

# Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre

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## EVALUATION REPORT YEAR 1

Written by the Students Commission of Canada

### Project Description

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The Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre is a community-driven initiative with the primary goal of empowering and supporting residents in the Rideau-Rockcliffe area. It serves as a comprehensive hub offering various services, including family support, education, health and well-being programs, community engagement, and youth development. The R.I.S.E Academy at the Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre is a transformative educational program that empowers individuals to reach their full potential. With a personalized learning approach, the academy addresses diverse educational needs and offers academic support, tutoring, and career development opportunities. Participants also benefit from mentorship and guidance, gaining insights into potential career paths and building essential life skills. The academy's inclusive and accessible nature ensures that low-income and marginalized youth who are at risk of graduating high school have equal access to education and career opportunities. As a result, graduates emerge with enhanced qualifications, increased self-confidence, and readiness to enter the workforce or pursue further education, making a positive impact on their lives and the community. R.I.S.E. was created to complement traditional schooling, not replace it.

### Highlights

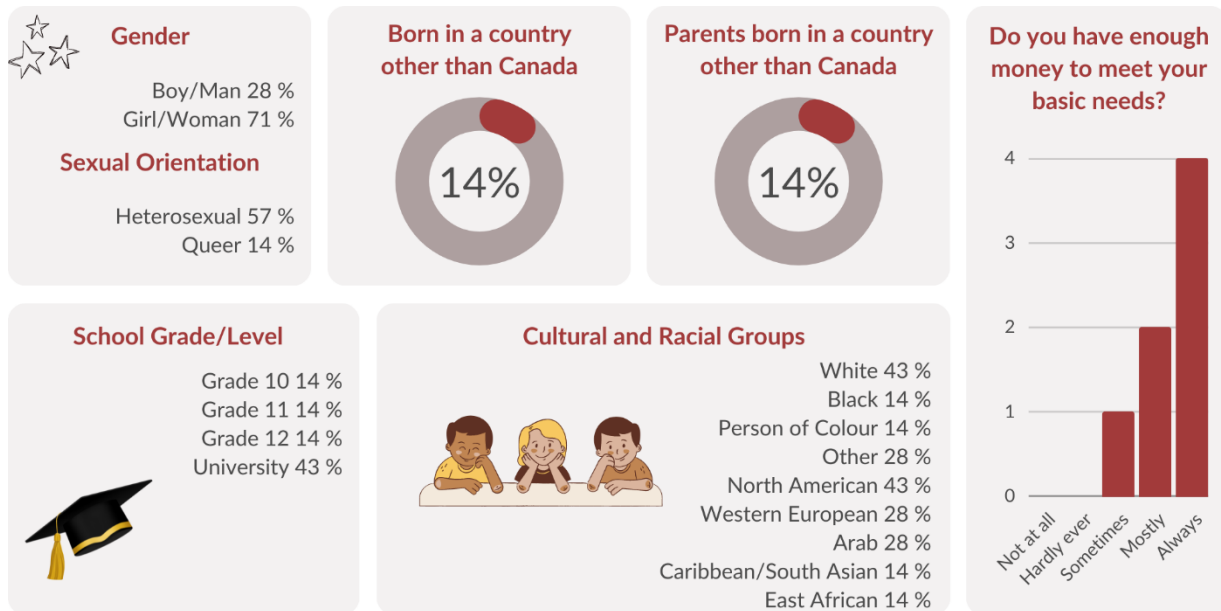
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The Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre partnered with the Students' Commission of Canada (SCC) to evaluate R.I.S.E Academy. The goal of this program is to deliver an innovative, virtual, experiential curriculum. R.I.S.E wants to be remembered as a safe place for youth to find themselves, become aware and confident in their brilliance and to network and leave feeling like they can accomplish anything.

The program was evaluated through two focus groups and three surveys. The evaluation used post-retrospective workforce preparation, professional networks and academic success measures. A fourth survey was distributed but it was not completed.

Results indicated that the program successfully created a safe learning space where youth find themselves and be confident in their abilities. They were able to create strong bonds with their participants, which enhanced the quality of their learning and their growth.

# Demographics



# Surveys

## Workforce Preparation, High School (Grades 9-12), Before & Now

At the conclusion of the first year, a Post-Retrospective Workforce Preparation survey was administered to assess the perceived workforce readiness of the participants since entering the program. A total of 2 participants<sup>1</sup> completed the survey, which consisted of 30 questions. The survey utilized a Likert scale, with participants providing responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree or not at all) to 6 (strongly agree or completely).

The average score for the “Before” section of the survey was 3.68 out of 5, indicating a medium level of agreement towards their workforce preparation before the program. The overall average score for the “After” section of the survey was 3.77 out of 5, indicating a medium level of agreement towards their workforce preparation after the program.

