

MIDAYNTA COMMUNITY SERVICES

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2017-2018

ONE PEOPLE. ONE VOICE. ONE COMMUNITY





**CONTACT INFORMATION  
HEAD OFFICE**

Telephone: 416-544-1992 Fax: 416-440-3379

**JANE ST HUB**

Telephone: 416-645-7575, EXT 5 Fax: 416-645-7570



@MidayntaYouth



@MidayntaYouth



@ Midaynta Community Service



@ Midaynta Community Service



info@midaynta.com | events@midaynta.com

**MIDAYNTA COMMUNITY SERVICES - LOCATIONS**

**HEAD OFFICE**

2150 Islington Ave. Suite 207  
Etobicoke, ON  
M9P 3V4

**SATELLITE OFFICE**

1652 Keele St.  
York, ON  
M6M 3W3

1514 Jane St.  
North York, ON  
M9N 2R3



A nighttime photograph of the Toronto skyline, featuring the CN Tower prominently in the center. The city lights are visible in the background, and the tower's structure is illuminated against the dark sky.

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## *Message from the Chair*

Over the past year, I have had the pleasure of seeing Midaynta raise the bar for themselves and for our members. Our community is engaged and proactive: our community comes together and show resilience, determination and share sense of purpose and working effectively as a unified voice for change. This year the board set a new strategic plan for 2018, we had committed ourselves to working differently and to enhancing our collaborative approaches so that we could achieve better outcomes.

The year 2017/2018 at Midaynta Community Services, the board of Directors worked hard to implement the strategic goals and meeting key objectives as we aim to increase capacity building, among other objectives. The Board of Directors took steps to update policies and procedures to meet the services needed in the Community. We reviewed and initiated the Risk Assessment Tools in order to increase agency capacity to manage identified areas of risks within the organization. The Risk Management Tool measures the agency in terms of 8 weighted categories of threat or risk dimensions (governance/organizational, service delivery/operational, stakeholder satisfaction/public perception, financial, legal and compliance, technology and operational, information and people/HR). The Risk Tool requires the agency to identify areas of high and low risk and to document a rationale for the related assessment and/or strategies to mitigate the risks. The process was intended to enable risk management practices and support development of risk mitigation plan within the organization.

This year the board of directors of Midaynta Community Services held ten (10) board meetings and, recently held a three-day strategic planning retreat and continued the process, of which I would like to acknowledge Jamila Aman for her support during these sessions and meetings. Over next three years, our organization will focus on the following five key priority areas:

- 1. Organizational Capacity Building and Building vibrant communities.**
- 2. Addressing and resolving youth violence in our community and justice issue.**
- 3. Creating targeted mental health counseling and support services for our community.**
- 4. Developing External Communication plan**
- 5. Diversifying our funding**

Often board meetings also us an opportunity to re-evaluate our core values, vision and mission and explore ways to better demonstrate and communicate the positive impact we have on the lives of our youth, families, immigrants, refugees, seniors and vulnerable populations.

We, the Board of Directors at Midaynta, are looking forward to the year ahead, and addressing exiting challenges and providing more opportunities to the community. We would like to thank everyone who has supported Midaynta this year, special thanks to our staff, volunteers, board members, funders, partners and collaborators. Thank you for your support, generosity and faith in Midaynta as we strive to continue providing quality services and supports for our community.

Thank You,



Abdirahman Dhor  
Chair

## *Message from the Executor Director*

I am pleased to report that in 2017-2018 we have continued to re-innovate our programs and services in order to meet the needs of families who are experiencing difficulties or unsafe situations, people who cannot find affordable housing, struggling with poverty, unemployment, systemic barriers, mental health and trauma.

Key to our success has been engaging and involving the mothers and young people to find community based solutions, collaborating with other agencies, and the tireless work and dedication from our board of directors, staff, and volunteers. We are seeing strong community mobilization as well more youth coming forward as catalysts of change. The future is promising!

Since our founding, we have taken a leading role to address and raise awareness of issues affecting the newcomers, refugees and under-served communities in Toronto. We empower families through different youth programs including the “Rites of Passage” youth mentorship Program, the Enhanced Youth Outreach Workers Program (EYOW), the Youth Outreach Worker program (YOW), Midaynta Summer Camp program, and Project Turn-Around. We have also taken initiative to provide black youth with internship opportunities; this fiscal year alone we had placement students from Christian College, Sheridan College, and Seneca College. We continue to take an active role to advocate on behalf of the communities we serve and provide quality service and empower youth and their families.

