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Strategies for Supporting Youth Education: A Snapshot of Early Intervention Programs in Ontario

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Executive Summary

While Canada leads other OECD member countries in postsecondary education (PSE) participation rates, there still remain underrepresented segments of the population which are less likely to pursue PSE. Ontarians who come from low-income households, have parents with no PSE, live in a rural area, identify as an Aboriginal person, and/or have a disability are less likely to enrol in PSE (Norrie & Zhao, 2011). Youth from some ethnic and racial groups are also less likely to pursue PSE, particularly university (Abada, Hou, & Ram, 2008).

This paper focuses on early intervention programs as one approach to support underrepresented youth to complete secondary school and make the transition to PSE. These programs are intended to provide youth with the resources, support and information necessary to avoid dropping out of school and to increase their chances of participating in PSE (Chambers & Deller, 2011). Early intervention programs can originate within the elementary and secondary school systems, colleges, universities, community centres or other community-based organizations.

The first section of this report is a literature review summarizing the key thinking on the role of early intervention programs in supporting access. Much of what we know in Canada about these programs is drawn from the American context, where research on the topic has been extensive. As a result, the literature review draws heavily from American sources, making links to the Canadian context where possible.

The second section of this report provides a snapshot of six community-based early intervention programs in Ontario, which aim to minimize barriers to participation in PSE. The search for programs took on a multi-method approach, including consultations with agency and community program advocates, website searches, a review of government documents and a scan of peer-reviewed journals. The process was guided by the following questions:

- Which community-based early intervention programs exist in Ontario?
- Which services and strategies are these programs incorporating to support secondary school students in their education?
- What challenges, if any, are programs experiencing?
- What impacts, if any, are programs having on students?

From the over 50 programs that were brought to the researchers' attention, six both met the criteria and responded to the invitation to participate. The authors of this report interviewed program founders and leaders in the winter of 2011 and spring of 2012 to gather information about the programs in question and their influence on the relevant populations. The six programs profiled in the report include:

- *Jessie's – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women*. The Toronto-based centre offers teenage mothers access to education, health and housing support, along with a range of other services aimed at supporting overall well-being. The onsite alternative secondary school provides teenage mothers with the opportunity to earn academic credits while receiving free onsite daycare.
- *Native Youth Advancement with Education Hamilton*. The program supports Aboriginal secondary school youth with their education and aims to create a sense of belonging within the community through a range of academic, cultural and recreational services across select secondary schools.
- *YMCA – YOU CAN GO*. The program offers new residents of Canada the opportunity to learn about the PSE system and their potential career paths through a two-hour workshop in Toronto. In addition to the workshop, participants have the option of accessing other YMCA services.

- *University of Toronto – Saturday Program and Summer Mentorship Program in the Health Sciences.* The *Saturday Program* is led by medical students and supported logistically by the University of Toronto medical school, while the *Summer Mentorship Program* is led by the University of Toronto medical school and supported by medical student volunteers. The twelve-week *Saturday Program* offers academic and mentoring services to secondary school youth on a University of Toronto campus. The four-week *Summer Mentorship Program in the Health Sciences* offers secondary school students the opportunity to gain a secondary school credit while exploring postsecondary programs and careers at the University of Toronto and its affiliate institutions.
- *Pathways to Education Canada.* The program offers a range of services under the pillars of academic, financial, social and advocacy supports to secondary school students within designated catchment areas throughout the duration of secondary school. Originating in Toronto’s Regent Park neighborhood, the program has expanded to over ten communities across Canada.
- *Wilfrid Laurier University – Building Bridges to Success.* The program offers secondary school students the opportunity to experience university by participating in either a three-month certificate-based course or a four-month university credit course at the Waterloo campus. Several adjunct supports are made available to help ensure that students successfully complete the program.

A number of lessons emerged from a study of the six programs. In keeping with existing research, the programs offer a mix of services in order to target the web of potential barriers youth face in graduating from secondary school and pursuing PSE. Built into each program is the “one arm around one child” approach, which offers youth a tailored experience that reflects their unique needs and circumstances. Consistent with the literature, interview findings also support the importance of recognizing the unique cultural backgrounds of the community being served in creating effective programs. In addition, most of the programs incorporate some level of peer support with others who have similar backgrounds and/or challenges, which has been shown to contribute to student success. A few interviewers echoed the challenges, documented in the American literature, of conducting program evaluations.

In summary, since barriers seldom occur in isolation, programs usually offer a variety of early intervention strategies to support youth. Some interventions are more clearly focused on alleviating certain barriers – the most obvious being financial assistance – but changing student aspirations and improving academic preparedness are more likely fostered through a specialized mix of services. Community and parental involvement is also important. If programs are going to be sustainable, they need to be generated out of and adapted to the needs of the community. Finally, systematic evaluations are challenging to conduct. However, measurable outcomes offer students, community members and researchers a valuable window on what works and on how to adapt resources to best meet the needs of those being served. Despite program limitations and the gaps in the research, early intervention programs can be one of the more interesting and effective ways of addressing the needs of youth who traditionally encounter barriers to PSE.

Introduction

Canada is a leader on the international stage in postsecondary education (PSE) participation, ranking first among OECD member countries in the proportion of adults with a college education and eighth in the proportion of those with a university education (OECD, 2012). The PSE attainment rate in Ontario is among the highest across the provinces at 62 per cent for the population aged 25 to 64 (HEQCO, 2010). However, despite these positive numbers, certain segments of the population are not pursuing PSE to the same extent as others. Research shows that Ontarians who are from low-income households, have parents with no PSE, live in a rural area, identify as an Aboriginal person, and/or have a disability are less likely to enrol in PSE (Norrie & Zhao, 2011). Youth from some ethnic and racial groups are also less likely to pursue PSE, particularly university (Abada, Hou, & Ram, 2008).¹ The fairly substantial literature on access supports the view that barriers to PSE are formed during secondary school years and even earlier (Berger & Motte, 2007).

This paper focuses on early intervention programs as one approach to support underrepresented youth to complete secondary school and make the transition to PSE. These programs are intended to provide youth with the resources, support and information necessary to avoid dropping out of school and to increase their chances of participating in PSE (Chambers & Deller, 2011). They can originate within the elementary and secondary school systems, colleges, universities, community centres or other community-based organizations.

