



# RLC 2020

## ANNUAL REPORT



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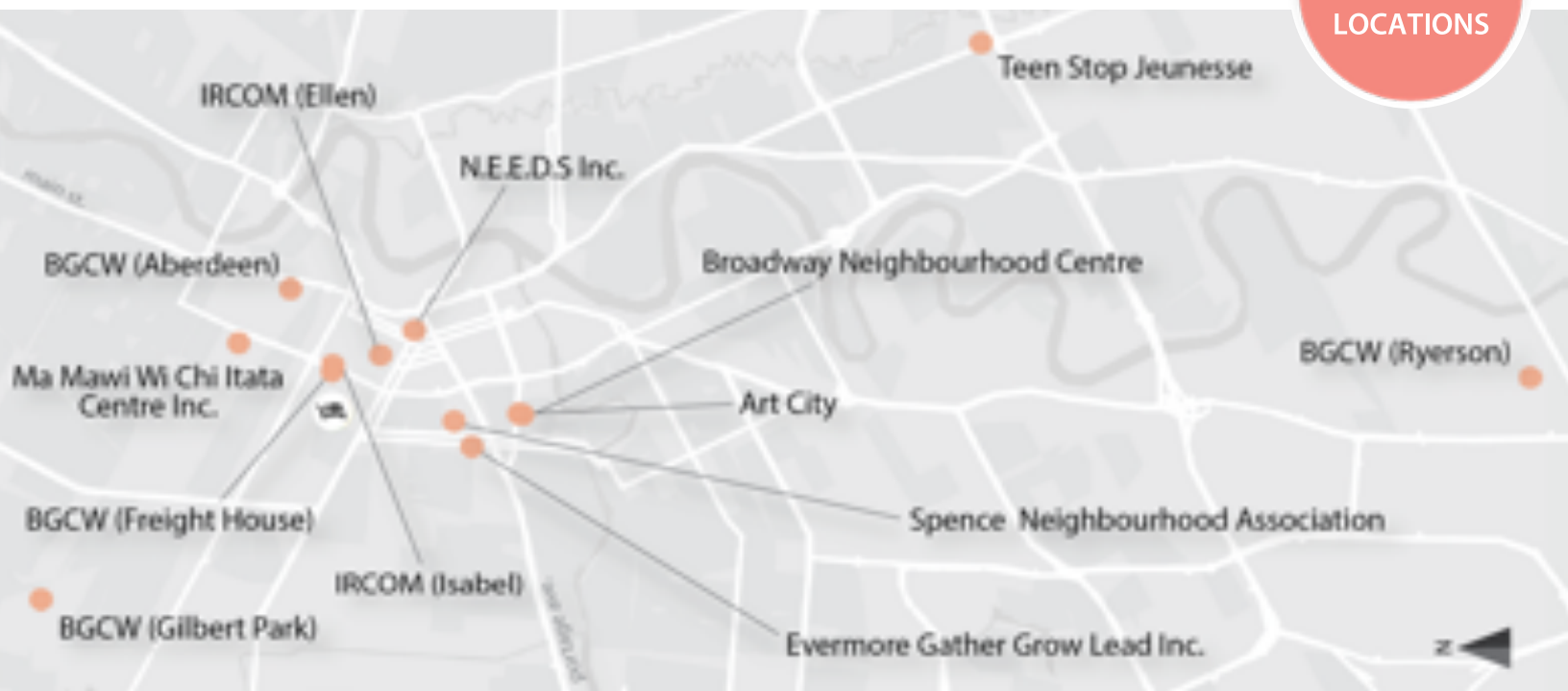


Boys & Girls Clubs  
of Winnipeg  
A good place to be



RLC Youth Leadership Inc.  
300-61 Juno Street  
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1T1

RLC  
LOCATIONS





# Editor's Note



**Amanda Doerksen**  
Program Coordinator  
Youth Agencies Alliance



@yaaprograms



youth.agencies.alliance

"Youth participants formed positive connections and participated in activities not otherwise possible"

## Youth serving agencies working together to strengthen our communities

It was an anomaly of a summer amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted the feasibility of many planned initiatives and disproportionately affected our city's most disadvantaged communities. However, with an increased appreciation for sustained engagement and positive opportunities for youth, Youth Agencies Alliance and our Members were motivated to proceed with the Rotary Leadership Circle program while ensuring all outlined health protocols were present.

