or departments to monitor such programs). Use networks to distribute the guide/tool widely.

Timeline: Special focus in Q 2,3 & 4 – 2016, continuing beyond.

Action 8.2 Share stories that provide “how-to” examples for youth and/or employers of youth to achieve success and avoid pitfalls.

Lead(s): United Way and the City of Kingston.

First Step: Develop a system for a continuing communications effort: determine the types and sources for stories to be developed, identify potential channels for sharing them, and engage partners/resources to help.

Timeline: Special focus in Q4 – 2016.

Action 8.3 Communicate benefits gained by employers who hire (and retain) youth (e.g., access to social media skills; opportunities to develop fresh talent “their way”; brand enhanced as a youth/community-minded employer).

Lead(s): United Way and City of Kingston, working with best-practice employers, employment agencies, KEDCO and the Chamber.

First Step: Develop mini-profiles: start by engaging & learning from local employers using successful approaches for hiring / developing youth as employees.

Develop a system of evaluation to monitor continuing progress.

Timeline: Special focus in Q4 – 2016.

Action 8.4 Research/develop evidence and proof-points to guide programs and communications: Ask businesses what they look for in employees; ask youth what would best help them become ready for work.

Lead(s): Employment agencies to lead, working with KEDCO, educators and others who work with youth / employers.

First Step: Start with some best-practice frameworks and / or competencies to develop an initial checklist. Then validate, adapt and refine it in consultation with youth and employers.

Timeline: Special focus / milestone in Q4 – 2016.

Action 8.5 Develop employment placement opportunities with the not-for-profit sector for youth receiving Ontario Works support.

Lead(s): City of Kingston to lead, working with not-for-profit organizations.

First Step: Develop program guidelines and communicate program to clients and not-for-profit sector, starting with a pilot project in 2016 and anticipated roll-out in 2017.

Timeline: Special focus in Q 3 & 4 – 2016.

9.0 Helping Youth Start Planning Early:

Action 9.1 Reach out to youth with opportunities for them to learn about employment (e.g. as trade fairs do), but at times and in places where they hang out.

Lead(s): The City of Kingston & United Way will coordinate with community agencies working with youth, together with student leaders, the employment agencies, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, school boards, KEDCO, and employers.

First Step: Develop a pilot project to test innovative approaches to achieve this goal.

Timeline: Special focus / milestone in Q2 – 2017.

10.0 Developing Pre-employment Skills:

Action 10.1 Recommend a program model to help youth develop employment skills and experience; scale up capacity and sustainability of existing programs serving youth in need of support for employment.

Lead(s): United Way & City of Kingston to lead, working with Employment Ontario.

First Step: Develop proposals, engage partners and identify potential resources to accomplish this goal.

Research various models that work in other communities like Halifax, London and Edmonton (e.g. Youth Opportunities Unlimited , clubs and so on).

Timeline: Special focus / milestone in Q2 – 2017.

A Timetable for Action on These Strategies:

Youth Employment Action Items

Initiative	Lead Assigned to	2016			2017			
		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
For All Streams of Youth								
1.1	Analysis of Jobs of the Future	Worforce Board	■					
1.2	Highlight Transferable Skills	United Way	■		■	■		
1.3	Forum for Guidance Counselors	United Way	■		■	■		
2.1	Coordinated pre-employment Initiatives	Employment Agencies	■	■				
2.2	More apprenticeships / internships	City of Kingston	■	■				
Prepared & Ready for Work								
3.0	Networking for mentoring and entrée	City / United Way			■	■		
4.1	Barriers to entry (large employers)	City of Kingston		■				
4.1	More paid, flexible internships	City of Kingston		■				
4.3	Promote strengths bring to workplace	Innovate Kingston		■				
5.1	Help students learn about opportunities	KEDCO / Worforce Bd		■	■	■	■	■
6.1	Engaging with start-ups, youth centres	KEDCO			■			
Preparing for Work								
7.1	Mentoring on workplace culture	Employment Agencies	■					
7.2	Promote & build financial literacy skills	Employment Agencies	■	■				
7.3	Help meet basic living skills	City / United Way	■	■	■	■	■	■
8.1	Promote employer incentives	Employment Agencies	■	■				
8.2	Promote stories on "how to"	City / United Way			■	■	■	■
8.3	Promote benefits of hiring these youth	City / United Way			■	■	■	■
8.4	Research evidence to guide planning	Employment Agencies		■				
8.5	Opportunities for Ont. Works youth	City of Kingston		■				
9.1	Employment outreach to youth	City / United Way			■	■	■	■
10.1	Develop pre-employment program model	City / United Way			■	■	■	■