The first section of this report is a literature review summarizing the key thinking on the role of early intervention programs in supporting access. Commentators in Canada have relatively recently turned their thinking toward early intervention programs as a way of addressing access barriers (Cunningham, Redmond, & Merisotis, 2003; Educational Policy Institute, 2008; Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, 2011), led most notably by the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF) pilot projects (see in particular *Future to Discover Pilot Project*, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, 2012; *BC AVID Pilot Project*, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, 2010; and *LE, NONET Pilot Project*, Hunt, Lalonde, & Rondeau, 2010). However, much of what we know in Canada about these programs is still in its infancy. As a result, the majority of literature on early intervention programs reviewed in this first section is drawn from the American context, where the research is more extensive and covers four decades of programs. This report will rely heavily on the lessons learned from south of the border and draw links where possible to the Canadian context.

The second section of this report provides a snapshot of six community-based early intervention programs in Ontario, which aim to minimize barriers to participation in PSE. The authors of this report interviewed program founders and leaders from the six programs, which range in duration from two-hour workshops to multi-year supports offered throughout secondary school. Observing the types of services being offered to underrepresented Ontario youth can help provide a fuller understanding of what is happening locally to support youth with their education.

¹ For more information on underrepresented groups in PSE, see *Informing the Future of Higher Education: 2011 HEQCO Community Report*, available at www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Community_Report_2011_Long_ENG.pdf, and HEQCO's *Third Annual Review and Research Plan* (2010), available at <http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/TARRP.pdf>.

Literature Review

The literature on access has been extensively reviewed elsewhere (Anisef et al., 1985; Finnie, Childs, & Wismer, 2011; Norrie & Zhao, 2011; HEQCO, 2010; EKOS, 2009). To summarize, when it comes to the continued underrepresentation of certain groups in PSE, individuals usually face a combination of potential barriers that may not be resolved with one single solution or intervention (Chambers & Deller, 2011; EKOS, 2009; Berger et al., 2007; Finnie, Sweetman, & Usher, 2008). Past research on access has identified factors that can work in combination to influence a youth's participation in PSE, including parental education, academic achievement, financial support, the availability of information on PSE, peer group influence and self-confidence (Chambers & Deller, 2011). Parental education in particular has been shown to be one of the strongest indicators of whether or not youth pursue PSE (Berger et al., 2007; Drolet, 2005; Finnie et al., 2011; Norrie & Zhao, 2011). Researchers note that:

For youth whose parents participated in postsecondary education, it is more likely that PSE is an expectation, and that the parent is on hand to offer advice about programs and possible institutions that the child might attend in the future, talk about their own experience and how it benefitted them, help the child figure out how postsecondary can help them achieve their goals, help them network with others on postsecondary choices, and get them the right information (Chambers & Deller, 2011, p. 54).

Parental education has a complex relationship with other barriers, such as income. Youth from low-income backgrounds are still less likely to participate in PSE, especially university, than their middle- and high-income peers (Frenette, 2007). In the case of youth with no parental history of PSE, some researchers have argued that while these young people are more likely to be of low-income backgrounds, they also have lower household ambitions towards PSE, show less self-efficacy and focus less on academic preparedness (Finnie & Mueller, 2008). It should be noted, however, that youth from certain immigrant groups are more likely to go to university than their peers, regardless of family income level or parental educational background (Finnie & Mueller, 2009).

It has also been noted that youth from low-income families tend to overestimate the cost of PSE and underestimate the earnings benefits related to PSE attainment – more so than youth from middle-income and high-income families (Usher, 2005; Palameta & Voyer, 2010). To be sure, these findings point to the need for student aid to offset financial burdens. They also indicate that finances alone will not eliminate the PSE participation gap (Norrie & Zhao, 2011; Zhao, 2012). Students whose parents have participated in higher education benefit from their parents' "cultural capital," which includes information, guidance and/or academic support. Early intervention programs can help those students who are on the precipice of opting out of higher education by offering them support and potentially fostering cultural capital.

To add to the complexity of these barriers, the moment when an individual decides to go to PSE is difficult to isolate and influence. It is unique to each individual and develops from his or her past realities, expectations, aspirations, knowledge of options, available resources and belief in future possibilities (Chambers & Deller, 2011). Research from the US suggests that shifting perceptions about the future can take time. For instance, findings suggest that an intervention program can be more beneficial the longer students participate in the supports and services offered (Mathematica Policy Research Inc, 2004).

Early intervention programs attempt to target that decision point by packaging a variety of services in one program to offset the network of barriers and challenges, while encouraging youth to complete secondary school and make decisions about PSE. A 2001 College Board survey of 1,091 early intervention programs in the US (Educational Policy Institute, 2001) and an analysis of state-run early intervention programs by Cunningham et al. (2003) both revealed four broad categories of services common to most early intervention programs: academic supports, information provision, financial supports and counseling/mentoring.

Academic Supports

Across the majority of early intervention programs in the US, academic supports can range from tutoring to on-campus initiatives such as campus visits. A growing body of research suggests that giving youth some contact with a college campus (for example, by enabling the student to attend courses or spend time on campus) can enhance his or her pre-college preparedness (Gándara & Bial, 2001). Students' ability to see themselves on a college campus may have an effect on their decision to participate in PSE. The US research also indicates that requiring youth who participate in early intervention programs to meet certain academic requirements, while at the same time providing them with the necessary supports to achieve those requirements, is one of the most effective ways of encouraging youth to participate in PSE (Cunningham et al., 2003; Lingenfelter, 2007).

Information

Information is a core component of most early intervention initiatives (Cunningham et al., 2003; Educational Policy Institute, 2001; 2012). The Canadian pilot program *Life after Secondary School*, which ran from 2010 to 2012 in British Columbia and was recently launched in Ontario, provides secondary school students with assistance and information on how to complete postsecondary application forms and apply for financial aid. Although results examining the program's influence on postsecondary participation rates are pending, application rates for PSE at participating secondary schools are reported to have increased between 35 per cent to approximately 75 per cent (Tamburri, 2012).

It makes intuitive sense that students facing certain decisions about their future will make use of easy and accessible information about their choices and the requirements attached to those choices. In the best case scenario, easy access to accurate information can provide part of the motivation an individual needs to make a decision about pursuing PSE. It is important to note, however, that information alone is rarely influential in encouraging youth who would not otherwise apply to participate in PSE (Cunningham et al., 2003).