Youth Agencies Alliance organizations maintained continuous dialogue throughout the pandemic to communicate best practices. This allowed the Rotary Leadership Circle program to have thorough contingency plans in place. Although the adaptations were challenging, and cross-Site collaborations were limited, youth participants formed positive connections and participated in activities not otherwise possible through a hybrid of on-site and virtual programming.

It is imperative that we send our sincerest gratitude to our collective membership and to our long-standing partnerships which provided financial support for the program: The Winnipeg Foundation, Rotary Club of Winnipeg, Graham C. Lount Family Foundation, Dr. Alfred Deacon Medical Research Foundation Inc., BellMTS, Wawanesa Insurance, and the contributions of private donors. Their flexibility and empathy for our organizations and youth in Winnipeg made all the difference for the Rotary Leadership Circle program this year.

We hope the narrative that follows demonstrates the meaning and significance of social and emotional supports like this for Winnipeg's youth. If you would like to learn more about Youth Agencies Alliance or the Rotary Leadership Circle program, please drop us a line. We appreciate your support and would love to connect.



Dr. Alfred E. Deacon  
Medical Research  
Foundation Inc.

**BellMTS**



**Wawanesa  
Insurance**





# Introduction

The Rotary Leadership Circle (RLC) program is a joint effort of youth-serving organizations in Winnipeg, MB which has occurred for 24 years. Initially designed by a coalition of inner city social agencies to reduce the gang involvement of youth, RLC has expanded into an immersive program facilitated by the present day coalition: Youth Agencies Alliance (YAA). YAA is a network of 15 not-for-profit youth serving organizations who share resources through collaboration, relationships, best practices, and programs.

RLC promotes community engagement, belonging and an overall increase to YAA organizations' capacity throughout the summer. RLC exists to reduce the heightened risk factors that youth aged 10 - 14 face in low socio-economic communities. The odds of exposure to drug use, gang activity, or truancy are

problems disproportionately borne by youth that connect with YAA Member organizations. The program intends to improve graduation rates, employment, and volunteer opportunities through providing safe alternatives.

The Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (2019) identified that through participating in programs congruent with RLC's core experiences, youth are more likely to achieve positive health, social, and educational outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Through an anecdotal understanding of barriers facing participants, along with evidence from the program evaluations, this community engagement and skill-building intervention is needed to counteract negative influences for Winnipeg's youth.

"Youth are more likely to achieve positive health, social, and educational outcomes"

## Program Outcomes

1

### Employment Skills

Enhance each youth participants' skills so they obtain marketable employment opportunities

2

### Neighbourhood Pride

Build participants' sense of belonging and pride towards their neighbourhoods

3

### Leadership Skills

Develop positive individual and team leadership skills



**140**  
YOUTH LEADERS

# RLC Program

This summer RLC provided youth who are marginalized with the opportunity to interact with positive role models, learn life skills, and contribute to their communities. Throughout July and August, youth participants engaged in hands-on volunteer experiences to promote community engagement and skill-building.

The RLC program participants are known as ‘Youth Leaders’ and are recruited through a guided application process, similar to a resume, to enhance their ability to apply for future employment or volunteer opportunities.

The longevity and continued enhancement of RLC is attributed to YAA organizations and their dedication to providing a staff member (in-kind) at each Site throughout the summer. These staff are known as Site Coordinators and are responsible for program planning, the facilitation of daily RLC activities, and growing as positive mentors for the Youth Leaders.

This year, nine YAA organizations participated in the program resulting in 13 RLC Sites and 140 participants.

