



Mentoring Supports Youth's Educational Attainment

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted young people's academic experiences and success. Youth from equity-seeking groups, including the 11% of young people living in poverty and 8% with a learning disability, were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.¹

Mentors — including naturally occurring mentoring relationships young people develop with adults in their environment or formal relationships formed through mentoring programs — can play a critical role in supporting young people's educational journeys and keep them on track for graduation.

Mentors help build academic skills and provide guidance

According to our study, *Mapping the Mentoring Gap*, close to half of young adults who were mentored during their adolescence acquired school-related skills with the help of their most important mentor. Over one-quarter reported that their mentor helped them either stay in or return to school.

Mentoring supports high school completion

95% of young adults who had a mentor growing up completed high school. Mentored youth were twice as likely to have completed high school compared to their peers who did not have access to a mentor.

90% of young adults who faced adverse life circumstances and were mentored completed high school compared to 80% of those who did not have a mentor.

Mentors support youth's educational journeys after high school

Over a quarter of youth who were mentored during their adolescence applied to trade school or to a postsecondary institution with the help of their most meaningful mentor. Many **formal** mentors also helped youth find funding for trade school or post-secondary education.

Overall, youth who were mentored growing up were 95% more likely to have pursued further education or training after high school compared to youth who did not have access to mentoring.

78% of young adults who faced adverse life circumstances and were mentored pursued further education or training compared to 63% of their non-mentored peers.

Schools play a critical role in closing the mentoring gap

According to our study, roughly 38% of young adults recalled facing barriers accessing mentors during their teenage years. Many of them did not know how to find a mentor or did not understand how mentoring could benefit them.

Schools, in partnership with mentoring programs, must play a critical role in expanding young people's access to mentoring opportunities. According to our study participants, schools offer significant advantages such as convenience, safety, and widespread reach.

Informal mentoring is already happening in many schools, as teachers, coaches and other caring adults step into a mentoring role. According to our research, 22% of young adults who has access to mentoring during their adolescence reported that their most meaningful mentor was a teacher or other school staff member. Schools and education leaders have an opportunity to increase young people's access to mentoring by providing mentoring training to teachers and staff, and by equipping students with the skills they need to initiate a mentoring connection.

Contact Stacey Dakin at stacey.dakin@mentoringcanada.ca to learn more about how you and your organization can help close the mentoring gap.

1 Statistics Canada. (2021). School Closures and COVID-19: Impacts on Children. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-607-x/2021009/sc-fe-eng.htm>

About MENTOR Canada

MENTOR Canada is a coalition of organizations that provide youth mentoring. We are working together to build sector capacity and expand access to mentoring to empower every young person to reach their potential. *Mapping the Mentoring Gap* is one of three studies conducted by MENTOR Canada as part of the State of Mentoring Research Initiative. Between January and March 2020, we surveyed 2,838 young adults aged 18-30 about their mentoring experiences growing up and their current lives.

Learn more about MENTOR Canada and our research at [MentoringCanada.ca](https://mentoringcanada.ca).