Financial Supports

In the US, financial components of early intervention programs often take the form of scholarships or full or partial tuition promised to students who successfully complete the program and enrol in PSE (Educational Policy Institute, 2001; 2012; Gándara & Bial, 2001). For example, among the most popular community and not-for-profit organizations is the “*I Have A Dream*” (IHAD) Foundation. There are about 180 IHAD programs in the US, which commit to support a secondary school cohort for ten to 15 years (“I Have A Dream” Foundation, 2008; Educational Policy Institute, 2001).² Outcomes point to significantly higher secondary school graduation and PSE participation rates and better secondary school grades for students who participated in the program than for those who did not (Arete Corporation, 2001). Programs like IHAD are based on the notion that tuition assistance in combination with other services can make PSE seem more viable for many students who may otherwise opt out early because of the real or perceived costs.

Counseling and Mentoring

A variety of forms of support and counseling – guidance counselors, community support, tutoring, mentoring and parental support – are built into most early intervention programs. Counseling allows for

² IHAD programs are tailored to meet the needs of the community but they all share common components, including family involvement, educational support, mentoring, counseling, employment and recreational resources, among others. For more information, see the “I Have A Dream” Foundation at <http://www.ihaveadreamfoundation.org/html>.

the opportunity to attend to an individual's needs, or to provide "one arm around one child" (Levine & Nidiffer, 1996). Most programs combine the distribution of information and the supports for academic success with the guidance necessary to achieve the expected results. A growing number of programs aim to involve parents in the process. Research suggests that incorporating the parents' culture and having counselors who can communicate in the parents' language can help support parental involvement. (Gándara & Bial, 2001).

In summary, information and academic, financial and counseling supports are common elements of most/many early intervention programs. Given that barriers differ both among individuals and over time, it makes sense that the most successful programs are those that are flexible enough to be responsive to individual needs. At the same time, each program, despite its unique character, still needs to reach as many students as possible. In the US, despite program success, findings suggest that only 5 per cent of those who are eligible to receive early intervention services through the federal TRIO³ programs actually have access because of limited program funds (Perna & Swail, 2001). Ultimately, the concept of "one arm around one child" (Levine & Nidiffer, 1996) must be balanced with the need to make a program as scalable and systematic as possible.

Program Impacts

According to the literature, much of what we know about early intervention programs remains anecdotal – a finding we shall see echoed by some of the Ontario program representatives interviewed. It is generally agreed that we still know too little about the success of early intervention programs and how they affect postsecondary participation (Educational Policy Institute, 2001; Gándara & Bial, 2001; Gullat & Jan, 2003).

Program evaluations can be challenging. So while there seems to be consensus in the American literature that there has been an aggregate increase in the success rates of US programs (Chambers & Deller, 2011), it remains unclear how this success is actually measured. The College Board Review of US early intervention programs found that 94 per cent of programs claimed to have conducted evaluations, but on further investigation few of these programs actually tracked students longitudinally or did a thorough empirical study (Educational Policy Institute, 2001). The review also indicated that the limited number of program evaluations is usually a product of limited funding and resources at the program level, all of which are directed toward the student and the program, with little left over for evaluation. Similarly, Gándara and Bial (2001) conducted an extensive review of US early intervention programs and reported that few programs had built-in research measures that included comparable control groups, longitudinal comparisons or monitored program attrition. Assessing programs over time can bring particular challenges, as goals evolve or components that seem intuitively to work are given more emphasis across different cohorts. As a way of addressing such challenges, some researchers advocate for external evaluations to ensure that programs are provided with information on how effectively student needs are being met (Venezia & Rainwater, 2007).

Despite the challenges of program evaluation, Gándara and Bial (2001) offer insights gained from the available studies to reveal several features associated with effective programs, as well as common limitations. Among these features, the authors note that it is important to have a person who monitors and guides the student over time, such as a mentor, program coordinator or counselor. Students also tend to stay engaged when they have support from their peers in the form of academic, social or emotional support, and when recognition and respect for cultural backgrounds are evident. Students are also more

³ TRIO are US federal outreach and student services programs aimed at supporting individuals from disadvantaged groups, including low-income individuals, first-generation college students and individuals with disabilities, with their education from middle school to the post-bachelor level. For more information, see the U.S. Department of Education: Office of Postsecondary Education at www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html.

likely to stay engaged when the curriculum is in line with their individual needs and pushes them to excel. Financial support, especially for those who identify as low income, can also motivate students.

With respect to common challenges in program evaluations, Gándara and Bial (2001) note that many programs do not report on program attrition or on what happens to students after they exit the program. Few programs indicate how students are selected to participate or the extent of contact participants have with the program. With some exceptions, indicators of improved academic performance are limited. Not much is known about long-term student outcomes or about whether students who participate in the program are more likely to pursue PSE than those who do not. Little is known about the actual costs of many programs. In the absence of evaluations that provide guidance on how best to target those students who might get the greatest benefit out of the program (aside from anecdotal evidence), it is difficult to assess how to control for self-selection. Given the broad state of affairs in program evaluations, the development of program improvements is limited, as is the opportunity to share proven practices and the ability to fight against cutbacks.

As previously mentioned, the literature on early intervention programs is heavily drawn from the US. Gathering what we know about the range of programs provides a context for understanding the types of programs available within Ontario. The next section begins with a description of the process for finding and selecting the six early intervention programs reviewed in this paper. A case study of each program follows, drawing on findings from the interviews with senior program representatives, along with relevant information gathered from program websites and reports.

Six Early Intervention Programs in Ontario

Methodology

Students in the US can turn to a one-stop directory, *Pathways to College Network*, to find a helpful overview of available early intervention programs. When HEQCO set out to develop this report, however, Ontario did not have a comparable resource. As a result, an environmental scan was conducted in order to understand the landscape. The aim was to capture all of the community-based early intervention programs across the province that serve youth from a low-income household, with a disability, from a rural area, and/or of Aboriginal background. The search for programs took on a multi-method approach, including consultations with agency and community program advocates, website searches, a review of government documents and a scan of peer-reviewed journals. The process was guided by the following questions:

- What community-based early intervention programs exist in Ontario?
- Which services and strategies are these programs incorporating to support secondary school students in their education?
- What challenges, if any, are programs experiencing?
- What impacts, if any, are programs having on students?

The researchers catalogued over 50 programs, and we must assume that other valuable programs may not have been captured at all. A set of criteria was developed in order to determine whether the captured programs fit the scope of this study. To be considered, programs had to have the following characteristics:

- The program mandate in whole or in part needs to support the education of underrepresented youth;
- Participants must include youth of secondary school-level age;
- Programs must be free to the participants.