Chart 1. Participant Ages

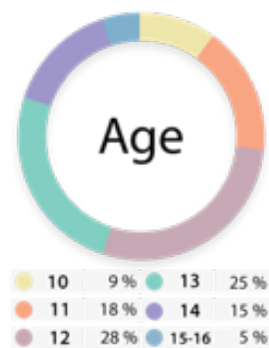


Chart 2. Participant Ethnicity

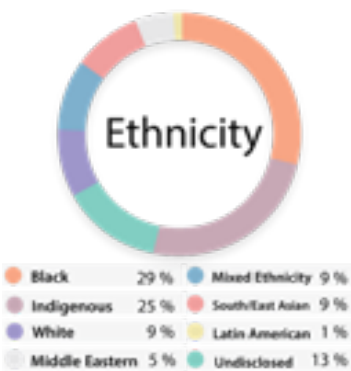


Table 1. Participant Numbers per Site

Sites	Youth Leaders
Art City	15
Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg (Aberdeen)	9
Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg (Freight House)	12
Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg (Gilbert Park)	14
Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg (Ryerson)	12
Broadway Neighbourhood Centre	11
Evermore Gather Grow Lead Inc.	12
IRCOM (Ellen)	12
IRCOM (Isabel)	12
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Inc.	8
N.E.E.D.S Inc.	6
Spence Neighbourhood Association	8
Teen Stop Jeunesse	9
Total # of Youth Leaders	140





**8084**  
VOLUNTEER HOURS

The structure of RLC this year worked within the health protocols mandated by the Province of Manitoba which enforced gathering size restrictions and physical distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of a typical RLC cycle, YAA would encourage cross-Site collaborations and initiatives in the community and throughout Winnipeg. However, given the

uncertainty of the virus, most organizations opted for a RLC program which reduced in-person activities and established hybrid programs involving virtual components. Even with the modifications, youth participated in more than 8084 hours of volunteer activities related to the RLC outcomes.

Table 2. RLC Activity Examples

### Employment Skills

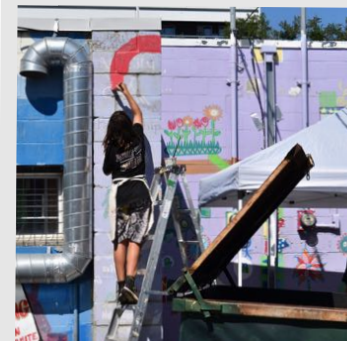
- Money management workshop
- Skill share day
- Virtual job fair
- Resume writing workshop
- Media literacy course
- Coding class

### Neighbourhood Pride

- Community scavenger hunt
- Medicine picking
- 'Love 30 for 30' campaign
- Inspirational rock painting
- Community clean up
- Bear Clan Patrol outings

### Leadership Skills

- Youth-lead Olympic Games
- FortWhyte Alive canoe trip
- Community care packages
- Indigenous Ceremonies
- Mock debates
- Cooking tutorials





“Youth Leaders were very passionate about helping those who are low income and in need”

The integration of a fundraising component into RLC allows youth to experience the fundraising cycle, money management, and an opportunity to meaningfully make a collective difference. Despite the hindered ability to interact with community members, a Site Coordinator noted that the "Youth Leaders were very passionate about helping those who are low income and in need". The fundraisers supported: Sunshine House, D’Arcys ARC, Bear Clan Patrol, Tim Hortons Foundation Camps, Winnipeg Harvest, The Salvation Army, and Victoria General Hospital Foundation.

A notable recruitment incentive of RLC is that Youth Leaders are celebrated and provided an honorarium which reflects their hours contributed throughout the summer. With their earned funds, youth participated in a supervised shopping trip for back-to-school items. This process encouraged financial management as the youth took great care in calculating the value of their purchases. The respect for the stipends was best demonstrated this year by a Youth Leader who inquired about setting up a Registered Education Savings Plan with their honorarium.





