



ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



ONE PEOPLE, ONE VOICE, ONE COMMUNITY

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Message from Chairman of Board of Directors

The year 2021/2022 has been an opportunity for growth and change at Midaynta Community Services. We adapted to the constant changes of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Even with the varying restrictions, we continued to advance our strategic plan and meet the needs of the diverse community, expanding and creating new services focused on predominantly marginalized and oppressed communities.

The vision of Midaynta is to build-up communities that promote social and economic wellbeing for all areas of our clients' lives. The past year has been a continued opportunity to develop and advocate for these communities to meet their needs. Each year, volunteers, staff and members of the Board work tirelessly to increase the organization's ability to attract new opportunities and develop our capacity to meet our vision and mission statements. The volunteers play an integral part in Midaynta's organization in outreaching and supporting the many programs that serve the community. Our continued collaboration with other service organizations has a positive impact on the communities.

The Board continuously reviews and edits organizational policies each year to effectively provide the services needed in the community. This past year, the Board updated the policies surrounding human resources (HR) as to make it more streamlined in use. The policy update is now clearer, more concise and more organized in its understanding and application. With the update to the HR policies, the staff and Board were given trainings to better understand the changes in the policies. The Board continues to update the policies to align with the Public Health recommendations relating to the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all the staff, volunteers and clients of Midaynta.

Last year, we were able to hire youth from vulnerable communities for the summer to work on Project Real Talk. Thanks to Service Canada, we were able to continue the summer hiring of youth, this time as

an employment and skills building experience. The youth were able to gain knowledge, experience and build community connections working in a variety of our programs, such as housing, administration and the summer camp.

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic changed how we administered our programs, we were able to successfully adapt to the changes. In the start of the term, we were administering our services entirely online. As the Public Health policies regarding COVID-19 changed to allow more in-person operations, we switched to a hybrid model of alternating staff working in-person and online. As the year progressed and the Public Health policies continued to change, we were finally able to transition to provide our services fully in-person, with some online services available for the clients who require that option.

Over the past year, we had many successes with our projects. Some of these successes include the onboarding the Student and Family Advocate (SFA) and Youth Justice programs, and launching of the Gender-Based Violence program. The Student and Family Advocate program filled in the gap that the Black community needed with issues in navigating the school systems. The SFA program is a great resource for providing culturally sensitive advocacy for Black students and their families. The expansion of the Youth Justice program was a necessary resource for the communities as it provides a culturally-sensitive, trauma and strength based approach in diverting Black youth from entering the prison system. This program helps the youth turn their lives around through supporting their positive goals.

The past year has been a time of expansion and growth for the organization. We have expanded our social media presence and enhanced our website. We hired a consultant for Midaynta to develop and enhance program monitoring tools, as well as to enhance program efficiency.

Message from the Executive Director

Mahad Yusuf
Executive Director



This past year has been challenging with the easing of the COVID-19 restrictions and society re-opening again. Adjusting our programs from online to now mostly in-person has been quite successful, as we are now able to offer programs in-person with the option of a hybrid model or completely virtual for some projects.

Our programs this year have been quite successful, with the onboarding of the Student and Family Advocate (SFA) and Youth Justice programs, and launching of the Gender-Based Violence program, as well as expanding the Youth Mentorship program (YMP) internationally. These programs have increased the organizational capacity of Midaynta and have helped to fulfill gaps within services available to the Black community.

Midaynta has also been successful in forming new and maintaining connections to stakeholders on different tables and committees. We remain connected to the Toronto Police Service Board and Toronto Police Services, having meetings with them every week to help support transparency within the organization and to increase community safety. Midaynta also continues to sit on multiple FOCUS tables, supporting high risk community members and forming inter-organizational connections and supports. The organization has also formed connections with tables such as the York Weston Pelham Cluster, where resources are pooled together and professional connections are built.

While there have been many successes within the organization, the Black community as a whole still encounter systemic racism, criminalization, gun and gang violence, poverty, as well as

discrimination and limited access in services such as education, healthcare, housing and employment. Everyone should be able to access services without discrimination and racism, however that is unfortunately not the reality of our society and needs to be remedied immediately.