Based on the environmental scan and the criteria for participation, 14 programs were selected and program representatives holding a variety of staff positions were sent an email invitation to participate in the study.⁴ Six of seven responding representatives confirmed that their program had the characteristics required for participation. The interviews (telephone or in person) occurred in the winter of 2011 and the spring of 2012. For the purposes of this paper, the program representatives will be referred to as interviewees. The next section of the report showcases the six programs.

Interviews and Findings

Aside from their common, overarching goal to provide educational supports, the six community-based early intervention programs, profiled below, have unique missions. Each program provides a number of services that are targeted to a specific youth group. A brief summary of the different programs is provided below and is followed by the full case studies:

- *Jessie's – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women.* The Toronto-based centre offers teenage mothers access to education, health and housing support, along with a range of other services aimed at supporting overall well-being. The onsite alternative secondary school provides teenage mothers with the opportunity to earn academic credits while receiving free onsite daycare.
- *Native Youth Advancement with Education Hamilton.* The program supports Aboriginal secondary school youth with their education and aims to create a sense of belonging within the community through a range of academic, cultural and recreational services across select secondary schools.
- *YMCA – YOU CAN GO.* The program offers new residents of Canada the opportunity to learn about the PSE system and their potential career paths through a two-hour workshop in Toronto. In addition to the workshop, participants have the option of accessing other YMCA services.
- *University of Toronto – Saturday Program and Summer Mentorship Program in the Health Sciences.* *The Saturday Program* is led by medical students and supported logistically by the University of Toronto medical school, while the *Summer Mentorship Program* is led by the University of Toronto medical school and supported by medical student volunteers. The twelve-week *Saturday Program* offers academic and mentoring services to secondary school youth on a University of Toronto campus. The four-week *Summer Mentorship Program in the Health Sciences* offers secondary school students the opportunity to gain a secondary school credit while exploring postsecondary programs and careers at the University of Toronto and its affiliate institutions.
- *Pathways to Education Canada.* The program offers a range of services under the pillars of academic, financial, social and advocacy supports to secondary school students within designated catchment areas throughout the duration of secondary school. Originating in Toronto's Regent Park neighborhood, the program has expanded to over ten communities across Canada.
- *Wilfrid Laurier University – Building Bridges to Success.* The program offers secondary school students the opportunity to experience university by participating in either a three-month certificate-based course or a four-month university credit course at the Waterloo campus. Several adjunct supports are made available to help ensure that students successfully complete the program.

⁴ Other HEQCO research has covered related programs that did not fit these specific criteria. See Sachin, Levin, and Segedin (forthcoming); and Malik, Guan, Vetere, and Abramovitch (2011).

Jessie's – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women

Purpose. *Jessie's – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women (Jessie's)* was established in 1982 in Toronto and is one of North America's first centres for teen parents and their children. The Centre is guided by the principle that well-being is fostered through accessibility to education, nutrition, housing and

Mission Statement:

"Our mission is to nurture the healthy development of pregnant teenagers, young parents and their children."

www.jessiescentre.org

an overall sense of belonging. In addition to an onsite secondary school program, over 30 other services, including health services, counseling and daycare, are available. The focus of this report is on one of the most popular programs, the onsite secondary school. Its goal is to prepare young women who are pregnant or who recently had a child for re-integration into the secondary school system and for PSE.

Services. The onsite secondary school offers young women from Grades 9 to 12 the chance to earn up to three secondary school credits in a full-day semester program. While in class, young women are offered free onsite care for their children (who are at least three months of age). In addition to obtaining academic credits, counselors offer different types of assistance depending on individual needs (e.g., housing, finances and support with re-integrating into the regular school system). Financial assistance includes transportation tokens, free breakfasts and lunches, and ten annual scholarships of \$500 for those pursuing PSE.

"When women get pregnant the assumption is that they are throwing away their education, but it is the opposite. They talk about how they need to finish high school because they want to be a role model, and they want to provide a good standard of living for their children."

Interviewee from Jessie's – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women

Eligibility and Size. Young women must be 18 years of age or younger when first registering at the Centre. Once enrolled in the program, they have access to services indefinitely. Seating at the onsite secondary school is limited to 12 students. Four seats are designated for prenatal women, while the remainder are intended for young mothers. Participation is self-selected, meaning that students apply directly after learning about the program. According to interviews, demand for the onsite secondary school quickly exceeds supply, usually resulting in a wait list. A point system assessing each individual's needs determines who participates. Attending the onsite secondary school does not mandate attendance in other services. Once secondary school credit(s) are obtained, individuals have the option of continuing to participate in other supports at their own discretion.

"A lot of them had to become an adult overnight. Some may have a housing crisis, some of their children fall ill, and the fact that they are all still able to focus on finishing high school is amazing. Many don't even have the support of their friends or families."

Interviewee from Jessie's – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women

"The challenge is feeling like we are doing enough because we have a waitlist for the secondary school and there are so many that you cannot accommodate."

Interviewee from Jessie's – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women

Challenges. There is a desire to expand the onsite secondary school to include multiple teachers across different classrooms, in order to accommodate more students and offer greater course variety. Unfortunately, financial constraints have had the opposite effect, as cuts have reduced the Centre to one teacher. Over 80 per cent of funds come from the Government of Ontario and the United Way. An ongoing reported challenge is maintaining the same standard of quality as costs continue to outpace funding.

Impact. Much of the information gathered regarding the impact of the onsite secondary school is anecdotal. Former participants report gratitude for the onsite secondary school, indicating that it allowed them to continue with their education. Some go on to provide their own community outreach by making secondary school visits to talk about being a young parent. It is the range of supports available at the Centre, along with the individualized staff attention, that allows for a customized experience intended to fit individual needs. Program evaluation and tracking outcomes is challenging according to the interviewee because participants start at different ages and access different services depending on their circumstances. Staff members are starting to track postsecondary enrolments, but remaining in contact with participants who access the Centre at different points in their lives is difficult.

“A lot of young women say that this program made a difference in their life and they may not have returned to school otherwise.”