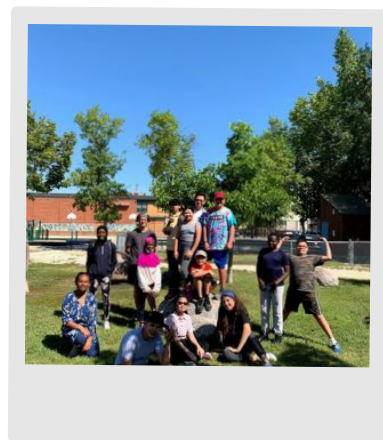


# Youth Green Action Plan

The Youth Green Action Plan (YGAP) was included in RLC this year as an experiential learning component centered on environmental activism. This provided Youth Leaders an opportunity to acquire climate action information in a supportive environment and explore topics around environmental justice, Indigenous ways of knowing, and leadership. During the YGAP, youth participated in five workshops created through a partnership with Green Action Centre, The Story Source, and Lee Mae Spence. Ten trained Mentors facilitated the hands-on activities that helped youth explore and share their individual identities, develop a sense of belonging to nature, and obtain skills for navigating climate related issues.

*"We got to express ourselves and learn about others..., and have a say in what happens."*

Youth Leaders were empowered to take action around climate change in many ways, with one noting that the workshops were enjoyable "because we got to express ourselves and learn about others..., and had a say in what happens". Specific workshop activities included: guided nature walks, a food chain exploration, discussions around climate justice and sustainability, learning about existing climate action groups, and designing plans for change.



**Lee Mae Spence**







"The YGAP workshops  
 "helped me build a  
 sense of community  
 while further grounding  
 my passion for social  
 and climate justice in  
 an appreciation for  
 the communities  
 around me"

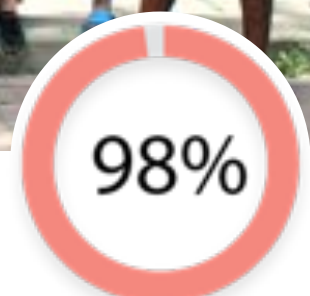
The YGAP workshops also offered intergenerational learning opportunities with one Mentor noting that it "helped me build a sense of community while further grounding my passion for social and climate justice in an appreciation for the communities around me". Another Mentor expressed passion in being able to "share very important knowledge with powerful young minds" and help the Youth Leaders apply "the things they learned to real issues that their community members' face". Site Coordinators shared similar sentiments about the benefits of having participants exposed to activities such as the formed relationships with Elders and bringing important current events down to a community level.

The YGAP was youth-led and culminated in the development of the below climate actions. This inaugural initiative marks the beginning of a multi-year strategy which empowers youth with skills that will assist them in becoming the shakers, makers, and leaders for climate action.



Table 3. Climate Actions at RLC Sites

Climate Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garden on Building</li> <li>• Composting</li> <li>• Community recycling campaign</li> <li>• Community care packages</li> <li>• Tree planting</li> <li>• Campaign against litter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundraiser for Siloam Mission</li> <li>• Letters to the Mayor</li> <li>• Community clean up</li> <li>• Save the Trees campaign</li> <li>• Fares4Free bus campaign</li> <li>• Letters to local MLA</li> </ul>



... Would recommend RLC to a friend

# Results and Feedback

## Developmental Capacities

Through YAA Members' dedication, RLC participants and Site Coordinators engaged in robust evaluation activities and delivered meaningful insights that highlighted the effectiveness of the program. This year YAA piloted pre and post survey tools from Hello Insight, an online evaluation platform. These tools allowed the core RLC outcomes (Employment Skills, Neighbourhood Pride, and Leadership Skills) to be monitored through a subset of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) capacities: Self-Management, Positive Identity, Social Skills, and Social Capital.

Specifically, Self-Management growth consists of becoming more resilient, gaining confidence in decision-making and being able to better deal with negative emotions. Positive Identity is characterized by how well youth explore and cultivate a range of opportunities that grow self-worth, while Social Skills is founded on positive interpersonal relationships and empathy towards others. Social Capital is the degree to which youth possess a greater support network across and within the institutions they engage with.