The community still faces many issues as we adjust to the life after the COVID-19 restrictions. The Black community in Northwest Toronto continue to struggle with these factors along with COVID-19 infections and the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions. Many of the issues facing the community are an increased lack of affordable housing, increase in food insecurity, rise of substance use and overdose, and increasing poverty. This year has also seen an increase in gun violence, specifically over the summer, sadly resulting in increased trauma for families within the community.

Our next steps for the organization are focusing on addressing the needs that have risen over the past year and focusing on increasing both the capacity of the organization and developing resources for the community. We continue to work to expand our programs, as well as looking to create more projects to support the needs of the Black community.

Without the support of so many of our partners and stakeholders, we would not have had the same amount of success for our programs and services. Thus, I would like to take the time to acknowledge and to thank each and every member of the community, our funding partners, all of our affiliate organizations; supporters, volunteers and staff for all of your valuable support and dedicated work to help this work succeed.



About Midaynta Community Services

Midaynta Community Services is a registered Canadian charitable organization that provides settlement, housing, and youth services. The organization provides meetings, counselling and other support services for refugees, immigrants, and young people across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Midaynta was established in July 1993 as a family reunification project and incorporated in August 1995, as a non-profit organization committed to identifying and responding to the needs of the community. We have been in service for 30 years. Midaynta currently has a team of 16 full-time staff and 2 part-time staff. In addition, through Service Canada Youth Jobs, we can hire 25 youth to support programming throughout the summer.

Midaynta offers a wide range of services to fit the needs of the community. These services include immigration, settlement, counseling, case management, housing and homelessness support, as well as educational services such as courses and seminars. In addition to these services Midaynta offers specialized support through programming such as the Youth Mentorship Program (YMP), Youth Outreach Worker program (YOW), Enhanced Outreach Worker program (EYOW), Student and Family Advocate program and Project Turn-Around. These programs focus on supporting marginalized youth with mental health and connecting youth to resources such as, counseling, employment, navigating the criminal justice system, anger management, gang prevention and intervention services, youth mentorship, stress management, conflict resolution skills, educational services (e.g., sexual health, drug and alcohol addictions, cultural and community) education, internship opportunities and parenting support services.

Midaynta has dedicated the last 30 years committed to understanding and supporting the various structural needs of the Black community, particularly young people in the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs). For instance, we have many years of experience delivering services to young people 'at risk' or in conflict with the law, through the implementation of our program 'Project Turn Around'. Project Turn Around is a gang prevention and intervention program which aims to serve Black youth ages 12- 20, who are at risk of or already involved in the criminal justice system. In further detail, most of Black youth that Project Turn-Around works with are either on probation or at-risk of gang involvement or committing crime. This program is specifically tailored to providing supports through case management, counselling, gang awareness education, employment support, cultural and community education, drug and alcohol addictions awareness, workshops and ultimately supporting the rehabilitation of youth into a positive community setting. Most of these youth share risk factors that are deeply rooted in poverty, low education attainment, lack of opportunities, social alienation and exclusion. Issues of racism and discrimination are evident in most Black youth we work with across all our youth programs. Considering such problems, Midaynta employs culturally sensitive programs while working with different partners to address issues affecting Black youth and the Black community. Project Turn Around has now been expanded to include the Youth Justice Program and the Gender-Based Violence program.