Interviewee from Jessie’s – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women

Native Youth Advancement with Education Hamilton

Purpose. The *Native Youth Advancement with Education Hamilton (NYA WEH)* is a stay-in-school initiative launched in 2003 for Aboriginal youth in Hamilton. The name “*NYA WEH*” serves not only as an acronym but also means “thank you” in Mohawk. This program was created to address the high drop-out rate among Hamilton’s Aboriginal youth. *NYA WEH* aims to provide Aboriginal secondary school youth with the supports needed to overcome any potential barriers that may impede educational growth. Participating schools integrate “western style” education with traditional Aboriginal education, since both philosophies are viewed as valuable to the healthy development of the local community. The program is offered across three secondary schools: Sir John A. MacDonald Secondary School (SJAM), Cathedral Secondary School and Parkview Secondary School. *NYA WEH* is partnered with Hamilton Executive Directors’ Aboriginal Coalition and sponsored by Niwasa Aboriginal Education. It is funded by the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board and Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board, along with the Hamilton Community Foundation. The focus of this section will be on SJAM, the first site to launch *NYA WEH*.

Mission Statement:

“The Native Youth Advancement with Education Hamilton (NYA WEH) is dedicated to the progressive development of Hamilton’s Aboriginal community through educational success...”

<http://schools.hwdsb.on.ca/sjam/community/nya-weh>

Services. The program offers a range of services, including academic and nutritional enrichment, employment services, and cultural and recreational events. The staff complement includes three youth advisors and a cultural outreach worker. There is a resource room at SJAM intended for Aboriginal students, which serves as a space to complete assignments, receive tutoring and guidance, eat meals and do laundry. To ease financial burdens, daily breakfast and lunch are provided, along with transportation tokens. To provide community enrichment, *NYA WEH* also offers activities to all SJAM students and to the outside local community, ranging from floor hockey to drumming. Nine courses on Aboriginal culture are offered by elders and traditional teachers (like medicine keepers) to all interested students.

“To break down barriers for Aboriginal students so that they can be successful in high school (both the small and big barriers), so that secondary school can be a top priority and they can go onto postsecondary.”

Interviewee from NYA WEH

Eligibility and Size. The *NYA WEH* program is directed to support Status, Non-Status, Metis and Inuit students (as defined by the Government of Canada’s Indian Act). Approximately 120 out of 1,200 students at SJAM are registered in *NYA WEH*. To join, students need to self-identify as Aboriginal, have a discussion with a principal and a youth worker, and complete a registration form. Students are welcome at any grade level and self-select their activities.

“There are 1,200 students in the school and we have our own community within that – this is a safe place, a place without judgment, we don’t look down on you, we just try find a solution to the problems.”

Interviewee from *NYA WEH*

Challenges. According to the interviewee, the main program challenge is related to funding. *NYA WEH* launched with a three-year grant from the Hamilton Community Foundation. Although grants have been renewed, financial constraints are said to limit program expansion.

Impact. There are several personal stories and anecdotal accounts of *NYA WEH*’s impact on student outcomes. Students have credited *NYA WEH* with enabling them to stay in school, providing them with an opportunity to re-connect to their Aboriginal roots, creating a space for issues to be addressed and alleviating isolation. The program is also praised for creating a school climate that embraces Aboriginal culture. Approximately 50 per cent of students who register in courses regarding Aboriginal culture at SJAM are non-Aboriginal. An evaluation tool is currently being developed to track participant outcomes, including secondary school graduation, credit accumulation and absenteeism. Moving forward, the interviewee would like to see *NYA WEH* support younger generations at the kindergarten and elementary school level.

YMCA – YOU CAN GO

Purpose. *YOU CAN GO* was initiated by the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation in 2008 under the coordination of the YMCA of Greater Toronto. The goal is to motivate and provide awareness and knowledge of postsecondary education to new residents of Canada. Participants are given an opportunity to explore career paths and employment options and are offered assistance with program and school selection, along with financial aid options. The program was initially intended for secondary school students but later expanded to include newcomers to Canada of any age. The initiative was offered across 12 regional sites. However, with the demise of the Foundation and its support, the only remaining program is located at the YMCA of Greater Toronto. The following section provides an overview of the program, with a focus on the existing location.

About *YOU CAN GO*:

*“...If you want to: get a hand to make it happen, talk to someone about your future, figure out if college, university, technical studies or apprenticeship could work for you, see a *YOU CAN GO* access worker at your local YMCA.”*

www.youcango.ca

Services. Formally, *YOU CAN GO* includes one workshop that is two hours in length and offered monthly at different YMCA newcomer information centres. Informally, *YOU CAN GO* staff point individuals to a number of related supports at the YMCA. The workshop is designed for those with relatively little knowledge of Ontario’s postsecondary system. There is no limit to the number of times an individual can attend a workshop, but they are designed to be attended only once. Each workshop includes a discussion with a role model who offers insights on PSE opportunities and requirements, and personal career outcomes. In addition to the workshop, YMCA staff arrange visits to college and university campuses for those who are interested. Participants seeking additional information outside of the workshop are encouraged to seek one-on-one

“It’s about presenting postsecondary education as a viable option...there are campus visits – this is to provide options. We just want them to see what life would look like...”

Interviewee from *YOU CAN GO*

support from YMCA staff. Staff can help connect a workshop participant with a postsecondary institutional representative.

Eligibility. *YOU CAN GO* is intended for those of at least 14 years of age who are new to Canada. Workshop participants are members of a YMCA newcomer centre. On average, between ten to 30 participants attend a workshop, and no registration is required. After the workshop, it is the responsibility of each individual to seek out additional supports at the YMCA.

“The purpose is to open up information about postsecondary in a group setting...it helps to answer – ‘what can I do when I finish secondary school?’”

Interviewee from *YOU CAN GO*

Impact. *YOU CAN GO*'s impact is documented anecdotally, with participants expressing gratitude for the PSE information provided. There is no record-keeping of adjunct services accessed by participants. It was noted that financial constraints limit the likelihood of an evaluation. When funding ended, only the YMCA of Greater Toronto managed to keep the program running by absorbing the cost. The interviewee hopes that one day the program will re-launch across Canada.

“My biggest surprise was the need for it – the need was overwhelming...people have said, ‘Oh I never knew’ or ‘I wasn’t aware of that.’”

Interviewee from *YOU CAN GO*

University of Toronto – Community Affairs (Service Learning) Programs: The Saturday Program and the Summer Mentorship Program in Health Sciences

Purpose. The University of Toronto's Community Affairs (Service Learning) Programs provide 25 different initiatives for underprivileged or marginalized groups, from children to seniors in Ontario. These programs are hosted by the University of Toronto's Medical Society and the Office of Health Professions Student Affairs in the Faculty of Medicine. The focus of this report will be on the *Saturday Program* and the *Summer Mentorship Program in Health Sciences*

“Our vision is to foster values of service and compassion in students and respond to the changing needs of our community.”