SEL skills are increasingly being sought by employers and are important for youth to gain when navigating their social spheres such as friends, family, school, and community.<sup>23</sup> Youth with lower SEL skills are more likely to avoid pro-social behaviour, engage in risky behaviours, and struggle with developing effective decision-making strategies.<sup>4</sup>

Chart 3. Neighbourhood Changes

When asked "what would you change in your neighbourhood", Youth Leaders prioritized the following issues, qualities, and conditions:





## Youth Leader Growth

The most meaningful growth measures at program's end were shown in the subset of four SEL capacities. RLC saw that 74% of Youth Leaders succeeded in growing their Self-Management capacity (n=87).<sup>56</sup> Similarly, 68% succeeded in growing their Social Skills, and 73% of those identified as emerging in Positive Identity development also improved.<sup>7</sup> When accounting for all six SEL capacities, including the ones more ancillary to RLC outcomes (Academic Self-Efficacy and Contribution), 85% of the Youth Leaders grew in at least 2 or more SEL capacities, with 38% of the participants

benefitting enormously from RLC having successfully grown in either 5 or all 6 SEL Capacities. Many of these capacity and skill developments were reflected in the narratives Youth Leaders provided at the program's end. It was common for participants to reference peer and community relations when sharing their favourite parts of RLC. One leader appreciated "the fact that [the Site Coordinators] actually taught us some life lessons like how to manage money and how to make a resume".



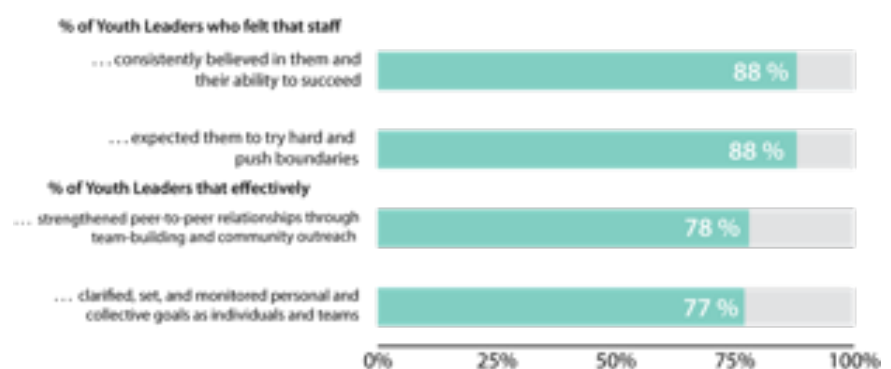
Chart 4. SEL Capacity Growth



## Experiential Reflections

The evaluations also reviewed some programming experiences which supported the participants' ability to grow as leaders. An essential experiential component for the program is peer-to-peer engagement. The collective goals achieved this year (ex. fundraising, community outreach, and climate action) were best mediated by deeply relational settings where open and inclusive experiences thrived. With the barriers presented by the pandemic in mind, the Site Coordinators still creatively navigated ways to facilitate collaboration and build connections.

Chart 5. RLC Experiences (n=87)