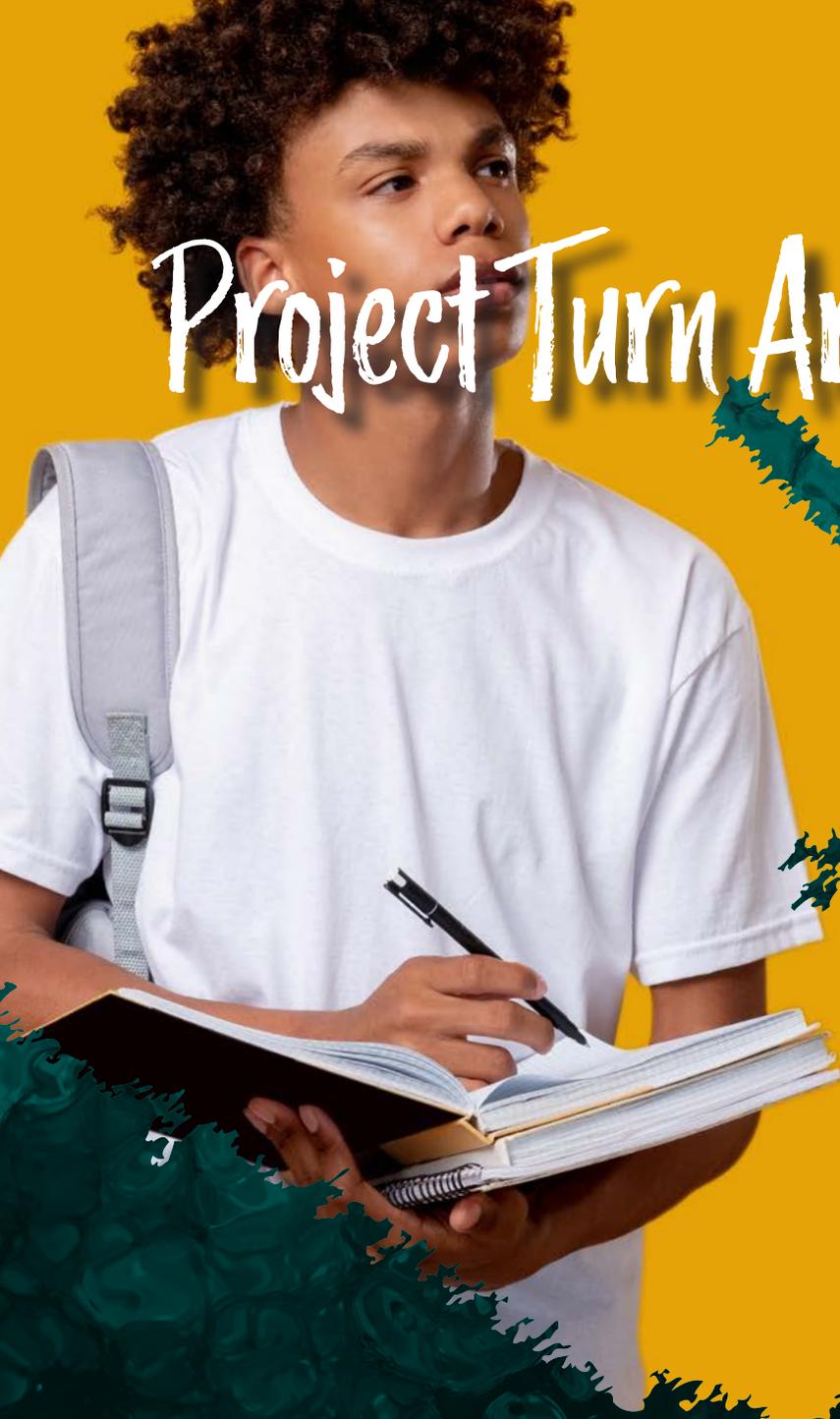




Midaynta holds annual conferences for the purpose of converging together, sharing knowledge, and devising collaborative efforts. The youth resiliency conferences have paved a pragmatic path to formally and informally engage multiple stakeholders and in process the conference has grown into a powerful platform that the community sees as integral to carry the conversation forward and give the community a voice. In addition, once every month we hold a roundtable meeting at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education to brief each other, share knowledge and collaboratively come up with innovative ways to address radicalization to violence. The roundtable also serves as a key component of the conference as they are involved throughout the planning process and offer direction on what kind of topics to included, how to engage youth, how to sustain the conference, how to disseminate knowledge gained and offer other forms of in-kind support.

Through the Youth Outreach Worker program, Midaynta works with Black youth and families in various capacities. This includes but not limited to acting as youth brokers by connecting them to mental health resources, employment resources and conflict mediation. In addition, our Enhanced Youth Outreach Worker provides mental health interventions and develops individualized action plans for Black youth for them to cope with mental health issues, get better education and sustain employment.