Notes:

- 1) Many of these activities are on-going: the chart highlights milestones & focus periods.
- 2) Timeline details are provided in the relevant sections of the report – this chart has been included just to illustrate the overall timing and flow of projects at a glance.



Links to Other Resources:

- What has changed for young people in Canada? <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2013001/article/11847-eng.htm>
- <https://www.cityofkingston.ca/apps/councilpriorities/employment.html>
- <http://www.unitedwaykfla.ca/mayor-paterson-gets-to-work-on-youth-employment-strategy>
- Creating Pathways to Success <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/cps>

Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools, Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2013 describes a comprehensive education and career/life planning program for Kindergarten to Grade 12 designed to help students achieve their personal goals and become competent, successful, and contributing members of society.

- http://www.limestone.on.ca/Programs/Guidance/Creating_Pathways_to_Success
- <http://www.magnet.today>

Magnet uses job-matching technology to connect people with jobs they're interested in and qualified for — and the service is free. Job seekers upload their résumés and complete a profile that showcases their qualifications and experience. The system then matches job seekers with job opportunities that fit their criteria and notifies them when employers are interested in touching base for an interview.

Thanks to Task Force Members & Many Other Contributors:

Many people have been involved in developing and building consensus behind these strategic initiatives to help youth find work, build meaningful careers and contribute to a productive economy. The list below identifies formal participants in the process; our thanks also go out to all others who have contributed in some way.

Name

Organization

Bhavana Varma (Co-Chair) United Way of KFL&A

Lanie Hurdle (Co-Chair) City of Kingston

Employment agencies

Elaine Lewis St. Lawrence College Employment

Gillian Watters KEYS Job Centre

Christie Scales KEYS Job Centre

Jenoa Meagher KEYS Job Centre

Lucie Mercier ACFOMI

Tyler Fainstat John Howard Society, ReStart Program

Youth/Social Service Agencies

Debbie Gillis K3C Community Counselling Centres

Simon Robinson K3C (Credit Counselling)

Mary Kloosterman YMCA of Kingston

Harold Parsons Boys and Girls Club of Kingston & Area

Wendy Vuyk Pathways to Education

Employers / Private Sector

Ben Gooch Providence Care

Bill Stewart Kingston Chamber of Commerce

Carrie Batt RBC Royal Bank

Leanne O'Mara J.E. Agnew Food Services Ltd.

Andrea Payne J.E. Agnew Food Services Ltd.

Emily Koolen Dress for Success and Innovate Kingston

Julie Blasko Correctional Service of Canada

Donna Gillespie Kingston Economic Development Corporation

Carey Bidtnes Kingston Economic Development Corporation

Education

Matt Kussin	Queen's Alma Mater Society
Francis Campbell	Queen's Alma Mater Society
Theresa Kennedy	Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board
Krishna Burra	Limestone District School Board

Government & Umbrella Organizations

Christina Thomson Kim	Mayor's Office
Hockey	United Way of KFL&A
Pam Kent	CYSPC
Sharon Smith	City of Kingston

Labour

Darlene Medhurst	Kingston & District Labour Council
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Youth Engagement

Cody Allan	Youth Council
Derek Brown	United Way of KFL&A

Community Representatives

Janet Heyman	Hotel Dieu Hospital
Rosemary Lysaght	Queen's School of Rehabilitation Therapy
La Vern Simkins	Voices, Opportunities & Choices Employment Club (VOCEC)

Consulting support for Youth Employment Strategy Task Force Report provided by 8020Info Inc.

What Does Youth Unemployment Feel Like?