It seems like Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre was able to foster confidence in youth that extended to their academic success in a field that interest them.

<sup>1</sup> Please note that given the small sample size, it was not possible to perform statistical analyses. Instead, a summary of the results if provided to depict the general trends of responses.

## ***Academic Success***

At the conclusion of the first year, a survey assessed the academic success of the participants. A total of 2 participants completed the survey, which consisted of 6 questions.

The results indicate that the participants (100%) had high hopes that they would graduate from high school and continue into higher education rather than going to a professional school. The participants usually get marks ranging from 70 to 89. This suggests that youth participants were motivated in pursuing academic success.

## ***Professional Networks***

At the conclusion of the first year, a survey assessed the participants' ability to foster and maintain professional network through the program. A total of 2 participants completed the survey, which consisted of 10 questions. The survey utilized a Likert scale, with participants providing responses ranging from 1 (Completely Disagree) to 5 (Completely Agree).

The overall average for the survey was 3.05 out of 5, indicating a medium level of agreement with the participants' perceived ability to grow or maintain their professional networks. The participants reported higher scores for the first five questions of the survey. The average per question was above 3.5. The question related to improving self-esteem, finding your vocation/interests or finding friends with the same interest, and finding educational opportunities. The last five questions of the survey reported lower scores, with an average per question of below 3. Participants reported lower scores for questions about finding or keeping a job, and networking. It is possible that participants did not have those networking opportunities yet.



# Focus Groups

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Two alumni and a youth participant participated in two focus groups to assess the program's qualities, impact on youth growth and skills, support, and future impacts.

## Program Qualities

The participants shared the positive aspects of the program. They appreciated the experimental learning, which fostered a positive environment for the participants. They also disclosed the various resources they accessed through the program.

### Positive Learning Experience

Participants described their learning experience at R.I.S.E. The participants expressed that they appreciated and preferred the program's style more than traditional schools.

*I felt that most of my learning did come from my passion project, not just maybe academic learning.*

*I think that also pushed me outside of my comfort zone and a different type of learning in COVID, when we were online at school, I could not be bothered to, to excel in those classes. I, I just it wasn't really, for me, but Rise does it in a way that I feel is very different. And I feel like it's a place where, where I can actually learn.*

*It was a fun way to learn, it was a different way to learn.*

### Positive Environment

Participants shared the positive qualities of the program that made R.I.S.E an inclusive and safe environment.

*I think from the moment I hopped on the very first call with you, I felt as if I was like, at home in my learning. And I felt like I could, like I could say and do and like achieve what I actually want to achieve.*

*It was very eye opening. And like, I learned a lot through rise Academy.*

*inclusive in a way that in traditional school isn't*

*it just kind of like it gave me an opportunity that I was never given*

### Access to Resources

Participants shared the resources they were able to access because of the program. They were able to access scholarships, tools, resources.

*R.I.S.E does offer lots of like scholarships for people all over.*

*Increase my perspective on the disabilities and different like, tools and resources and 100%.*

## Individual Outcomes

The participants shared the personal growth they achieved through the program.

### Personal Growth

The participants shared the program helped them boost their confidence leading them to believe in themselves. Some believe the program shaped who they are today.

*I think what I really took away from that is helping others was important and helping my own mental trauma and the stuff that I've been through, but as well as understanding that I have the power to make a big change in my community and the people around me.*

*I think I had a lot of self-doubt and the outcome of my project and I always had these ideas to make it bigger. I just felt like it wasn't enough. I felt like my contribution wasn't enough throughout the journey, but I overcame that. I saw the success that my project gained, and I am very proud of what I did. And I think it's also given me the chance to heal what happened, but I was able to get some healing from that as well.*

*R.I.S.E has really shaped me into the person I am today. I feel like I have now more trusting of myself. And if I do want to do something, I push myself a little bit more than I remember my past accomplishments with rise, and then makes me want to pursue that even more. So, I think that it has really helped with my self-confidence.*

*Helped me boost my confidence.*

## Social Outcomes

Participants discussed the close and supportive relationships they were able to form with the staff, as well as the skills they were able to gain through the program.

### Adult Support

Participants shared that the program supported their academic journey in a way that traditional teachers could not. Some disclosed the strong bond they were able to have with staff members.

*Because I haven't had a great teacher, or a mentor or anyone like that, except from my own family that pushes me as hard as they did. So, I would definitely say that a perfect word for them is support, because I feel always supported with R.I.S.E.*

*I feel intense the relationship between me and my teachers, my facilitators, like me and (name), like I love being able to talk to her and jump on the call, or even this, like to hear other students in their passion projects.*

*You helped me like stay on top of school and you just helped me in a way that like normal traditional teachers like weren't able to help me.*

### Relationship Skills & Knowledge

Participants shared that they acquired public speaking skills through the program.