Project Turn Around



Project Turn Around is a gang prevention and intervention program which aims to serve Black youth ages 12- 24, who are at risk of or already involved in the criminal justice system. In further detail, most of Black youth that Project Turn-Around works with are either on probation or at-risk of gang involvement or committing crime.

This program is specifically tailored to providing supports through case management, counselling, gang awareness education, employment support, cultural and community education, drug and alcohol addictions awareness, workshops and ultimately supporting the rehabilitation of youth into a positive community setting. Most of these youth share risk factors that are deeply rooted in poverty, low education attainment, lack of opportunities, social alienation and exclusion. Issues of racism and discrimination are evident in most Black youth we work with across all our youth programs. Considering such problems, Midaynta employs culturally sensitive programs while working with different partners to address issues affecting Black youth and the Black community

Last year, Project TurnAround team members continued to serve and support, with dedication, clients and families in various capacities. Staff facilitated workshops and counselling sessions on different topics that include but not limited to: Negative Thinking, Anger Management, Incidents of Violence, Time Management, Drug and Alcohol Addictions We participated in 3 Focus tables: Rexdale, York, and Black Creek, together with other mainstream and community agencies, to support the community in different capacities. Furthermore, team members participate in City cluster tables and safe TO, and use these tables to promote and inform the community about the program. As it has been a part of the program, staff also, support homicide victims and families with grief and crisis counselling and response in the community.

Last year was unique in the sense that we started to see the extent of the impact COVID-19 has had to the community we serve. As staff were getting back to work from the office, they continued serving clients both virtually and in-person. Team members noticed the rise in mental health cases which were exasperated by the pandemic and taking a toll on a community which was already in crisis. With the resources available in our organization, team members went above and beyond to mitigate

these factors by temporary providing mental health support and refer out to mainstream agencies for long-term support.

Project Turn Around has been expanded to include the Family Support Counsellor, Gender-Based Violence program, as well as the Youth Justice program:

Family Support Counsellor

The family Support counsellor worked closely with the GPIIP team to support youth who are involved with gangs or at risk of being involved. As the team navigated through Covid-19, clients were supported using a hybrid approach based on their needs of the clients.

The counsellor attempted to address the direct/ indirect impacts of violence in the community utilizing core principles of social work such as principles of Anti-racism and Anti-discrimination, principles of safety and confidentiality, principles of right-based and strength-based approaches, and others. The counsellor utilized various evidence-based treatment methodologies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Narrative Therapy, and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy techniques to address the mental health challenges youth and families face as a result of the violence they experience in the community. Some of the work entailed the delivery of one on one clinical support to youth and families through interventions including crisis planning, system navigation, safety planning, resource navigation, and others. GPIIP team focused on outreach, hence worked closely to deliver multiple presentations to stakeholders and community members to disseminate critical information regarding resources and services available in the community. Team continues to work closely in the community to help navigate virtual meeting fatigues experienced by youth, parents' hesitancy to send youth to physical spaces, reaching out to high-risk clients, and supporting youth who are overwhelmed by going back to in-person interactions post the pandemic.

Gender Based Violence Program



Gender-Based Violence Program (GBV) is culturally relevant prevention / intervention programming to justice-involved male youth (12-20 years) in the Northwest Toronto who: have committed or are alleged to have committed GBV-related offences or are identified as at-risk of offending; and self-identify as Black or African Canadian.

Program Successes

- The design of our 16-week GBV curriculum
- Design of GBV program flyer
- By conducting a comprehensive research study, we were able to obtain insights from youth and community members on their understanding of GBV and its impact in their community.
- Facilitated a number of GBV workshops and information sessions
- Gender Based Violence Coordinator has connected with schools, Community Safety Tables, Focus Tables, Domestic Violence Advisory Committees, Focus Situation Tables, City Cluster Tables, Crisis Response Tables and Neighbourhood Community Officers Tables to further raise awareness of GBV program and increase the number of youth referrals.
- Partnered with Weston University and are participating in their HRP community of Practice meetings. This space has enabled us to collaborate with other stakeholders and partners who have supported and guided us in the development and design of our GBV curriculum.
- The formation of Community of Practice Meetings (CoP) with three other community-based organizations delivering GBV programming. Which further enhanced support for shared learning and practices that allowed us to disseminate research, best practices, resources and training opportunities. This platform also allowed us to involve other practitioners on the table and guided important discussions on GBV.