We also increased collaboration and engagement with multiple actors to address issues affecting the community in Toronto. Starting in late 2017, we planned the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Youth resilience conference “Youth Resilience: hate, Racism and Youth Radicalization. The conference was held on May 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> at Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy of which a report from the conference will be released on November 27<sup>th</sup> 2018. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual conference was organized by Youth from Midaynta through the partnership of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education University of Toronto, Midaynta Community Services, and the Office of the Consulate General of the United States. The upcoming report from conference will include recommendations and an Inclusive Action Plan that calls for different sectors to collaboratively address issues impacting youth that can lead to radicalization to violence among youth.

2017-2018 was a very proactive year in terms of consultation with the community, stakeholders and different partners. We held consultation meetings with the Chief of Police, East Mall community, former Ontario Premier Kathleen Wayne, the Mayor of Toronto, and Hon. Ahmed Hussein, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. We also participated in consultation meetings for the Ontario Youth Action Plan and participated, in conjunction with Telemedicine, in a capstone project for Munk School Graduate students looking at mental health in East African communities. Furthermore, we have continued to hold our monthly roundtable meeting at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) that includes stakeholders from the government, law enforcement, community agencies and public institution like OISE. We sit and attend different Focus tables across the city including Focus Dovercourt and Focus Rexdale, as well safety committee meetings hosted by the city Toronto.

In terms of issues that the organization addresses, black youth are still over-representation in the correctional systems and recent spike in gun violence have is alarming. The consultations we did specifically raised these issues and going forward we are calling a “roots approach” and a “public health approach” where the government invests more into the black communities, engages the community more and employ a public health and a roots approaches with solutions tailored to address actual roots of violence—such as high poverty rate, social exclusion, and systemic barriers that disproportionately impact the black community in Toronto.

In conclusion 2017-2018 saw the organization achieve different milestones but that did not come without challenges. As a community, we still have miles to go and remain optimistic especially as the youth we work with are becoming more aware and engaged. On behalf of Midaynta, I would like to thank our dedicated staff, board of directors, our partner agencies and collaborators. Special thanks to our funders in the Ontario Government and the City of Toronto, whose support has been indispensable to our community.

Thank you!



Mahad Yusuf Executive  
Director



## About Midaynta Community Services

Midaynta Community Services (Midaynta) is a registered Canadian charitable organization that provides settlement, housing and youth services. The organization provides meetings, counselling, workshops, mentorship and other support services for refugees, immigrants and youth.

The organization was established in July 1993 as a family reunification project, and incorporated as a not for profit organization committed to identifying and responding to the needs of the community in August 1995. Midaynta abides by a policy of non-discrimination and equity, and our services are open to everyone for free of charge. At Midaynta we pride ourselves with a team of passionate and knowledgeable professionals who are dedicated to their work, delivering excellent and quality services to the community. Our diversified services are specifically tailored to empower the youth, and help newcomers from their initial start-up process upon arrival until their full adaptation in the society.

Since establishing the organization, we have grown to provide multi-services through grassroots cultural relevant approaches that prioritize community engagement and youth empowerment. Through “Project Turn Around”, a holistic, culturally appropriate and responsive community-based gang prevention and intervention program, Midaynta does outreach, mentorship and helps at-risk youth exit gangs through intervention and prevention. The Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program matches black students aged between 12 to 16 with mentors and organizes workshops for the youth throughout the calendar year. Midaynta is also committed to tackling youth radicalization and uses education tools that emphasize education equity, inclusiveness and culture relevance to promote excellence among racialized youth and communities.

### MISSION STATEMENT



Provide high quality community social services



Address and raise awareness of issues affecting at-risk youth using evidence-informed solutions



Provide free settlement and community development services



Advocate for largely underserved communities in Toronto, especially the youth



Serve clients regardless of race, national origin, ethnicity, Culture, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability or religion.