*Rise really helped me with my speaking in front of people and things like that.*

*Pushed me to talk with new people and see new perspectives.*

## **Future Impacts**

Participants discussed how they want to contribute to the program for the next year or how they want to help the next generation.

## **Generativity**

Participants disclosed their interest to help the next generation of youth and the fact that this program helps the next generation of youth.

*And I really hope that me coming back and me being able to support rising this way like it has supported me to help other youth, like, learn about themselves and do similar projects and aspirations that they want to do in their life.*

*I went into R.I.S.E, and I realized, and I learned about myself that helping other people is definitely what I want to do when I'm older*

*I think it will impact people very positively. I know it's impacted me very positively.*



# Discussion & Conclusion

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The data and feedback gathered from the surveys and focus groups provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and impact of the RISE Academy at the Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre.

The survey results indicate that participants perceived a medium level of agreement towards their workforce preparation both before and after the program. While the slight increase in average score after the program suggests some improvement, there is room for enhancing resources and support in this area. Allocating more resources towards workforce preparation could further boost participants' confidence and readiness to enter the job market successfully. Moreover, lower scores were noted for questions regarding finding or keeping a job and networking. The program should focus on enhancing resources and activities that strengthen participants' abilities to build and maintain professional networks. However, participants reported higher scores for questions related to personal growth, self-esteem, finding interests, and educational opportunities. In addition, the survey on academic success showcases a positive outlook among participants, with all respondents expressing high hopes of graduating from high school and continuing into higher education. The fact that all participants were currently in university supports the program's impact on academic achievements. However, to draw statistically significant conclusions, more participants need to be involved in future surveys.

The feedback from the focus groups demonstrates that the RISE Academy has successfully created a positive and inclusive learning environment. Participants appreciated the program's experimental learning style, which contributed to a positive learning experience and personal growth. The strong bond between participants and staff showcases the supportive adult relationships fostered by the program. Moreover, participants gained valuable skills, such as public speaking and relationship building, that will benefit them in their future endeavors. Moreover, the program's positive impact on participants has instilled a sense of generativity, where they express a desire to contribute to the program and help the next generation of youth. Participants' willingness to support and mentor others showcases the lasting impact of the RISE Academy, creating a ripple effect that extends beyond the individual participants.

In conclusion, the RISE Academy at the Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre has demonstrated its effectiveness in fostering personal growth, academic success, and supportive relationships among participants. The positive learning experience, access to resources, and emphasis on individual growth have contributed to participants' self-confidence and future aspirations. While the surveys and focus groups provide valuable insights, expanding the participant pool in future evaluations will enable more robust statistical conclusions. By continuing to refine workforce preparation resources and networking opportunities, the program can further enhance its impact on youth empowerment and academic success, ensuring a bright future for the participants and their community.

# Appendix

## Workforce Preparation, High School (Grade 9-12), Before & Now

Questions
1. I contact experts and gather as much information as possible before making decisions about my education.
2. There is no one for me to observe directly in order to find out about the kind of work I might like to do.
3. When solving a problem, I am able to think everything through in my own head.
4. Once I have decided what kind of work I want to do, I know how to go about getting it
5. I can compare and look carefully at the various ideas I develop.
6. I like to make plans and take action steps before making a final decision about a job.
7. When it is time to make an important educational or occupational decision, I am able to develop an appropriate plan of action.
8. When it comes to solving a problem, I consider all of the things that are part of the problem before deciding what to do.
9. I do not know which talents to work on that will help me in the future.
10. I can tell the differences between talk that is backed up by facts and talk that is not backed up by anything
11. I use information I gather to help me develop several different ways to solve a problem.
12. I know where to go to find dependable information about jobs.
13. I am able to solve problems through the use of logic.
14. I know how my actions and decisions will affect my occupational choice.
15. In exploring the kind of work, I might want to do, I get information about it, talk to people who work at it, and get a part-time job that is like the work I am considering.

## Academic Success

Questions
1. Graduate from high school.
2. Go to a professional school to learn a trade (i.e. hairdresser, mechanic, plumber, etc.)
3. Go to college or university
4. If you are still in school, what grade are you in?
5. If you are not in school (you graduated or dropped out), what grade did you finish before you left?
6. What kind of marks do/did you usually get?

## Professional Networks

Questions
1. Find abilities that you did not know you had.
2. Improve your self-esteem and confidence.
3. Find your vocation (a strong feeling of suitability for a particular career) or passion.
4. Continue seeking educational opportunities in areas of your interest.
5. Find new friends with similar interests.
6. Network with people working on areas of your interest.
7. Find a job or keep your current job.
8. Meet people that can help you find a job.
9. Open a new business or keep a current one.