- We hired a consultant to develop more program tools including evaluation tools; revising the logic model and developing evaluation metrics.
- GBV case worker sits on FOCUS Black Creek table every Thursday
- GBV case worker has begun testing the program by working with clients in a one-on-one setting while preparing for the launch of the group component in September

Program Challenges

The effects of COVID delaying the launch of the program by forcing us to plan and implement the curriculum virtually

Identifying the needs of our community at the beginning. With this being a completely new program, there wasn't any roadmap to follow in terms of best practices when addressing Gender-Based violence within our targeted demographic. To address this issue, we had to conduct research studies to figure out the best approach to tailor the program to our community.

The stigma of GBV within the demographic we serve. A lot of the topics surrounding GBV unfortunately are taboo in our community which has been a hurdle that we are trying to clear as we work to increase awareness about GBV.

Future of the Program

- The 16-week curriculum is set to launch in October.
- GBV workbook is in the process of being designed and will be ready for the launch of the curriculum in October.

GBV case worker is working on short informational videos for social media to help promote and educate the community about the GBV program.

Youth Justice Program



The Youth Justice program is culturally relevant program that serves Black youth ages 12-20 who live in the Neighborhood Improvement Areas (NIAs). The program provides support to youth complete Extra Judicial Measures, get charges dropped and restore harm done to the community. The program employs holistic, trauma and strength-based approach, aims to divert Black youth from entering jails and helps address the overrepresentation of Black in the justice system. We work with the youth with goals of helping them turn their lives around, restoring harm done to the community and addressing the risk factors that funnel many of our young people into the justice system.

The program supports Black youth, 12-20 years old who live in the Northwest of Toronto

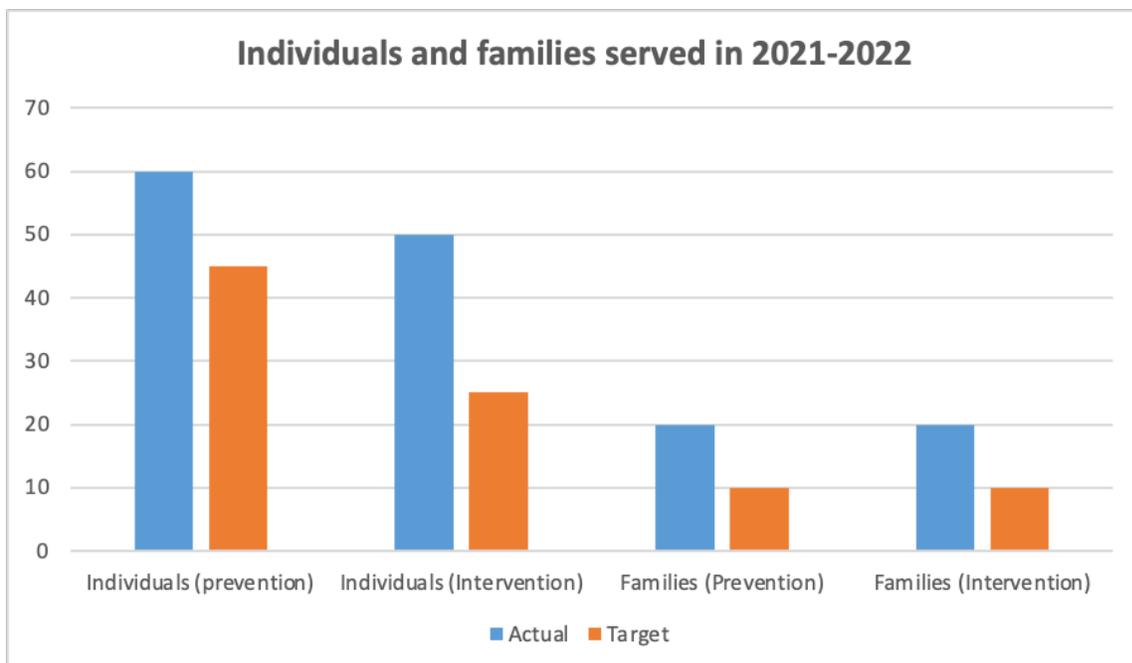
Services Provided are: case management, one-on-one supports, referrals, individualized service plan and workshops