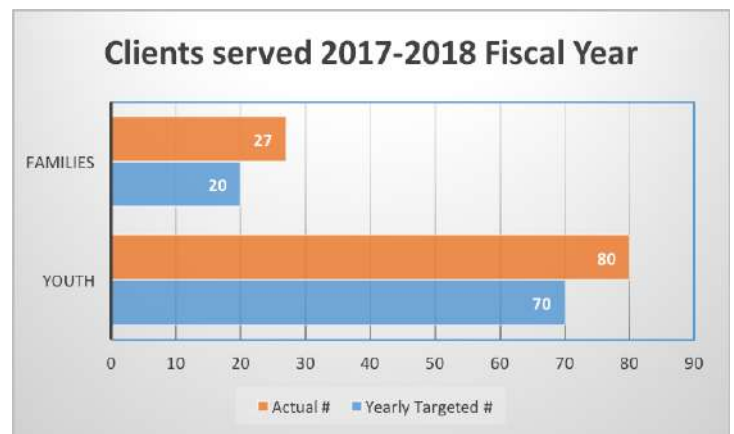
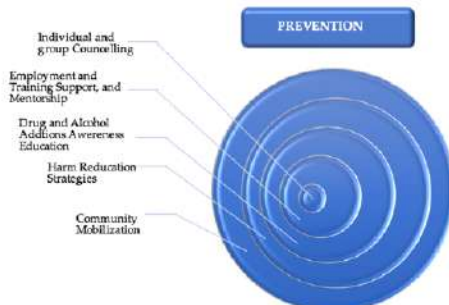
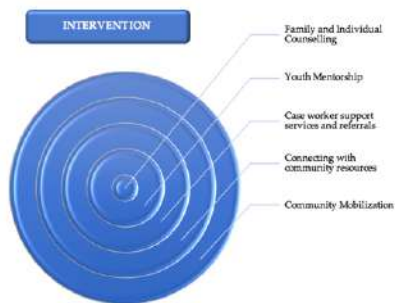
Unite the community and create a social cohesive environment under the roof of a 'Community Centre'



## GPIP–Project Turn-Around

Project Turn-Around employs a holistic, culturally appropriate and community-based gang prevention and intervention service delivery from youth aged 12-20 years and their families in north-west Toronto. The program provides gang prevention and intervention support to-at-risk and youth, gang-involved and high risk youth—most of whom are on probation or in conflict with the law—to develop a positive goal-oriented lifestyle and to help them exit from gangs and navigate the criminal justice system.

In 2017-2018, Project Turn-Around served 80 youth and 27 families, exceeding our expected annual target of 70 youth and 20 families, respectively.



In terms of program activities, we provided clients with: one-on-one case management; individual and group counselling; anger management; health relations educations; education and awareness of consequences of gang involvement and crime; help client navigate the job market by helping them find employment, job and interview coaching; social skill; life skills; and helped client explore their desired short and long term goals.

In 2017-2018 fiscal year, Project Turn-Around held 20 workshops for 528 youth and parents and exceeded the yearly target of 450 total participants.

