



WHAT IS "THE MENTORING GAP"?

Research shows that young Canadians are not receiving the support they need.

"The Mentoring Gap" refers to a lack of access to the right kind of mentorship opportunities at the right time, especially for those facing barriers. Young Canadians are not getting the support they deserve – when they need it most – and that is a major cause for concern.

Did you know? Approximately 2 million young Canadians grow up without a mentor.

"The Mentoring Gap" is being caused by:

- Lack of access to mentors;
- Lack of access to mentors at the right time;
- Lack of access to the right mentors at the right time for equity-deserving groups;
- Lack of access to formal mentoring programs.

To better understand the mentoring gaps listed above, Mentor Canada surveyed over 2,800 young adults (aged 18 to 30) and over 150 Canadian organizations offering mentoring programs.

Gap 1: Lack of access to mentors

Too many young people do not have access to any form of mentorship while growing up. A staggering 44% of survey respondents do not recall having any mentor of any kind at any point between the ages of 6 to 18.

Gap 2: Lack of access to mentors at the right time

Young people need different mentors at different times in their lives to respond to their complex and evolving needs. In fact, 62% of young people who had at least one mentor reported that they recalled wanting mentorship opportunities and not being able to access them at the right time.

Gap 3: Lack of access to the right mentors at the right time for equity-deserving groups

Young people from equity-deserving groups have a much more difficult time accessing the right mentorship opportunities at the right time. In fact, 72% of respondents with a diagnosed disability, 69% of respondents from sexual minorities, and 61% of Indigenous respondents recall a time when they wanted a mentor, but did not have one.

Gap 4: Lack of access to formal mentoring programs

Access to programmatic mentoring opportunities in Canada is very limited. Only about 16% of respondents recall having had access to a program mentor during their childhood and adolescence. Comparatively, approximately one-quarter of young people in the United States have participated in a mentoring program growing up since the early 2000s (Garringer and Benning, 2023).

Want to learn more about "The Mentoring Gap" and how you can help close it? Visit [Mentor Canada's Knowledge Hub](#) and browse our collection of research summaries and articles on this pressing topic.