Office of Health Professions Student Affairs,
University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine

(*Summer Mentorship Program*), both of which support secondary school students. The *Saturday Program* was founded in 1996 by medical students at the University of Toronto. Their goal was to provide tutoring, mentorship and academic enrichment to underrepresented and indigenous secondary school students requiring support in Math, Science or English. The *Summer Mentorship Program*, on the other hand, enables students who are disadvantaged and underrepresented in the health sciences to explore postsecondary programs and careers in the Faculties of Sciences at the University of Toronto while earning a secondary school credit.

Services. The twelve-week *Saturday Program* begins each February at the University of Toronto's St. George and Mississauga campuses. The program consists of two-hour private tutorials in Math, Science or English, followed by one hour of recreational activities. Tutors are University of Toronto graduate student volunteers. There are two tutors per student and they rotate their services. In addition to providing academic support, tutors serve as role models by offering guidance and information on PSE and career possibilities. At the end of the twelve weeks, students graduate from the program, an occasion that is marked with a keynote speaker who provides insights on his or her own experiences and challenges. Breakfast and

“This is a rich opportunity for kids with no confidence in themselves and who never thought they would see a role model in their life...”

Interviewee from Community Affairs (Service Learning) Programs

transportation tickets are provided throughout the twelve weeks as a way of easing any financial hurdles to participation.

"It is a program of 'possibilities' that targets youth who have the ability but not the advantage to achieve goals which are key to success in the professions."

www.facmed.utoronto.ca/about/ethics/equity.htm

The *Summer Mentorship Program* runs for four weeks in July, five days a week. Students are paired with mentors in a field of interest within health and have the opportunity to attend lectures, experiments, hospitals, laboratories and community agencies. In a typical week, a student spends three days job-shadowing mentors. Students are required to complete a research

project on a health science topic and present the work in a poster presentation. At the end of the four weeks students earn a secondary school credit that can be used towards the completion of their secondary school diploma.

Eligibility and Size. Both the *Saturday* and the *Summer Mentorship Program* are aimed at those with barriers to enrichment opportunities. The *Saturday Program* accepts 150 students between Grade 8 and 11 who are recommended by guidance counselors/teachers within the Toronto District School Board. The *Summer Mentorship Program* accepts 50 students who are at least 16 years of age and have completed a Grade 10 or 11 Science course or a Grade 10 or 11 Social Sciences and Humanities course. The program is targeted towards students of African-Canadian or Aboriginal ancestry, as these two constituencies are reportedly underrepresented within medical school and other health professions programs. Students from the *Saturday Program* eventually enrol in the *Summer Mentorship Program*.

Challenges. Both programs are supported by the University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine and donors. With the *Summer Mentorship Program*, a grant has been established to enhance the participation of Aboriginal students from reserve or settlement communities, although financial challenges prevent the program from providing grants to allow the greater participation of students from local communities with financial need.

Impact. Anecdotal accounts of the *Saturday Program* point to a positive shift among participants in their attitude towards education. Students who pursue PSE are invited back as guest speakers to inspire the next generation. Results for one cohort revealed that nearly every student saw improvements in school grades, with some by up to 30 per cent (Antonacci, 2010). A longitudinal follow-up looking at secondary and postsecondary outcomes was recently completed with 64 alumni from the *Summer Mentorship Program*. Of these 64 respondents, the following outcomes were compiled: all completed secondary school and pursued PSE; 56 per cent went on to science-related fields of study and/or employment; 26.5 per cent completed or were in the process of a completing a master's degree; 23 per cent completed or were in the process of completing medical school; and 6 per cent have completed or are pursuing PhD programs in the sciences.

"It is life altering and we have seen this time and time again. There is one student that comes to mind – he was skipping school...his parents enrolled him in the Saturday Program and mid-way through the program he was getting so excited about coming on Saturdays, and now wants to be a neurologist and now totally has a purpose for going to school."

Interviewee from Community Affairs (Service Learning) Programs

Pathways to Education Canada

Purpose. Founded in 2001, *Pathways to Education Canada (Pathways)* is based on the premise that improving secondary school completion rates in low-income neighborhoods requires supports that stretch outside the regular classroom. The program model encompasses four “pillars” of assistance under the umbrella of academic, financial, social and advocacy support. Services are offered throughout secondary school to all students within the catchment area. The program originated in Toronto’s Regent Park Health Centre, which in 1999 began conducting research to improve the neighborhood’s secondary school completion rate and reduce neighborhood violence. Today, *Pathways* operates in twelve communities across Canada, with programs in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Manitoba.⁵

“Pathways to Education is helping youth in low-income communities graduate from high school and successfully transition into post-secondary education. Pathways addresses systemic barriers to education by providing leadership, expertise and a community-based program proven to lower drop-out rates.”

www.pathwaystoeducation.ca

Services. Academic support takes the form of after-school tutoring in core academic subjects four nights per week. Social support is offered by volunteers who run group mentoring activities to help students with their social skills, problem solving and career planning. There is group mentoring for students in Grades 9 and 10 and specialty/career mentoring for students in Grades 11 and 12. Financial assistance aims to alleviate some of the short-term and long-term barriers to completing secondary school and pursuing higher education. Depending on the site, students receive either a hot lunch or transportation tokens. Students are provided with \$1,000 for every year they participate in the program, up to a maximum of \$4,000, payable to the college or university of their choice. Advocacy support is provided through Student-Parent Support Workers (SPSW), who work one-on-one with students to help bridge connections between the student, their parents, school administrators, teachers and community agencies. The SPSW serve as counselors, advocates, confidantes, social workers and mediators. Regularly-scheduled meetings with the SPSW provide an opportunity for students to discuss issues, review grades, attendance, PSE options, and receive transportation tokens (if applicable). Each SPSW is assigned to approximately 50 students and acts, according to one interviewee, as “the glue that holds it all together.”

“Sometimes it’s difficult for the students to talk to their parents so we talk to their families as well. For example, this one girl wanted to go to the University of Ottawa and from her parents’ perspective it was not going to happen....we spoke to the parents...we just want parents to learn and inform themselves of what the options are and then they can make their own decisions.”