2021/2022 was the pilot year for the program. Key activities included outreach to community members, other service providing agencies, probation officers, and key programs. Presentations about the program were made to different stakeholders and information was shared to promote the program. A majority of the program's client

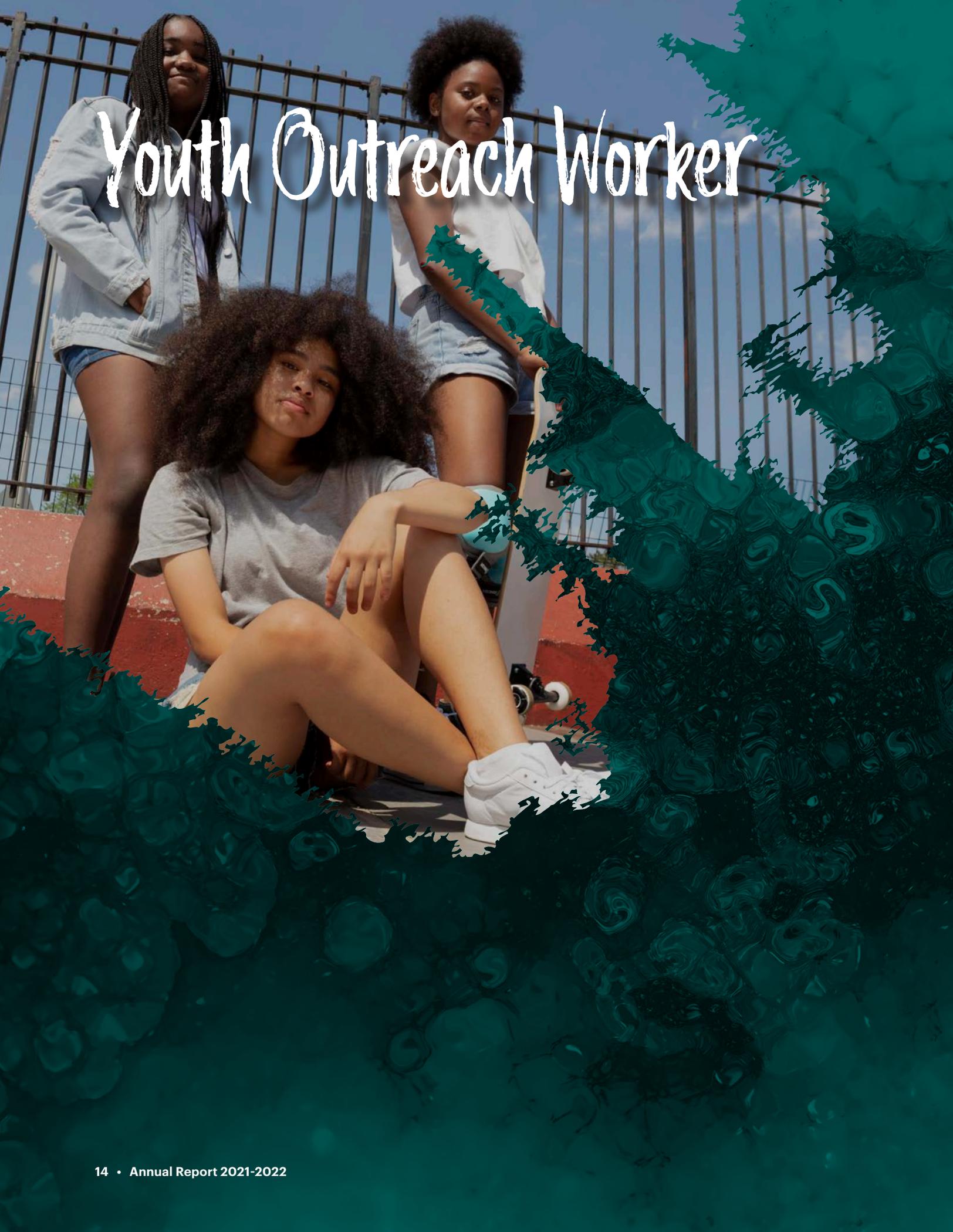
come from the Extrajudicial Measures Coordinators. The program was successful in supporting clients, connecting them to other services and resources. All the clients successfully completed the program and had their charges dropped. The program collaborated with other programs and planned Black History Month workshops that were presented to youth at Roy McMurtry Youth Centre.