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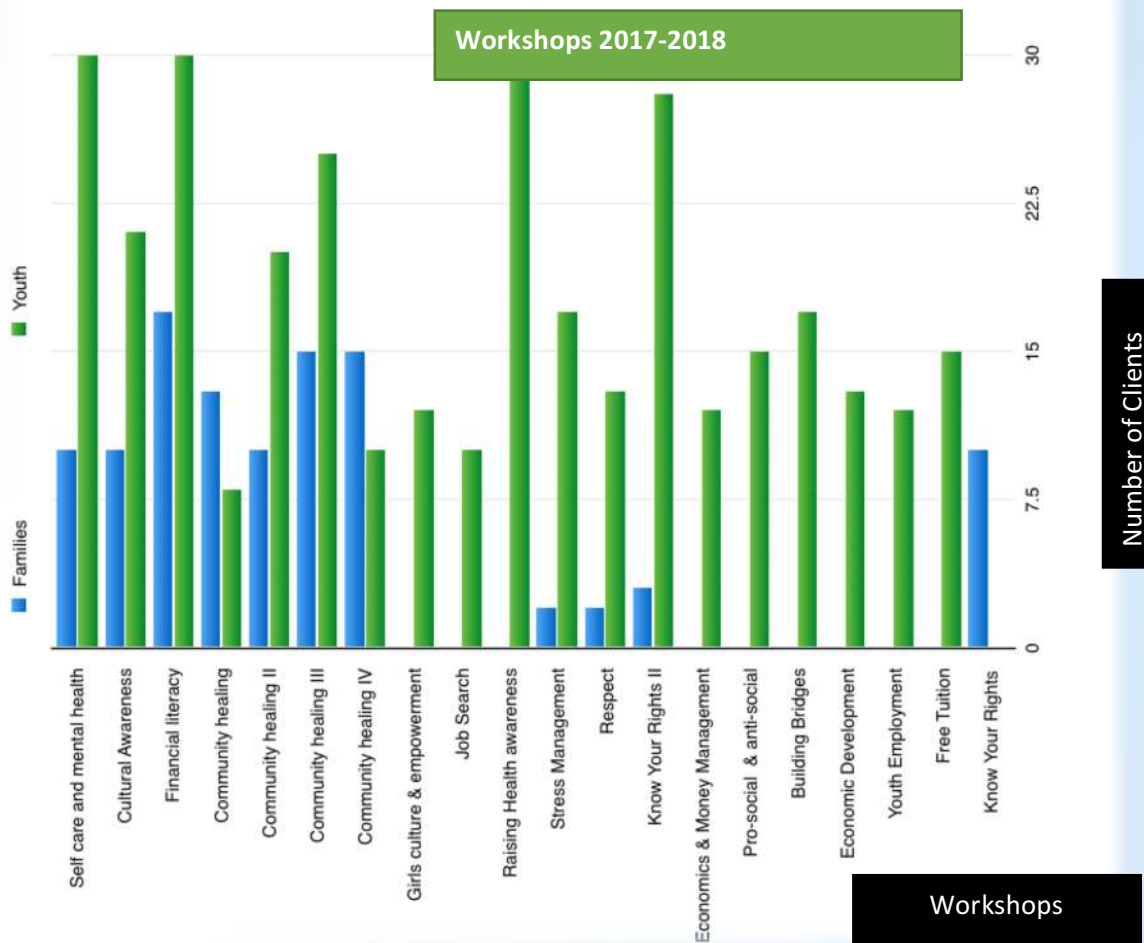
Our referral base grew, ranging across different sectors: from probation officers, family referrals, self-referrals and partner agencies. The number of referrals from probation officers, Youth Outreach Workers, Gang Prevention and Intervention partner agencies, and other Community agencies also grew as evidenced by the program exceeding the expected number of clients served. Key partners that we collaborated with include other community agencies, probation offices and correction facilities. In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, we collaborated with the following key partners:

Partners Collaborated with 2017-2018	
Success Beyond Limit	Kipling Collegiate
Contact Alternative School	YMCA
Kipling & Westway Community	ANS
Albion Neighbourhood Services	Driftwood Centre
Jane Street Hub	East Mall Community

Project Turn-Around also facilitated a meeting between Somali mothers and members of provincial parliament to raise concerns, discuss issues affecting the Somali community and come up with a bottom-up plan to help the community. Over 100 mothers and five provincial ministers were in attendance. The mothers requested a Somali Action Plan that includes:

1. Funds for the “Mending a Crack in the Sky” Somali community initiative.
2. Developing a comprehensive legal team to serve the Somali community.
3. Creating targeted mental health counselling and support services for the Somali Community.

In 2018, we completed an evaluation for Project Turn Around which included recommendations for improving the program. Following the evaluation, on November 9, 2018 we organized Project Turn-Around Strategic Planning where we invited funders, staff, the steering committee, and other partner agencies to access the program in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the program (SWAT Analysis).







## *Youth Outreach Worker Program (YOW)*

The Youth Outreach Workers Program has had a successful year. YOWs have meaningfully worked with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) to support Somali students, collaborated with the Toronto Police Service (TPS) to engage black youth and families, effectively responded to community crises in a concerted manner with the City and TCHC as well as Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program, we continue to work with courts and detention facilities to support youth, and have worked to raise awareness of the challenges facing black youth by engaging key stakeholders, including youth, parents and the community-at-large. Our YOWs through their participation in several community roundtables and committees, continue to serve as the voice of the black youth with and for whom they work.

Midaynta Community Services' has established a strong working relationship with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) to support Somali students. Last year, we delivered a larger than previous years Reading Campaign where volunteers from the community were recruited to tell stories of Somali folklore to elementary aged students during Somali Heritage Month where we organized story telling sessions with 6 elementary schools and leadership panels with 2 high schools.

In addition, we continue to work with courts and detention facilities by engaging with referred young people to get their community service order requirements and by connecting them to volunteering, educational and employment opportunities. We have also connected with several referred young people in transition from detention to community release with finding access to education and employment supports and referring them to Project Turn Around for longer term supports.