Corey



Corey studied business in university with his major in accounting. Unfortunately for him, the program did not come with any co-op work, and Corey got no hands-on experience as a result. When it came to searching for jobs after graduation, nobody wanted to hire him because of his lack of experience, which made getting a foot in the door rather impossible.

Corey also had the added challenge of not being a native to Kingston, limiting the number of people he knew that he could reach out to for help and/or with influence in the job market.

Things finally improved for him once he came into the St Lawrence Employment Service, when they helped him modify his resume for the correct target audience. Also, as part of the SLC ES program, an employer would be eligible for a subsidy to offset initial training costs should they be willing to hire Corey.

Sean Waldbillig



As a recent graduate of a Masters Program, and keen to work in the field of social services, Sean Waldbillig began looking for work related to his field of studies. This began a difficult task as the Kingston job market for social services in not-for-profit organizations was highly competitive.

Sean connected with KEYS Career Focus Program and through this he obtained a paid internship with the Canadian Mental Health Association, Kingston Branch, where he worked as their Mental Health Education Coordinator. In this role he developed various programming for LGBTQ youths ages 12-18.

During his Career Focus internship, Sean liaised with various community partners to establish a support network for young people. Sean has also been very successful in obtaining continuous, and innovative program funding for youth programming that are currently launching in Kingston.

He is currently acting as the Regional Headstrong Coordinator for the Mental Health Commission of Canada, an initiative aimed at empowering youth to speak-out against mental health stigma. Working at CMHA Kingston also firmly cemented Sean's desire to continue working in the area of youth mental health.

Anna



Anna and her family moved to Canada from Korea prior to Anna starting her Economics Degree at Queens University. As a recent graduate looking for work related to her field of study, Anna connected with KEYS for help.

Anna was struggling to find relevant and ongoing employment opportunities in her field. She had limited work experience related to her education and needed support to get connected to the local labour market.

She was accepted into the JobStart program in the Fall of 2015. She completed three weeks of skill development workshops focused on job search skills, communication skills, customer service training and got her job placement with the Limestone Credit Union.

Through the support of the JobStart program Anna's employer received help towards the cost of Anna's initial training and Anna was pleased to have a chance to gain experience towards her long term career goal. She was offered a full time permanent position with the Limestone Credit Union after her training placement.

Kaela's Experience with the Youth Job Connection Program:



Kaela graduated from St. Lawrence College with a degree in Behavioral Psychology.

Kaela's dream job was to find employment in the Behavioral Psychology field. Kaela was struggling to find relevant and ongoing employment opportunities in her field. She had no work experience related to her education and needed support to get connected to the local labour market. She was accepted into the Youth Job Connection program in the Fall of 2015. She completed three weeks of pre-employment training specific to the workplace such as: Job Safety, Working at Heights, Customer Service training and Smart Serve etc. Kaela is currently working at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kingston as a Case Worker. Through the support of the Youth Job Connection program Kaela's employer received help towards the cost of Kaela's initial training and Kaela was pleased to have a chance to gain experience towards her long term career goal. Kaela is currently on placement and working her way into integrating into the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kingston team.

What Does Youth Employment Look Like?

Dylan Hanson

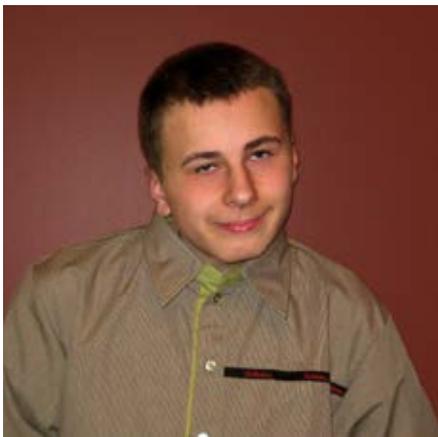


Dylan initially came to J.E. Agnew Food Services (operating Tim Hortons Restaurants in Kingston) as a Grade 12 Co-op at age 18 and he was hired on permanently after his placement was completed.

Dylan had some paid job experience, and started out working in the storefront serving guests. He has also covered on the midnight shift for a period of time and helps cover midnight shifts when needed. Dylan was very interested in learning how to bake, so he cross-trained for that position and is now one of the full-time production team members.

