



uOttawa

Youth Futures: Breaking the Cycle of Poverty through Education

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Shaping our future together

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Youth Futures

- Vision
- History
- Partners
- Components
- Funding sources
- Outcomes
- Evaluation



Two essential components that will help lift people from poverty:

- ❑ Education

- ❑ Relationships

-Ruby Payne, PhD, Author,
*A Framework for
Understanding Poverty*

Youth Futures' Vision

- **Breaking the cycle of poverty through education**
- **Enhancing social cohesion, social stability, and civic engagement**
- **Transforming the lives of youth and their families**



Targeted Approach

Recruiting youth aged 16-21 who:

- .May be the first in their family to attend post-secondary**
- .Reside in low-income, social housing and/or high-risk neighbourhoods**
- .Are willing to take an active role in shaping their future and can commit to a 7-month program**

History

- Established in 2008 by University of Ottawa
- Initially a 2-week program
- Evolved into a 7-month bilingual program, serving about 75 youth/yr
- Multiple partners in the community
- Continues to expand

Key Partners

University of Ottawa
City of Ottawa
Ottawa Community Housing



Additional Partners

- Carleton University
- Saint Paul's University
- Algonquin College
- La Cité Collégiale
- High Schools
- Pathways to Education
- Ottawa Police Service
- Children's Aid
- Odawa Native Friendship Centre
- Employers
- Community centres / other community agencies



Four Key Program Components

1. Leadership training
2. Engagement
3. Summer employment
4. Post-secondary orientation

1. Leadership Training

10 weekends and March Break:

- **CPR Level C / First-Aid**
- **Hi-Five Certification**
- **Employment Preparation**
- **AODA training**
- **Volunteering**



2. Engagement

- **Community: 40 volunteer hours required to graduate high school**
- **Parental: important component to youth success**