Interviewee from Pathways to Education Canada

Eligibility and Size. *Pathways* is open to all students who are of secondary school age within the catchment area. These areas are traditionally low-income neighborhoods with above average secondary school drop-out rates. The catchment area is defined through a process of consultations that require studying the geography of the neighborhoods and their corresponding demographic characteristics, such as income levels. As a rule of thumb, most catchment areas include 300 to 600 students. Exceptions include Regent Park, which encompasses approximately 900 students. Upon joining, students and parents are required to sign a contract, as a gesture of commitment and accountability. Students can pre-register in Grade 8

“We are not a teacher or a parent, but we are a trusted partner. However, there are conditions to participating – you have to show up.”

Representative of Pathways to Education Canada

⁵ The Regent Park site launched in 2001, followed by four additional sites in 2007 within Ontario, specifically in Kitchener, Lawrence Heights, Ottawa and Rexdale, and a fifth location in Verdun (PQ) in 2007. In 2009, community sites within Ontario were launched in Hamilton and Scarborough. By 2010, an additional three sites began in Kingston (ON), Winnipeg (MB) and Halifax (NS). Most recently in 2012, Pathways launched in Shawinigan (PQ).

but they can enter and leave the program at any time. In 2010/2011, there were 3,313 students enrolled in the program across Canada.

Challenges. Approximately 50 per cent of funds for the program come from the provincial and federal governments. According to feedback from the interviewee, ensuring that resources are sufficient will always be a concern. In terms of lessons learned, it became clear as the program evolved that for it to succeed, the unique needs of each community needed to be addressed.

“We are creating a school-going culture. In the past there were very few students in Grade 5 within Regent Park who said they were going onto postsecondary and today they take it for granted that they will graduate and go onto postsecondary.”

Interviewee from Pathways to Education Canada

Impact. *Pathways* has a portfolio of results ranging from student success stories to quantitative student outcomes, including a dedicated book chapter titled “Pathways to Education and Its Accomplishments” (Rowen, 2012). Key program indicators include secondary school drop-out rates, secondary school graduation rates, credit accumulation and attendance, and postsecondary participation rates. Student outcomes are compared to students within the same communities prior to the program, with peers in the same main schools but not participating in *Pathways*, and with school board averages across the different sites. Findings point to a 79 per cent average reduction in dropout rates for program participants across the first five cohorts in Regent Park, a doubling of secondary school graduation rates among program participants,⁶ and a \$24 social return for every \$1 invested in *Pathways*.⁷ Student testimonials have a resounding sense of gratitude towards *Pathways* for creating an inclusive atmosphere that empowers participants to complete secondary school and brings awareness of the possibilities within higher education. The outcomes generated have created a buzz of excitement and hope about the transformational qualities of this program.⁸ *Pathways* was recognized for its impact by Charity Intelligence as a Top Pick charity for the fourth consecutive year and received the official patronage of His Excellency The Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada.⁹ The vision of a “Graduation Nation” is tied to the plan to expand to 20 new sites by 2016.

“Pathways is focused like a laser beam on helping students graduate from high school, and provides a comprehensive set of supports that have proven effectiveness in keeping kids in school and giving them a voice.”

Interviewee from Pathways to Education Canada

Wilfrid Laurier University – Building Bridges to Success

Purpose. *The Building Bridges to Success Program (Building Bridges)* launched in 2011 at Wilfrid Laurier University. The program offers secondary school students from communities that have significantly lower rates of PSE participation the opportunity to experience university life. A certificate- and university-based course is offered with full access to university social engagements and recreational activities. The program has received funding support for five years in large part by the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation.

“Building Bridges to Success aims to provide students with a post-secondary experience to enhance confidence, study skills and career success.”

www.wlu.ca/buildingbridges

⁶ For more information on results, see www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/results/program-results.

⁷ In evaluating the impact of Pathways to Education Canada, the Boston Consulting Group revealed that every dollar invested in Pathways to Education resulted in a \$24 social return on investment for the wider community (based on higher incomes earned and reduced government transfer payments). For more information, see Boston Consulting Group (2011)

⁸ Pathways has been featured previously in newspapers. For more information, see the Globe and Mail editorial (2011, March 4) and Brown (2009, March 10) in the Toronto Star.

⁹ For more information on the awards granted to Pathways to Education Canada, see www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/results/awards-and-recognition.

Services. The certificate course, “University/College 101,” is designed to help with study skills and prepare for the transition to university. The course is offered in the evenings once a week in two-hour intervals for three months in the winter. The university credit course, “Building Bridges University Credit Course,” provides a university credit for completion of a first-year-level sociology course. Students are required to attend one three-hour lecture per week along with two hours of supplemental instruction bi-weekly for a four month period. The class is reserved for program participants; other university students are not allowed to enrol. However, academic requirements are consistent with other courses at Wilfrid Laurier University and include written assignments, multiple choice tests and exams. Students work with a senior student and learning assistant for additional support on issues like time management, essay writing, exam preparation and presentation skills. Participants in the university credit stream receive part-time student status at Wilfrid Laurier’s Waterloo campus, and students in both programs have the opportunity to participate in on-campus extra-curricular activities, gain access to campus athletic facilities and can take part in campus clubs and events. The program coordinator is a point of reference for participants and their parents/caregivers. Parents are invited to attend orientation sessions that include PSE information and aim to foster parental engagement.

“We are very fortunate. The funder has given us the latitude to learn from this project, and so the outcomes will help other programs to develop. We were told, ‘Don’t be afraid to make mistakes, say what they are, so we can all learn from them.’”

Interviewee from Bridges to Success

Eligibility and Size. The certificate stream and the university credit stream have slightly different entry requirements. The certificate stream requires a 65 per cent average in the student’s best five courses in Grade 11 or 12, while the university credit stream requires 75 per cent average in the student’s best six courses in Grade 11 or 12 (at least three courses must be from Grade 12). Secondary school students learn about the program through *Pathways to Education Canada* (Kitchener location), information sessions for parents/caregivers, and school guidance counsellors. As a result of the program’s connection to *Pathways*, most students in the first cohort were also participants of *Pathways*. The application includes a student self-assessment form, a letter of intent, a teacher recommendation form and an individual application meeting. A maximum of 40 and 25 students are accepted into the certificate and university credit streams, respectively.

“To provide high school students from underrepresented groups with an opportunity to access PSE. The goal is not to have students come to Wilfrid Laurier University, but to harness their interest and commitment to secondary school.”