He attributes his success to the company's training program, and willingness to continue to develop team members over time. He really enjoys the job, and has no interest in working anywhere else. Dylan has been with the local Tim Hortons group for almost 2 years and is now 20 years old.

Raymond Huffman



Raymond started with J.E. Agnew Food Services (operating Tim Hortons Restaurants in Kingston) as a Grade 12 Co-op Student at age 17 and he was hired on permanently after his placement was completed.

He has a disability, and started as a dish/dining room attendant. Previously, he had no previous paid job experience, but some volunteer experience.

He feels that the initial position helped with his confidence and basic job skills. Raymond then moved onto the bakery team as a Production Assistant to the main Production Baker, and from there he transitioned into the main Production Baker. Raymond works full-time, loves the job, his restaurant and coworkers. He has been with the company for almost 3 years now and is 20 years old.



An Employer's Perspective: J.E. Agnew Food Services

J.E. Agnew Food Services Ltd. has always invested in our community's youth. We do not require previous employment experience or a minimum level of education. We train and develop individuals internally and primarily promote our management and supervisory team members from within.

We take advantage of many Employment Ontario programs and resources. Many of these programs include pre-employment preparation that we wish all applicants went through. Many programs also provide ongoing support once the applicant is employed and working.

Our administrative team, human resources team, executive management team and many of our restaurant management team members all started with the organization as youth who began their career in one of our Tim Hortons restaurants. Today's youth are tomorrow's leaders.



An Employer's Perspective: RBC

At RBC, we have a number of different internship and co-op placement programs focused on providing opportunities for young people to gain experience. One of the most unique of these programs is the RBC Career Launch Program.

The RBC Career Launch™ Program was announced in 2013 as part of RBC's Kids Pledge. The year-long paid internship is designed to help break the "no experience – no job" cycle that many young graduates face. The program helps recent college or university graduates, under the age of 24, to gain diverse experience in banking and customer service. It also allows new grads to network with both seasoned and aspiring professionals.

During the one year internship, 100 Career Launch Associates complete three work rotations. We have been privileged in Kingston to have had Associates work in our area each year that the program has been offered.

The first rotation is in our retail branches. There the Career Associate is able to apply practical business skills and contribute value to both clients and branch objectives. As the face of RBC, they work directly on the front lines, serving clients, carrying out transactions, solving problems and spotting sales opportunities.

The Program's second rotation, a three-month placement with a Registered Canadian Charity, focuses on building the Associates' awareness of the charitable sector while providing them the opportunity to gain valuable skills in the areas of project management, communication, collaboration, and creative thinking. In Kingston, we have partnered with the YMCA of Kingston and the Boys and Girls Club of Kingston and Area to provide Associates this experience.

Mary Kloosterman, CEO of the YMCA of Kingston notes that "our Career Launch Associate allowed us to complete an important initiative that we would not have been able to accomplish otherwise. Having that calibre of associate was wonderful to work with."

The Boys and Girls Club of Kingston & Area participated in the Career Launch Associate Program in 2015, and highly recommends this program to other not-for-profit organizations. Harold Parsons, Executive Director, notes: "The individual that was employed by the Club was highly skilled, reliable and fit in with our team. She was not only dedicated to assisting the Boys and Girls Club, but wanted to learn as much as she could about the organization and the not-for-profit industry, as well as support children and youth."

During the final rotation, the Associate provides project-based support within one of RBC's functional business areas such as marketing, HR or operations, while receiving opportunities for ongoing business development, community events support and to participate in internal development activities. This gives them exposure to a regional or head office environment.

It's all designed to help them learn about the many opportunities within both corporate and not-for-profit environments, take on new responsibilities with each rotation and improve their employability in any career path they choose.

Laura Brown, a former Career Launch Associate and now RBC Banking Advisor Intern, says: "I went into the program as a fresh faced graduate with limited work experience so I found tremendous value in the work exposure the Career Launch Program provided. The variety of experiences and business skills I gained as a result of CLP make me more marketable to future employers. Graduating from the program I feel more confident in my own abilities and excited to start my career!"

