

# SERVICES, SUPPORTS & SETBACKS:

*A research initiative to understand the primary needs of young adults*

**LEDGE**  
LEADERSHIP



## Introduction

Young adults age 18 to 30 are emerging into adulthood. They encounter societal expectations about behaviour and accomplishments along with experiencing unique and challenging life circumstances.

Preventative services help them avoid mental and physical health crises, as well as foster their material and social well-being. However, young adults have relatively few services designed to provide preventative support.

Ledge Leadership launched our Research Project, a year-long journey to gain insight into the needs of young adults, and curate preventative services to respond to those needs.

## Methods

### RESEARCH TEAM

7 young adults recruited to lead and inform the research process

### EVENTS

Gatherings featured guest speakers, small and large group discussion, and reflection

### FOCUS GROUPS

Conversations about young adults' desires for programming and how to best engage them

### ONLINE SURVEY

95 young adults throughout Ontario completed a comprehensive survey of their needs and services

## Results

The research initiatives, from initial conversations with the Ledge Research Team, to the conclusion of the survey, have been amalgamated into the core themes and conclusions of the project.

### 1 Concerns are Complex



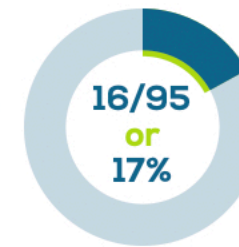
Mental health was highlighted in the survey, with 57/95 respondents saying it was the part of their well-being they are most concerned about. These mental health struggles are complex and include anxiety, depression, addiction, loneliness, and fear of an uncertain future.



### 2 Distrust of Institutions



Only 16/95 said that mental health services through medical or educational institutions were a main source of support for their well-being. Young adults in the focus groups expressed distrust for the institutions that position themselves as supportive.



### 3 Wellness Through Community



A high proportion of respondents, 71/95, find support for their well-being through friends. Young adults consistently articulated their isolation from community and need for deeper relationships.



## Conclusion

Young adults are struggling with many overlapping and complex issues, including their physical health, emotional well-being, finances, and general societal frustrations.

They face internal and external challenges. Internal challenges are related to a mistrust of resources from institutions and feeling guilty about seeking support when others might need it more. External challenges are related to the complexities of navigating mental health networks and the high financial costs that often accompany choosing support systems outside of institutions.

Young adults want support for mental health in relational and community contexts rather than in isolation. Opportunities for young adults to connect and build relationships will be highly beneficial to their overall wellness and personal well-being as they transition to adulthood.

## Acknowledgments

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Collingwood General and Marine Hospital Foundation for providing the Wellness Innovation Fund grant to make this research project possible.