Furthermore, our YOWs have also responded to community crises involving the murders of black youth, working collaboratively with the City's Community Crisis Unit, TCHC and the families of the victims services.

Because of the many crises facing black youth, our YOWs took felt to raise awareness of challenges facing black youth especially Somalis by deeply engaging Somali youth, Somali parents, and community-at-large in meaningful, responsive and culturally sensitive ways. For example, our YOWs organize Somali Flag Raising Day at Queen's Park on an annual basis, bringing together families to celebrate Somali heritage.

Additionally, our YOWs serve on various community planning tables, including the Ward 1 & 2 Safety Committee, the Ward 11 & 12 Safety Committee, and the African Canadian Coalition of Community Organizations (ACCCO) & TDSB Roundtable. Midaynta's Youth Outreach Worker Program is serving the needs of young people, working with them to build their resiliency, access opportunities in education and employment and overcome challenges and barriers to access to services and programs. We maintain, through appropriate communication and coordination, a collective working relationship with other professionals both within and outside of the organization to facilitate partnerships with community groups, and inform the Youth Outreach Worker Supervisor of emerging issues, service gaps and matters of interest and/or concern to youth. We are making a real difference in the lives of youth and families!

### *Enhanced Youth Outreach Worker*

Midaynta Enhanced Youth Outreach Worker (EYOW) is a clinical program that supports East African, Muslim and Black youth who are at a disadvantage; this program provides intensive one-on-one support to the youth ages 12 to 24. The EYOW offers many services such as providing short-term, counselling and support services in accordance with the Stages of Change intervention model. The EYOW's collaborate with youth outreach workers to identify Black youth who may require additional, more intensive services. We also refer youths to appropriate services in the community and supporting them to access these services as well as supporting parents and family members to help youth address their needs.



## *Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program (YMP)*

The Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program is a locally developed, culturally relevant Mentorship initiative aimed at supporting the positive development and success of African and Caribbean Canadian at-risk youth ages 12-16, who reside in the Northwest Quadrant of the City of Toronto. The Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program aims to support and encourage the youth through a series of culturally appropriate and relevant workshops, as well as providing consistent caring adults who will support youth participants to pursue and achieve goals. The Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program seeks positive outcomes for youth participants in leadership, civic engagement, educational achievement, employment and training opportunities, as well as fostering a positive self-identity, self-esteem and sense of community and inclusion.

Rites of Passage groups programming take place every two weeks (alternating between age groups). Focus is on youth, forming strong relationships, positive self and cultural identity, self-esteem and leadership. Core Rites of Passage programming in group setting take place once weekly covering different subject: social justice; cultural history; African and Caribbean history; social belief; and freedoms; spirituality; positive self-identity; conflict resolution; conflict with authority figures; anti-bullying, self-esteem; and confidence building; anger management; career goals; educational attainment and opportunities; sexual health education and consent; and youth justice system.

In 2017-2018 youth were provided opportunities for one to one mentoring with an adult professional, elder, and/or a university student. The mentors are highly specialized in areas of education, community engagement, science, and law. These dedicated professional mentors take a lead in supporting a young person through an ongoing, one-on-one relationship with 5 key tenets:

1. Serve as a positive role model
2. Build the relationship by planning and participating in activities together
3. Strive for mutual respect
4. Build self-esteem and motivation
5. Help set goals and work toward accomplishing them

In 2017-2018, the YMP program had 83 mentees, exceeding our annual target of 70 mentees, and 25 mentors. Key highlights in 2017-2018 include: mentorship group workshops at Kipling Collegiate Institute; one-on-one and group mentorship opportunities to black youth; the organizing field trips to the Ontario Science Centre, and The Royal Ontario Museum, and organizing Henna Party. The program worked with the mentees at Dixon Grove Junior Middle school for the Somali Heritage Month to come up with a musical performance. The program also helped facilitate Midaynta Summer Break Camp where 45 youth participated. The kids participated in number of recreational activities including going to movies, swimming, high park and sky zone. We also attended Somali week in which the youths attended soccer games. Another highlight was our March Break Camp in which we attended The Aga Khan Museum as well as having recreational opportunities and teaching leadership skills to the youths.

