



MENTOR • GROW • SUCCEED

“Youth Assisting Youth” or YAY. You might have also heard our previous name “The Peer Project”

We service **the whole City of Toronto & York Region**. Our Head Office is located in **North York at Finch-Yonge**.

Youth Assisting Youth is a **non-profit community-based charitable** organization.

Our core program is a **peer mentoring service** that we run to **improve life prospects** of Junior Youth **aged 6 – 15** with trained and dedicated **Youth Volunteers, aged 16 – 29**.

YAY is really unique in the world & this is why:

1. **Our impact is bigger.** The majority of mentoring programs help only one vulnerable population - children, who get an adult mentor. Our One-to-One Peer Mentoring Program empowers both the Junior Youth and the Mentoring Youth, so the positive impact for the community is doubled.
2. **Our impact is deeper.** Children more willingly follow the example of their peers than one of adults, so the positive changes are more visual.
3. **Our impact is faster.** Children that build meaningful relationships with mentors try harder to look better in their eyes, so they pick-up good examples faster.
4. **Our work is scrupulous.** We find the best volunteers, screen them, conduct Vulnerable Sector Police Checks, train them, do home assessments, empower them, support them 24/7. So the parents are 100% sure that their children are in good hands.
5. **Our support is integral.** Our volunteers, parents & youth are supported with care, information, supplies, workshops, training, advice, feedback, free tickets for events and more.

Our services will help youth who may be facing **social, emotional, behavioural and/or cultural** adjustment and other barriers. In our program we state that we are focused on **newcomer & at-risk** youth but actually we serve a very wide population. It means that a lot of families who

feel that their child needs a **role-model** to **succeed** in school, become more **resilient, physically & socially active** are willing to request a youth mentor. Mentoring has proven to help the society **empower the leaders of tomorrow**.

Before we required a **referring worker** from a newcomer/youth/health/educational organization to fill in the application form for a Junior Youth. But recently we have added an option for the families to **self-refer** at our website **yay.org** in the section “**request a youth mentor**”.

**Since 1976** we YAY has empowered more than **35 000 young people** with **leadership skills** through mentorship programs.

All our services are **free** for participants and it works! Helping **98% of mentees stay in school** and out of trouble.

All staff at YAY work hard to make it happen.

- 1) Our Recruitment Coordinators **screen** the Youth Volunteers who apply through yay.org, get their vulnerable **police** background **check** & professional **reference** check. Each volunteer goes through a **7-hour training** that covers the topics as Mentorship, Child Behaviour, Mental Health & Learning Challenges, Discrimination, Diversity & Acceptance, Child Abuse.
- 2) The Intake team will process referrals and assign Case Coordinators who during virtual or in-person **home assessment** will get maximum information about each Youth Volunteer & Junior Youth to find a perfect match. We match mentors and mentees who live nearby, have similar interests & background. Same-sex matches are the most common; however, we are able to match a young male child (6 – 10 years of age) with a female Youth Volunteer. The reverse does not apply. Exceptions can be made if requested (for example if a child is from the LGBTQ2S+)
- 3) Then the family meets the Youth Volunteer during a **Match Visit** facilitated by the Case Coordinator. The Match Contract is signed so that everyone understands their **goals, roles & responsibilities**. And then they schedule & plan the fun, active & creative activities for their first outing. Our organization monitors, guides & supervises the match through regular check-in with all the parties & 24/7 emergency phone support.

The families name such benefits of our program: Provided Role-model, Consistent Support, Advice & Feedback, Flexibility, Commitment, Confidentiality.

The Youth Volunteers say that our program helps them gain confidence, volunteer hours, build resumes, become leaders, improve interpersonal skills & have fun. What is more, they can apply for Special scholarships thanks to our organization.

YAY staff supports all the Clients (parents, juniors, volunteers) who have completed home assessment with:

- workshops, fun activities, picnics, sponsored tickets to sports events, movies, Zoo & Aquarium
- Virtual Coffee Chats, Parenting workshops, Trivia & Bingo Nights for Parents
- Virtual One-to-One Tutoring. Junior Youth get help with homework. Volunteers get tutoring/teaching experience.
- Virtual Group Mentoring. Includes Arts & Crafts Club, Young Readers's Club, New French Club
- Virtual Girls & Boys Empowerment Program. Creates a safe, judgement-free space to openly discuss and analyze various thoughts, feelings, influences & take part in creative, stimulating & fun activities.
- The Empowerment Project. Provides civic engagement opportunities for visible minority youth.
- Lifeline for support. For the youth to get quick advice in Zoom about anything that bothers.

As I have already mentioned, the youth commit to spend **3 hours a week together for 1 year minimum** to launch a life transformation cycle.

Some of the matches stay connected for **up to 15 years!** Thanks to our program and his mentor Philip Charlie overcame his learning difficulties, went to college and is **giving back** as a YAY Mentor himself. He is now paired with a mentee named Jeffrey. This heart-warming story of **true friendship, empowerment and success** is so touching that it was even recorded and shown by Global News. And this great story has the potential to **continue forever!**

Please check it out here:

<https://globalnews.ca/news/2851615/young-toronto-man-helped-by-older-mentor-becomes-a-mentor-himself/>

Let's say it without shyness, **we are great.**

Help us spread the word, support us, join us.

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