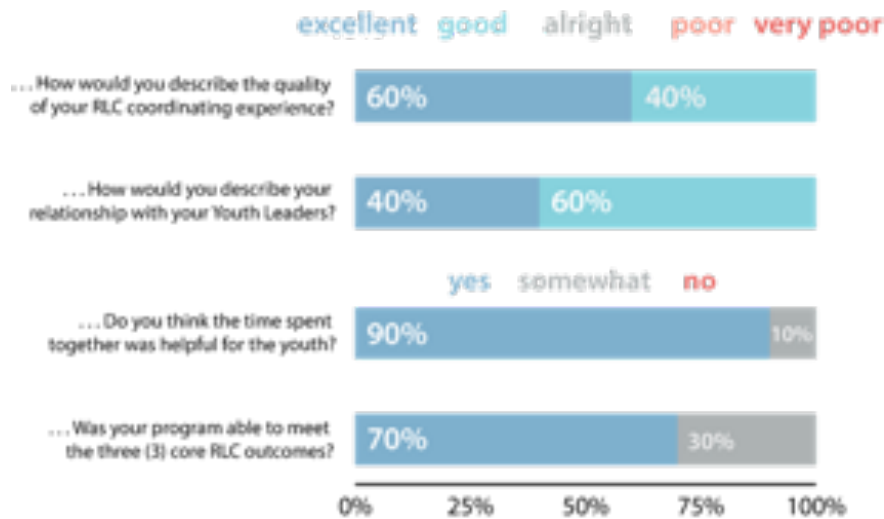
## Site Coordinator Feedback

"Community building (big and small) was at the core, and you could tell the kids felt accepted and that they were making a difference"

The Site Coordinators expressed a very high level of satisfaction with their experience and ability to guide Youth Leaders (Chart 6). When asked about the strengths of the program, most of the coordinators attributed it to the enthusiasm and resiliency of the Youth Leaders. As one coordinator explained, "I saw quite clearly the growth in each and every kid as they developed an understanding of dedication, work ethic, and working towards something that they want". Another mentioned that an emphasis on "individual expression and self-worth" for Youth Leaders at the outset was key to them believing "that what they had to offer was valuable and unique".

Site Coordinator's expressed some disappointment around not being able to maximize the benefits of outings, field trips, and other gathering spaces typical to previous years. This limited the cross-collaboration between Sites and the immersive experience of Winnipeg beyond Youth Leaders' immediate communities. However, the longevity of the RLC program helped the Sites utilize a network of ideas to share and implement innovative activities which followed health guidelines.

Chart 6. Site Coordinator Feedback (n=10)



## Evaluation Wrap Up

These evaluation insights hold additional significance given that RLC participants dealt with prolonged disconnection from safe and supportive spaces like those of our Primary Members' during the enforced lockdown. There were many layers of social and emotional support that participants needed that required more responsive programming on top of an already compacted schedule. The successes shown in this section should further reinforce the narrative that the not-for-profit youth-serving sector in Winnipeg is vital to the well-being and holistic development of our city's youth, especially during times of hardship.

Chart 7. Top Three Programming Strengths  
n= 10



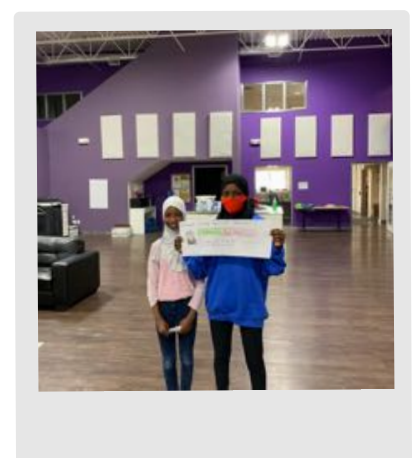
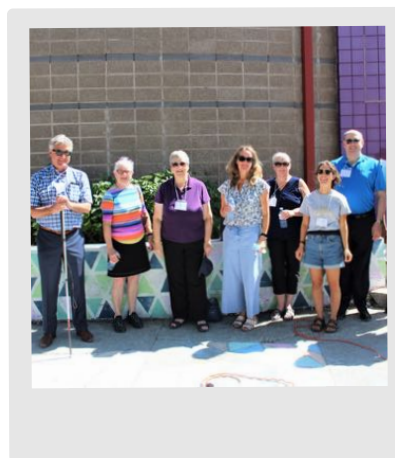
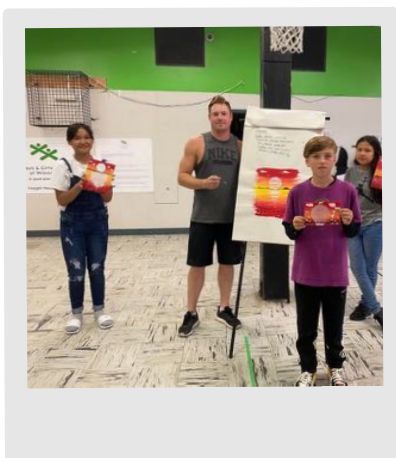




