



YouthSpeak Strategic Plan

September 2021 – August 2024

About YouthSpeak

YouthSpeak Charity offers youth led presentations to promote well-being, compassion, and hope. Trained youth speakers representing a range of backgrounds and lived experiences share their personal stories and coping strategies, through:

- School assemblies and virtual presentations
- Joint workshops for parents and kids
- Presentations for caring adults
- Podcasts, YouTube videos, and Instagram live discussions
- Wellness tips & tools

YouthSpeak has reached over 318,000 individuals and counting.



OUR VISION

For all youth to be inspired and empowered to live resilient and meaningful lives.



OUR MISSION

To create important conversations promoting well-being, compassion and hope, by empowering youth to share personal stories and coping strategies through in-person and online presentations.

Current Programs

YouthSpeak was founded in 2003 and has developed a robust portfolio of extremely impactful programs. Our goal is to continue building on our success to date by providing leading edge programming and providing youth with the mental health tools they need to succeed. Our current programs are as follows:

Youth Programs

Youth-led, interactive assemblies and workshops for primary grades to post-secondary.

- Mental Health & Wellness
- Empowering Minds for New Times
- Bullying Prevention
- Inclusivity (Anti-Racism, Anti-Homophobia, Anti-Xenophobia)
- Substance Use
- Online Overdrive
- Empowering Young Women / Boys as Allies
- Building-a-Self-Care-Toolkit
- Post-Secondary Presentations

Caring Adult Workshops

Workshops for parents, educators and other caring adults on how to support youth.

- Inclusivity
- Anti-Racism
- Understanding Youth Mental Health

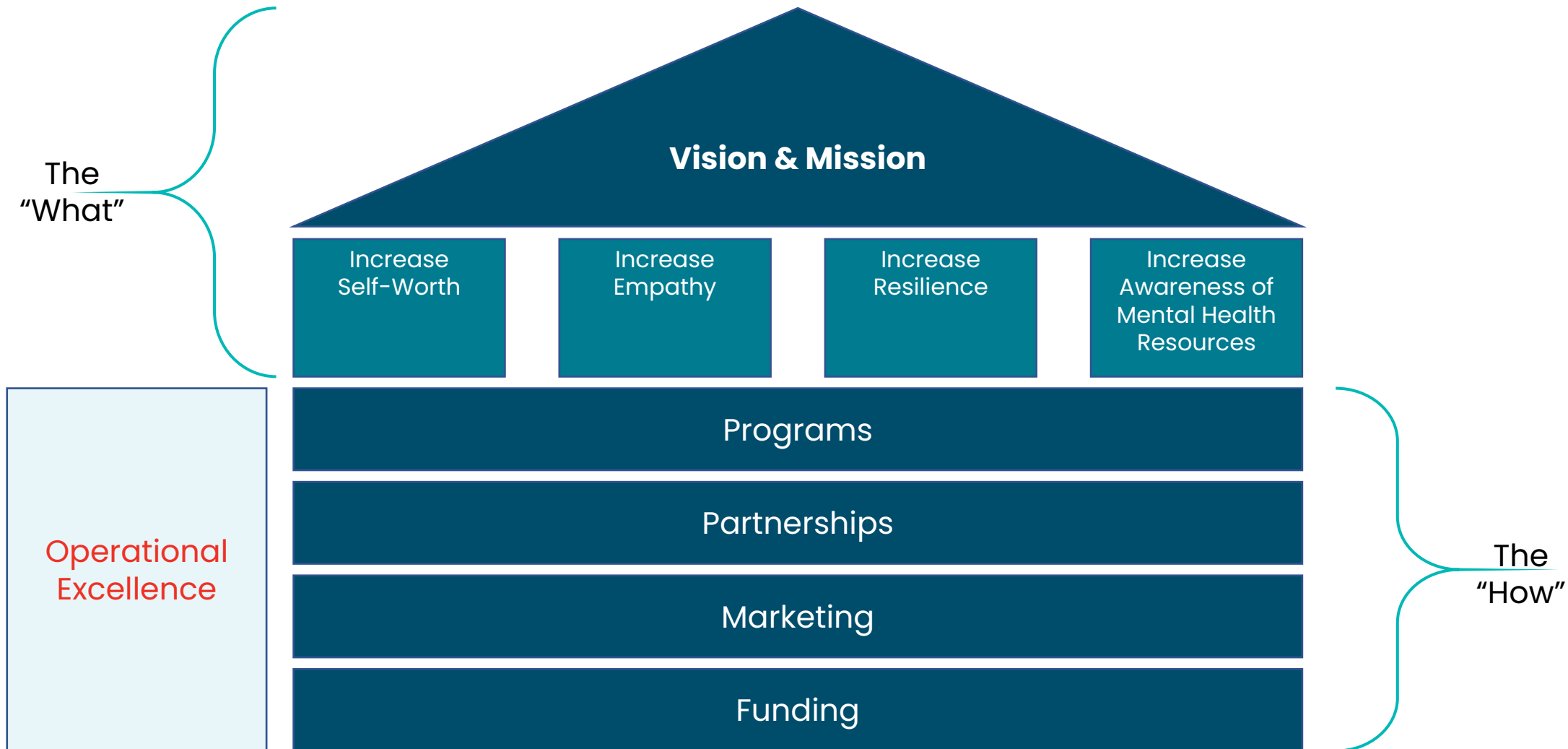
Corporate Workshops

Learning opportunity to improve Equity and Wellness strategies in the workplace.

