



Benefits of Mentoring

Strongest Recent Canadian Evidence: Unlocking Doors

Mentor Canada and the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) conducted an 18-month mixed-methods study on mentoring, skills and career pathways. The 2024 national survey included 3,110 young adults ages 18–30, including 1,618 racialized young adults.

Key findings:

- More than 90% of racialized youth with mentoring experience agreed that their mentor helped them develop adaptability, communication and problem-solving skills.
- Among racialized youth, mentors most commonly helped by listening/being there (96%), providing advice and guidance (95%), helping set and reach goals (94%), broadening horizons through experiences and opportunities (93%), and connecting mentees to people and services (92%).
- For young adults with mentoring experience since age 18, the share reporting that mentors helped develop specific Skills for Success was 85.4% for adaptability, 83.9% for problem-solving, 83.2% for communication, 82.3% for collaboration, 81.1% for social skills, 79.3% for creativity and innovation, 65.9% for literacy, and 64.7% for digital skills.
- The research identifies mentoring as a tool that can strengthen skills, increase professional confidence, provide access to meaningful opportunities, and improve well-being.

Mentoring is practical. Research links mentoring with academic engagement, school completion, employment and other academic and vocational outcomes, showing how supportive adults can contribute to young people's educational and career development.

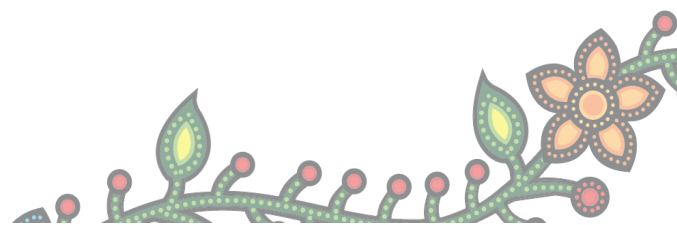
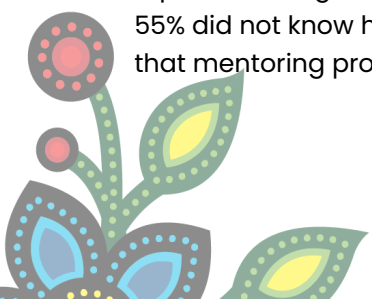
Mentoring is relational. The relationship itself matters. Research finds that relatedness, social support and autonomy support are associated with stronger youth outcomes, highlighting the importance of connection—not simply having access to a mentor.

Mentoring can strengthen belonging. In a study of 76 youth ages 11–18 participating in a site-based mentoring program, young people with strong mentor alliances described experiences such as empathy, acceptance, authenticity and supportive relationships alongside a strong sense of belonging.

Mentoring can support education and careers. Research finds positive associations between natural mentoring and academic and vocational functioning, including school attendance, engagement, completion and employment-related outcomes. Across 30 studies, natural mentoring was positively associated with academic and vocational functioning.

Culturally relevant mentoring can strengthen cultural identity and mental well-being. A two-year study with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth found improvements in mental health and cultural identity, along with reported gains in interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.

Access to mentoring is not equal. A national Canadian survey of 2,838 young adults found that 38% reported facing barriers to accessing mentors during adolescence. Among those who experienced barriers, 55% did not know how to find a mentor, 42% did not understand mentoring or its value, and 34% reported that mentoring programs were unavailable to them.



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