

Canadian  
Mentoring  
Partnership

# State of Mentoring in Canada

## National Youth Mentoring Survey Preliminary Results

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June 2020

## Sample Profile

3,100 young people between the ages of 18 to 30 across all provinces and territories participated in the survey. However, 262 respondents indicated they immigrated to Canada when they were 19 years of age or older. These individuals were not included in this current analysis as they likely reflected mentoring experiences outside of Canada, **bringing a total sample of 2,838 respondents**. These young people were similar in terms of age, gender, and province of residence to the national population of young people in Canada. The survey collected information about young people's experiences of mentoring between ages 6 to 11 and ages 12 to 18. Survey participants with wide range of demographic characteristics participated, including:

- 10.4 per cent who identified as Indigenous (either Inuit, First Nations, or Métis).
- 40.8 per cent from diverse ethnocultural groups. The most common groups being Chinese (6.8 per cent), South Asian (6.4 per cent), and Black (6.2 per cent).
- 14.7 per cent were born outside of Canada (but all immigrated at or before 18 years).
- Additional characteristics such as sexual orientation, transgender identity, presence of disabilities, facing risky life experiences during youth, and being in government care, among several others, were collected and factored into the analyses.

**Figure 1** Age distribution and gender identities of survey respondents

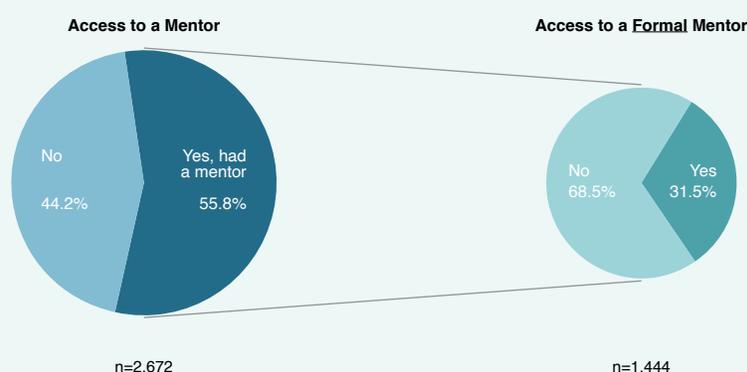


## Results

### Access to mentoring

- 1,490 respondents (55.8 per cent) reported having access to mentoring during their youth.
- Of those who had a mentor, 455 (31.5 percent) respondents additionally reported that at least one of their mentors was part of a formal mentoring program. Among the entire sample, this approximates to 16.0 per cent who had a formal mentor (Figure 2).
- On average (for ages 12 to 18), young people who had access to mentoring, reported having 2.51 mentors, with the vast majority (96.0 per cent) having between 1 to 5 mentors.

**Figure 2 Access to mentoring during youth (ages 6 to 18 collectively)**



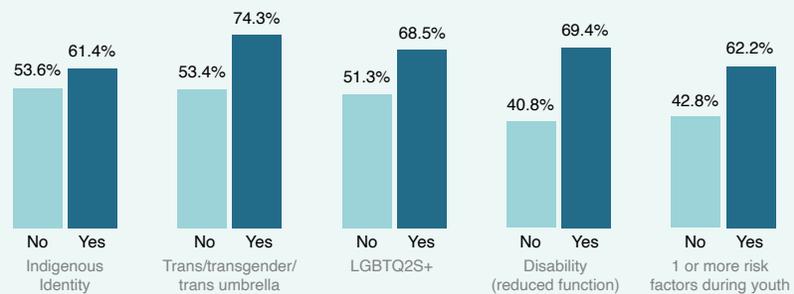
Access to mentoring varied among respondents with different demographic characteristics. For example:

- Indigenous youth were more likely to report having access to a mentor (65.5 per cent compared to 56.1 per cent) and access to a formal mentor (49.7 per cent compared to 27.6 per cent) than non-Indigenous youth.
- Young people who identify as trans, transgender, or under the trans umbrella were more likely to report having access to a mentor (67.5 percent compared to 55.3 per cent) and access to a formal mentor (65.8 per cent compared to 29.5 per cent) than young people who do not identify as such.
- Youth who faced one or more risky life experiences during ages of 12 to 18 – such as family interaction with the law, school troubles, and other experiences – reported higher access to mentoring (58.9 per cent compared to 51.4 per cent) and access to formal mentoring (37.7 per cent compared to 21.7 per cent) than youth who did not face any such experiences.
- Additionally, youth who had experienced a mental or physical disability that affected their functional abilities and diverse ethnocultural groups also reported higher access to mentoring and formal mentoring, respectively.

### Unmet mentoring needs

- Despite many youth having access to mentoring, nearly half (54.3 per cent) of respondents overall reported facing barriers or having an unmet need related to mentoring during ages 6 to 18
- Among youth who had a mentor, an even greater proportion (61.7 per cent) reported having unmet needs. Furthermore, several sub-groups are more likely to report having unmet needs (Figure 3).

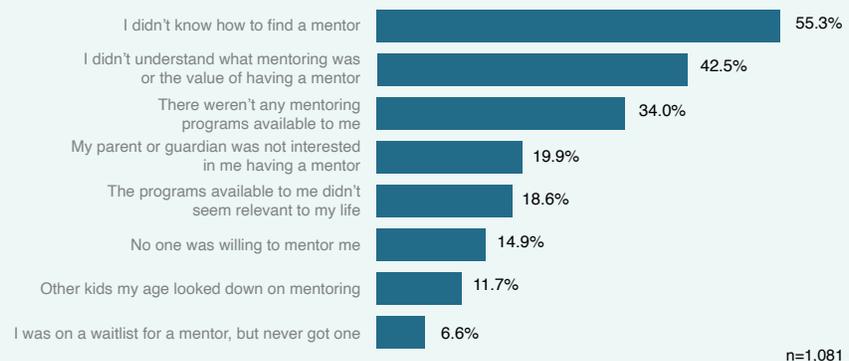
**Figure 3** Proportion of respondents reporting unmet mentoring needs, by demographic sub-groups.



All sub-groups shown below have significant differences (p<0.01). Sample numbers vary for each group.

- Many of these sub-groups reporting higher likelihood of unmet needs also had higher access to mentoring. Overall, these preliminary results suggest it is possible that while several sub-groups may have access to mentors, they face gaps in accessing the right mentor.
- Youth reported not knowing how to find a mentor as the most common barrier to access a mentor. Other commonly reported barriers (similar across sub-groups) are shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4** Barriers to accessing a mentoring among those who said they had unmet needs



n=1,081

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## Characteristics of youth's most meaningful mentors

Access to mentoring varied among respondents with different demographic characteristics. For example:

- 80.4 per cent reported their most meaningful mentor was an informal mentor, and nearly all youth (95.0 per cent) rated their mentoring relationship as a positive experience.
- Two thirds (66.6 per cent) reported their most meaningful mentor was more than 6 years older than them.
- Just over half (55.5 per cent) indicated that mentoring was held one-on-one, whereas 16.3 per cent reporting it was conducted alongside other youth and 27.3 per cent said it was a mix of both.
- Mentors were related to youth in diverse ways, the most common being teachers or school staff (21.8 per cent), family friends (13.7 per cent), and other adult relatives (12.6 per cent).

## Outcomes associated with having a mentor

Preliminary analysis indicates having access to a mentor may be associated with a higher likelihood of:

- Reporting positive mental health and very strong/ strong sense of belonging to one's local community.
- Pursuing higher education and being currently employed and/or studying.
- Having experience mentoring others and being interested in serving as a mentor in the future.

### Contact:

Canadian Mentoring Partnership  
220 Yonge St. Ste. 110a  
Toronto (Ontario)  
M5B 2H1

1 (800) 263-9133 ext. 59  
[info.cmp@mentoringcanada.ca](mailto:info.cmp@mentoringcanada.ca)