# HOUSING PROGRAM



## Midaynta Housing Program

Midaynta' Housing program is designed with the premise of meeting the needs of our clients, through the provision of safe, affordable and sufficient housing. Our housing representatives work with low-income individuals and families who face many obstacles in finding and maintaining appropriate and affordable housing, fighting to balance making timely rent payments and providing for their families. Midaynta Community Services is continuing to strive towards strengthening the delivery of efficient and effective services that will meet the varied and unique needs of our clients.

Through the work of this program, we take a holistic approach and look at several contributing factors when looking into housing needs, such as family size, financial status and the neighborhood that one resides in, variable health challenges, etc... all of which tend to have a detrimental impact on our client's housing status. While we are actively willing to serve anyone and everyone who needs the service, the main emphasis of the program is to provide culturally-appropriate support to prevent homelessness in the Somali Community. These services also include assistance in finding and maintaining affordable housing, information, referral, eviction prevention, housing

stabilization and counselling, mentoring programs and peer-support initiatives.

To provide high quality support to clients, we work in collaboration with several other service providers, including Toronto Community Housing Corporation, who provides social housing, as well as Access to Housing/Housing Connections, who oversee the central wait list process while also providing educational workshops for housing programs like ours.

Housing project outreach efforts have increased this fiscal year with the establishment of the better working relationships with a variety of Community Legal Clinics, which provide conflict resolution and eviction prevention support for tenants that are faced with housing challenges. Midaynta is also an active member of Landlord Connect, who provide our clients' vacancy listing for affordable private market units. The housing program has also conducted a variety of educational workshops, which help to ensure that our clients are well informed about their rights and responsibilities as tenants. We also established more beneficial partnerships and collaborated with other service providers to better support our clients. In 2017-2018 we served 800 clients.



Midaynta housing program did not only provide me with support to an affordable unit in a very short period of time; the housing manager connected me with so many other services that are interconnected with housing which has had a very positive impact on me and my family

Hassan Nur– Former Client

My experience as a placement student with Midaynta Housing Program was great. I learned many skills that help me in finding a job in my career as well building my confidence working with a diverse population.



Chery Hall- former placement Student



## ACCES TO HOUSING

20% of Clients got support with searching and finding affordable housing.



## EVICTION PREVENTION

18.75% of our clients were provided with eviction prevention related support such as land lord mediation, and connecting clients to legal clinics and rent banks



## NEW CLIENTS

Out 800 clients served in 2017-2018, 23.75% The were new clients



## STABILIZATION

25% of our clients received long-term support such as connection with auxiliary support services through connection with other services to meet their needs and ensure they maintain stable housing



## REPEAT CLIENTS

12.5% we repeat clients



## *Breaking Down the Barriers*

Midaynta Breaking the Barriers' seniors support program is a Multi-Agency Partnership Project (MAPP with St. Clair West Services for seniors (SCWSS) and Isra, we provide programming that is culturally relevant to Muslim and Caribbean seniors living in the Weston- Lawrence area. On April 2017, SCWSS merged with Reconnect Community Health Services (Reconnect).

Through this program, seniors have access to recreational and educational programs, community meals, various health related services, transportation and escort, home help/home- making, respite care, adult day programs and seniors' case management (information and referral, crisis intervention and assistance).

Programming is once weekly, held every Wednesday and has become extremely necessary, popular and in demand amongst the Somali senior population. The need for creating a larger network of services aimed at the specific and unique needs of our clients is becoming more essential, as proven by the overwhelming demand and positive response to our existing seniors program.

Many seniors in our community are living in poverty, and are often isolated from the society at large. There are also many language and literacy barriers that create difficulties in accessing many services and programs. Our 'Breaking Down the Barriers' program is a culturally and linguistically relevant and accessible program, and Midaynta is seeking to expand on this very successful model in the upcoming years. This is a very important program to us as we see daily the struggles that many of our seniors are facing, and are committed to expanding our reach within this community. Going forward, Midaynta will be seeking ways to expand upon our funding to create a more comprehensive approach to providing much needed services to this often isolated and underserved clientele.





## *Future Leaders Summer Camp 2017*

Midaynta Future Leader Summer Camp took place in the month of July and August 2017. The program provided students with a safe space in which children/ youth of Somali heritage developed their literacy, leadership and character skills, strengthen their Somali language and cultural awareness, and explore traditional arts and crafts (i.e., water-painting).