# Conclusion

"Leadership has always been a calling for me, so I see RLC as a big calling that I'm lucky to be in"

The 2020 RLC program occurred during an unprecedented year of programming. Through evaluation and a reflection on the outcomes, the argument could be made that RLC is most effective when cross-Site and community connections can be further forged without the limitations of the pandemic. However, the guiding principle of providing positive experiences for youth throughout the summer and the ability to connect with a consistent mentor figure still held true amongst other positive influences. This rendered the program a success for 140 youth in YAA communities who needed access to resources such as RLC the most.



## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Enns, Jennifer, Marni Brownell, Nathan Nickel, Dan Chateau, Alan Katz, and Joykrishna Sarkar. Rep. Health, Social and Education Outcomes of Children Participating in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Winnipeg: A Retrospective Cohort Study Using Linked Administrative Data Conducted in Partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Winnipeg. Winnipeg: Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> CBoC, ed. "The-Future-Is-Social-and-Emotional." The Conference Board of Canada. Accessed November 4, 2020. [https://www.conferenceboard.ca/\(X\(1\)S\(0tack1wdnjb533kvhyImpj1a\)\)/research/the-future-is-social-and-emotional?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1](https://www.conferenceboard.ca/(X(1)S(0tack1wdnjb533kvhyImpj1a))/research/the-future-is-social-and-emotional?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1).

<sup>3</sup> Shanker, Stuart. "Social-Emotional Learning: Measuring What Matters Domain Paper." People for Education, June 20, 2018. <https://peopleforeducation.ca/report/sel-domain-paper/>.

<sup>4</sup> Durlak, Joseph, and Joseph Mahoney. "The Practical Benefits of an SEL Program." Chicago: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), December 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Successful growth is determined by Hello Insight's standard deviation benchmarks whereby youth are understood to be making meaningful effect size gains in their SEL capacities.

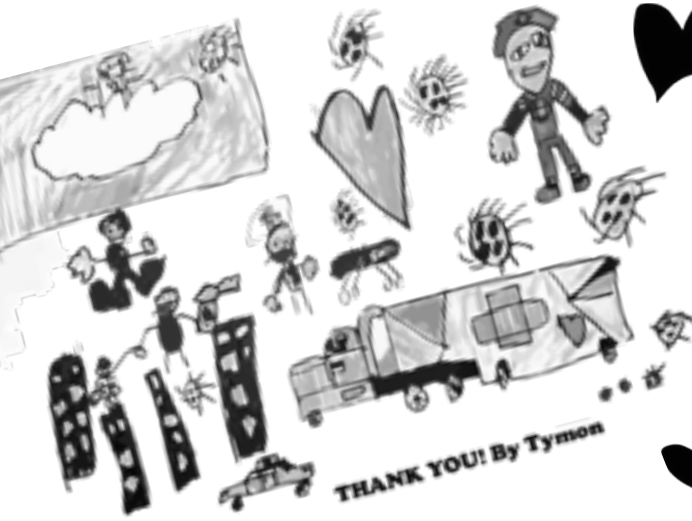
<sup>6</sup> The ability to have all Youth Leaders complete post surveys was limited due to some Covid-19 related complications. Of the 138 that completed pre surveys, 87 completed a matching post survey.

<sup>7</sup> Participants are understood to be either emerging or already advanced in SEL capacities coming into program. This is determined by Hello Insight's collection of pre-existing data sets and then by referencing comparable demographics of youth.

WE ARE ALL IN  
THANK  
YOU  
THIS TOGETHER

by Ania

Thank  
You!



Thank you  
for keeping  
us safe!  
- To all front line  
Workers.



Thank  
You!



YOU WORLD  
Thank you  
essential  
workers!  
By Eliana!

Art City



IF YOU ARE STILL  
GOING TO WORK, YOU  
ARE A SAINT!  
THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
SERVICE