Challenges. At the onset, *Building Bridges* experienced some challenges that resulted in program redesign. The program was originally intended as a credit-only program but was later adapted to include a credit and certificate stream because an insufficient number of applicants were able to meet the requirements for a credit stream. The certificate-based stream was an attempt to accept and support as many participants as possible.

Impact. The Centre for Community Research, Learning, & Action at Wilfrid Laurier University intends to conduct an evaluation of the university credit stream across the five years of funding. The evaluation will capture completion rates, PSE outcomes, program satisfaction, gains in PSE knowledge, challenges faced, and a clearer understanding of what it means to “build a bridge.” The evaluation will be made up of focus groups, surveys and interviews with students, faculty and staff. In 2011, 13 of 14 participants who enrolled in the credit stream completed the program. Pre- and post-program measures of the first cohort revealed that, after participating, most students felt increasingly ready and confident about PSE and were very satisfied

“We want to know what is the bridge that makes students make the leap to PSE, for those that wouldn’t necessarily have made the leap... We want to know what works and what does not work, so whatever findings exist, we want to learn from them...”

Interviewee from Bridges to Success

with the program. A rich database is expected that will help form policy recommendations on the factors influencing PSE participation among underrepresented groups. The ultimate goal is to obtain additional funds to continue *Building Bridges* well beyond the initial five years.

Insights and Conclusion

A number of lessons emerged from a study of the six programs and the large body of existing research covered in section one of this paper. Overall, the six programs provide different approaches to early intervention based on their goals and the particular needs of those they are serving. Despite these differences, the interventions can broadly fit into the following four categories described earlier (Educational Policy Institute, 2001; Cunningham et al., 2003)¹⁰:

- Academic
- Information
- Financial
- Support/Counseling

There are several common themes running through the six programs that reinforce what we know from the US literature on early intervention programs. In keeping with the research, the programs offer a mix of services in order to target the web of potential barriers youth face in graduating from secondary school and pursuing PSE. Built into the programs is the “one arm around one child” approach, which offers youth a tailored experience that reflects their unique needs and circumstances. Consistent with the literature, interview findings also support the importance of recognizing the unique cultural backgrounds of the community being served in creating effective programs. In addition, most of the programs incorporate some level of peer support with others who have similar backgrounds and/or challenges, which has been shown to contribute to student success. Similar to findings from the US, a few interviewees echoed the challenges of conducting evaluations. In cases where youth enter and exit the program at different life stages and self-select a unique set of services, program evaluations can be especially challenging. In addition, given the lack of comparable control groups, there is often a difficulty in assessing program attrition and the potential loss of participant contact information over time.

In summary, a program’s purpose drives the services, delivery and target participants. Since barriers seldom occur in isolation, programs usually offer a variety of early intervention strategies to support youth. Some interventions are more clearly focused on alleviating certain barriers – the most obvious being financial assistance – but changing student aspirations and improving academic preparedness are more likely fostered through a specialized mix of services. A holistic approach with some flexibility related to the use of services also allows each student to be treated as an individual and have their own unique needs met. Community and parental involvement is also important. If programs are going to be sustainable, they need to be generated out of and adapted to the needs of the community. It has been stated repeatedly that involving the community and parents helps create buy-in and ongoing support for the initiative. Finally, systematic evaluations are challenging to conduct. However, measurable outcomes offer students, community members and researchers a valuable window on what works and on how to adapt resources to best meet the needs of those being served.

Unlike in Canada, there is a substantial amount of effort going into early intervention initiatives and research in the US. However, a range of provincial and community-based programs are aiming to support Canadian youth in their pursuit of education. Although this paper only reviews Ontario programs, similar programs exist in other provinces and territories. Despite program limitations and the gaps in the

¹⁰ See the Appendix for a summary of the programs across the four categories.

research, early intervention programs are currently one of the more interesting and effective ways of addressing the needs of youth who traditionally encounter barriers to PSE. It makes sense that providing students with PSE information, academic support, guidance and financial resources would strengthen educational goals. Ultimately, for students on the verge of slipping out of the system, these programs may be what keeps them on the path towards PSE.

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Appendix 1: Chart of Six Ontario Programs across Four Thematic Areas

The purpose of the chart below is to provide a summary of the six programs across the four categories. Since the six programs differ in their goal, evolution and delivery, each of the four categories listed below does not imply equal weight across services, nor is the list exhaustive of the package of interventions offered.

Strategies for Supporting Youth Education: A Snapshot of Early Intervention Programs in Ontario

Initiative	Target Group	Types of Interventions				Duration		
		Academic	Information and Knowledge Educational Possibilities	Financial	Counselling/Support	Drop-In	Term(s)/Seasonal	Secondary School
Jessie's – The June Callwood Centre for Young Women: Onsite Secondary School	Prenatal and teenage mothers	Alternative secondary school classes	Advising	Onsite free daycare; meals; scholarship	Personal guidance		Three months onsite secondary school; indefinite use of other services	
Native Youth Advancement with Education Hamilton	Aboriginal secondary school students	Tutoring; academic advising		Meals; transportation tokens; resource/study room	Student advocacy; personal guidance; motivational			Throughout secondary school
YMCA – YOU CAN GO	Newcomers to Canada		Information on student financial assistance; PSE options		Role models; motivational	Two-hour workshop; indefinite use of other services		
Wilfrid Laurier University – Building Bridges to Success	Underrepresented secondary school students from low-income neighbourhoods	Study skill development; tutoring; academic enrichment; university credit	Exposure to campus life; PSE requirements		Parent involvement/outreach; motivational; personal guidance		University/College 101 runs for three months; Building Bridges credit course runs for four months	
University of Toronto – Community Affairs (Service Learning) Programs: The Saturday Program and the Summer Mentorship Program in Health Sciences	Secondary school students traditionally underrepresented in the Health Sciences	Academic enrichment; secondary school credit	Exposure to campus life; careers; advising	Meals; transportation	Mentoring; motivational		12 weeks Saturday Program; 4 weeks Summer Mentorship Program in Health Sciences	
Pathways to Education Canada	Secondary school students from low-income areas with an above average secondary school drop-out rate	Study skill development; tutoring; academic enrichment; grade attendance/monitoring	Exposure to campus life through partnerships; careers; advising	Financial aid for PSE; meals; transportation	Student advocacy; personal guidance; parent outreach/involvement; motivational; mentoring;			Throughout secondary school



Higher Education
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