- Anti-Racism
- Understanding Youth Mental Health
- Anti-Homophobia
- Anti-Xenophobia
- Inclusivity

All presentation content is Equity and Trauma-Informed and adapted for each age group

Over the next 3 years, YouthSpeak will pursue our vision & mission by prioritizing 4 areas of focus as we deliver our programming, expand our reach, and increase our impact. YouthSpeak will also implement a new “Operational Excellence” framework across all organizational activities.



Areas of Focus

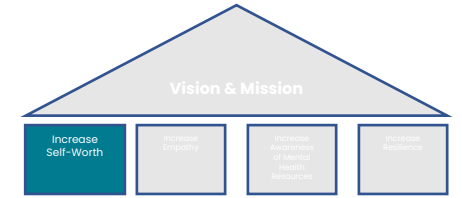
1. **Increase Self-Worth**
 2. **Increase Empathy**
 3. **Increase Resilience**
 4. **Increase Awareness of Mental Health Resources**
-

Impact-based

5. **Increase Audience Reach**
6. **Operational Excellence**

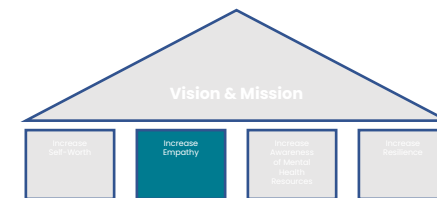
Execution-based

Increase Self-Worth



| Proposed Outcomes: | Plan of Action: |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increased body positivity among youth Decrease in substance use as a coping mechanism Increased practice of self-set boundaries Increased leadership among youth | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Seek external expertise along with publicly available research to critically analyze <u>historical and institutional roots of standards of self-worth</u>, as they pertain to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - body positivity - substance use - self-set boundaries - leadership <p>and identify how to emphasize that every human being is inherently worthy (which might require external expertise such as a psychologist)</p> Train youth speakers and facilitators and refine program curriculum Communicate the findings to students during programs |

Increase Empathy



Proposed Outcomes:

1. **Increased sense of community and connection to others**
2. **Decrease in bullying**
3. **More safe spaces for dialogue and self-reflection**

Plan of Action:

1. Collaborate with special interest groups focusing on equity and inclusion to develop and offer programs that seek to increase empathy
2. Update program curriculum to educate on the effects of our behaviour on others including those that can be detrimental, and the importance of kindness and sharing. External expertise or extensive research may be required prior to updating curriculum
3. Seek external expertise along with publicly available research to study the historical and institutional roots of inequity and, based on the acquired knowledge, update program curriculum

Increase Resilience



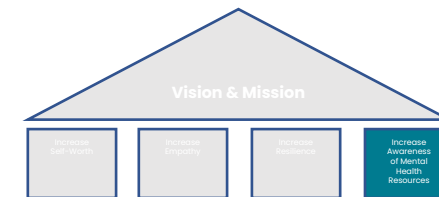
Proposed Outcomes:

1. **Increased access to and use of tools to support and build resilience**
2. **Increased self-assurance**
3. **Greater “growth-mindset” in youth**

Plan of Action:

1. Promote art, music, dance, athletics and expressive writing as tools to increase resilience
2. Develop inclusivity-based and trauma-based programming, by training the program development team, seek out external expertise when appropriate
3. Start up Peer-Led Support Group

Increase Awareness of Mental Health Resources



| Proposed Outcomes: | Plan of Action: |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge of available/suitable resources and how to access them | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Share on social media channels personal stories that destigmatize conversations around mental health as well as the positive impact of specific mental health resources Invite third party mental health resources to introduce their services to YouthSpeak staff, so that our speakers and facilitators are made aware of their benefits in order to communicate to our audience Partner directly with strategically aligned mental health resources and educate youth on how to access them Model help-seeking behaviour while sharing personal stories, and highlight the specific resources used |

Increase Audience Reach

| | |
|--|---|
| Proposed Outcomes: 1. Provide 400 presentations 2. Reach 50,000 youth and caring adults | Plan of Action: 1. Reach out to more school boards across Canada 2. Approach school parent associations to share information about our programs 3. Leverage new subject matter expert (SME) and organizational relationships to reach new markets |
|--|---|

| Year | # of Presentations | # of People Reached |
|-------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 2016 – 2017 | 191 | 37,090 |
| 2017 – 2018 | 268 | 31,820 |
| 2018 – 2019 | 256 | 27,624 |
| 2019 – 2020 | 141 | 16,201 |
| 2020 - 2021 | 126 | 17,216 |

Operational Excellence

Operational Excellence

(a common thread woven through everything YS does)

Presentation Quality Assurance:

1. Internal checks
2. SME / School Board review & approval (if necessary)
3. Impact Assessment

Best-in-class presentation delivery skills:

- Initial training
- Ongoing continuous development

Continuous learning / capacity-building:

- Internally (within our own team)
- Externally (to our audiences)

"Centre of Excellence" – In-the-know on the latest findings and research.

1. Internal research / volunteer research
2. Access expertise of SMEs (paid and pro bono)

Organizational Efficiency:

- Maximize employees
- Set clear expectations
- Put people in position of success
- Identify organizational & skill set gaps
- Streamlined operational processes & process improvements

Equity-informed operations throughout entire organization

Create a healthy feedback loop at every stage of review.

Thank You



Seneca 360