Camp attendees received access to recreational opportunities (i.e., basketball, soccer, dodge-ball, baseball, soccer-baseball, swimming etc.), excursions to key cultural sites in Toronto in celebrations of Ontario 150, and provided lunch and refreshments daily.

Midaynta Community Services engaged parent(s)/guardian(s) to build awareness of community safety, improve knowledge of how to be better involved in their child's education, and inform them of programs and services provided by community service providers to serve their child's educational, extracurricular and recreational needs. The Camp strives to provide children, youth and their families the kind of opportunities that enhanced student and community learning, engagement and well-being. In partnership with Toronto District School Board, Midaynta was fortunate to place 11 youth with employment and 40 registered camp participants.

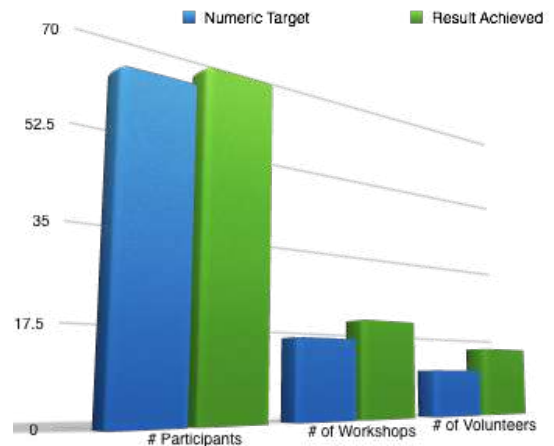




## Raising a Dialogue- RAD

Midaynta was a recipient of the 2017-2-18 Multicultural Community Capacity grant funded by Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Through this grant Midaynta facilitated Raising A Dialogue- RAD project.

“Raising A Dialogue – RAD” was a 16-week project that focused on the leadership development for Somali descent youth between the ages of 16 to 29 through workshop activities that facilitated intra-cultural dialogue, seminars, opportunities for volunteer-ship, and networking as means to promote civic engagement and multiculturalism. Through this project 64 newcomers and racialized youth were exposed to intra-cultural dialogue and understanding and were engaged in subject matters that were culturally competent, civically empowering, intellectual stimulating as a means of building leadership capacity, social network and sense of belonging and acceptance. We also organized a total of 20 workshops, panel discussions, seminars and events that broaden their understanding on leadership skills, academic achievement and financial literacy.





## Thank You!

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- Abdurahman Dhore – Chair
- Abdi Yousuf- Vice Chair
- Ayan Omar- Treasurer
- Huda Ibrahim – Secretary
- Safia H. Gassem- Director
- Timiro Agenah- Director
- Arlene Wallace- Director
- Hanan Ali- Director
- Joel Mukwedeza- Director

### STAFF:

- Mahad Yusuf – Executive Director
- Abdulwasey Siddique – Accountant
- Amina Noor – Program Manager / Youth Outreach Worker
- Fowzia Duale Virtue – Youth Outreach Worker
- Ahmed Mohdhar – Youth Outreach Worker
- Fatma Adam – Enhanced Youth outreach Worker
- Abdiaziz Dayr – Project Turn Around Caseworker
- Dominique Stevenson – Project Turn Around Bilingual Caseworker
- Jean-Luc Ramphal – Project Turn Around Caseworker
- Sixbert Himbaza – Project Turn Around / Reintegration
- Mina Ali- Youth Mentorship Coordinator
- Ubah Farah- Housing Manager
- Farhia Abdi – YMP Intake Worker
- Saido Sheikhnur- Seniors Outreach Coordinator

### PARTNERS:

- African Canadian Community Organizations (ACCO)
- Black Action Defence Committee (BADC)
- Canadian Labour Congress
- Jamaican Canadian Association (CAFCAN/JCA)
- Northwood Neighbourhood Services
- Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)
- Somali Immigrant Aid Organization (SIAO)
- KIDS UPFRONT TORONTO
- COSTI
- MOSAIC Institute
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE)
- Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy
- U.S Consulate in Toronto
- RECONNECT Community Health Services
- Islamic Social Service and Resources Association (ISSRA)
- The Black Experience Project
- UNISON
- The Turkish Consulate General in Toronto
- The Kenyan High Commission –Ottawa

### WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL TO OUR FUNDERS



On behalf of the community we serve, Midaynta Community Services would like to express our gracious gratitude to all our funders, partners, supporters, individual donors, community members, staff, volunteers, and placement students. Together we are 'One people, One voice, One community'.









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