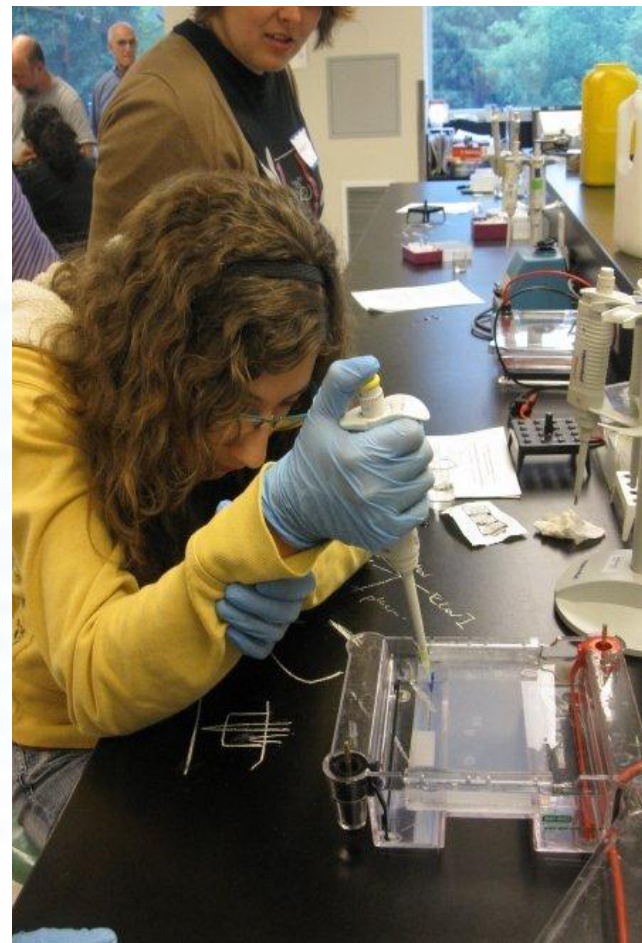
3. Summer Employment



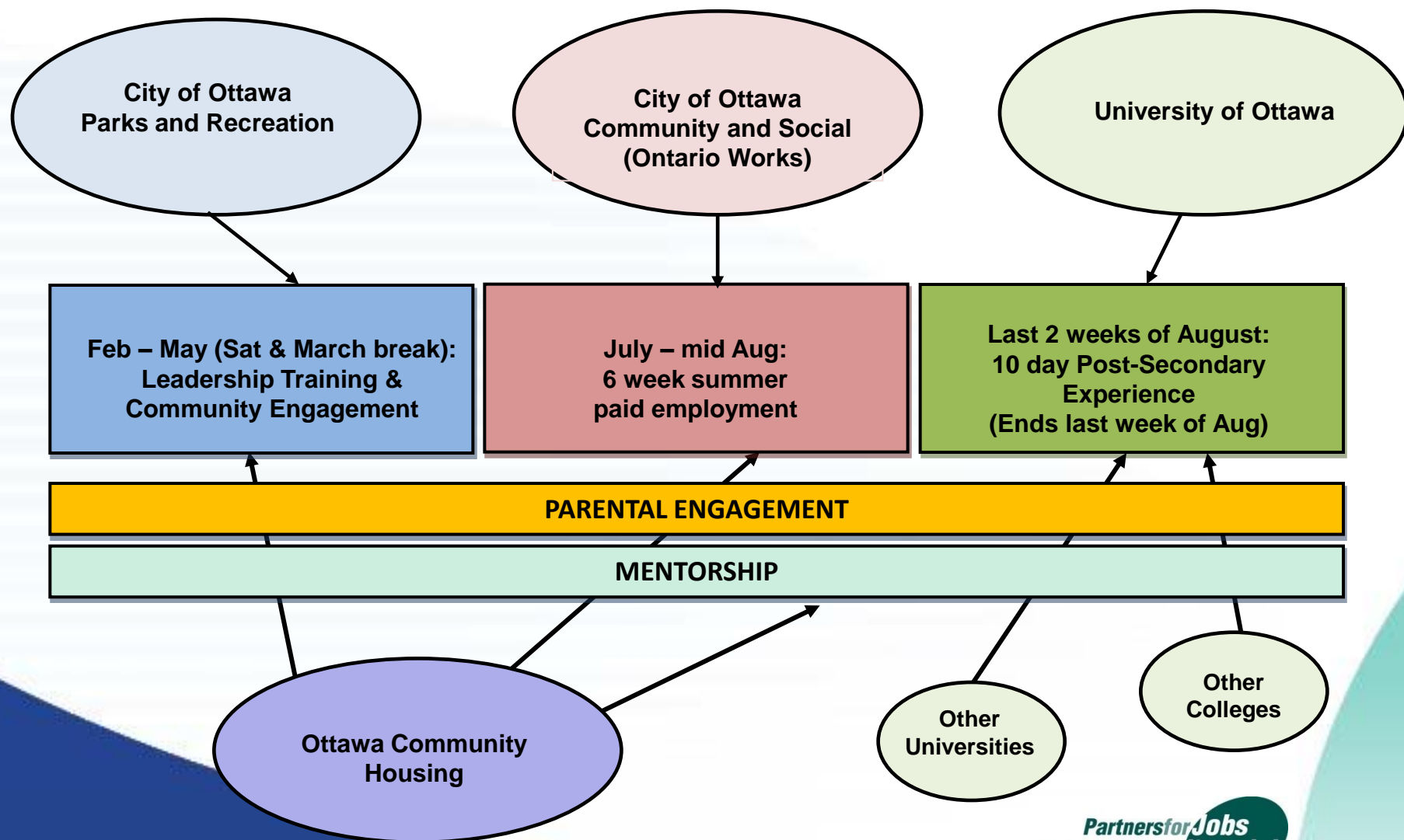
- 6 weeks paid employment with employers in the public, private and community sectors
- Enhancing work experience and skill development for long-term sustainability
- Earn about \$2,500

4. Post-Secondary Orientation

- 2 weeks of on-campus post-secondary experience provides exposure to a variety of university and college campuses, programs and courses
- Demystifies and increases familiarity with the university/college environment



Youth Futures' Continuum



Funding Sources

- Reinvestment of municipal savings from the social assistance upload (\$300K)
- University of Ottawa
- In-kind contributions from multiple partners (e.g. staff time, volunteer professors, etc.)
- Leveraging other funding sources (e.g. province, city, employers)

Outcomes for 2014

- 370 youth applications
- 76 youth accepted
- 41% males, 59% females
- 95% completion rate



Outcomes Since 2008

- 1,200 youth applications
- 375 youth accepted
- 95% completion rate

Participant and partner feedback is exceptional – “more confidence”, “improved self-esteem”, “developed leadership skills”, “opened doors”, “life-changing”...

Evaluation

- **Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Grant**
- **Evaluation components:**
 - ❖ **Interviews with Champions, Coordinators, Mentors, Participants, Parents**
 - ❖ **Self-evaluation by the Coordinators' Table**
 - ❖ **1-year outcomes evaluation (PhD Psychology student)**

Going Forward

- Youth Futures has grown rapidly over the last 7 years – program components, partners and popularity
- Balance the interests of:
 - ❖ Growing the program to respond to community; with
 - ❖ Capacity and resources required to support this growth