As the program moves forward, significant work has been done to increase the program's visibility, serve more youth and increase prevention work. Important connections were made with probation managers, youth serving agencies and programs. The Youth Justice program is a founding member of **Black Programming Initiative: Community of Practice (CoP)** co-chaired by For Youth Initiative and Midaynta Community Services. The purpose of CoP is to support new programming launched as part of the Justice Collaboration Initiative in 2021.

2021-2022 didn't come without challenges given the predicament COVID-19 and it's proceeding variants left community agencies in. A majority service provision was done virtually until COVID_19 restrictions were relaxed to allow in-person services. This allowed us adapt a hybrid model whilst slowly return ing to in-person/ office work.



Youth Outreach Worker



The Youth Outreach Worker program strives to empower and support the youth by equipping them with tools and resources to navigate different pathways of education and employment. YOWs ensured to connect the youth with resources and services tailored to their needs to help them reach their goals. During the past year, The Youth Outreach Program continued supporting local youth with modified group programs (for social distancing due to COVID-19) and individual support such as; tutoring program, resume and cover letter support, and referrals to needed resources and programs.

Over the past fiscal year, the Youth Outreach Worker Team has seen an influx of youth looking to access our services this spring (2021). As COVID-19 restrictions continue to be lifted, we anticipate that participation in our programs will continue to grow. YOWs are aware that local youth are most interested in programs that offer the opportunity to socialize, eat food and play games. While participating in these programs, our team will ensure that the youth have the chance to work on the goals outlined for the Youth Outreach Program (mentioned earlier) in a safe and supportive environment.

This year, the YOW team have also faced some challenges while serving many group-based programs were put on hold during the lockdown. The transitioning period returning back from the pandemic was difficult for the youth in the community, many requiring more support and

resources. The YOWs continued to support youth in the community by having multiple avenues of outreach and being flexible in the forms of communication and service that the team provided. The YOW team used a combination of phone, email, social media and meeting individually when possible while following the COVID-19 protocols to connect with youth who felt more comfortable with the wide range of methods available to connect to our team. In the spring of 2021, the regional lockdowns had mainly ended, and the YOWs began doing more in person outreach and workshop events.

Midaynta workshops provide structured, interactive opportunities for our youth to engage with and apply new ideas and skills in a face-to-face environment. All of our workshops provided by the YOW team were accessible to youth, and were designed to address the needs of the youth in the community. Some workshops were designed to support skills development in a particular area, while others will be designed to introduce people to new ideas and practice, support critical thinking and extensions to practice –it all depended on what the needs and requests of the youth were.

This upcoming year, the YOW team has set goals to do more outreach in person and on the ground in the community, getting back into schools to connect with more youth, and providing more in person workshops and training.



Enhanced Youth Outreach Worker



The Enhanced Youth Outreach Worker (EYOW) program provides intensive one-on-one support along with short term counselling to black youth aged 12 to 25. EYOWs collaborate with Youth Outreach Workers to identify black youth who may require intensive services and support.

In addition, EYOW program served as a support system to the Mending Crack in the Sky (MCIS) initiative, a healing initiative that was developed by Somali mothers to address youth violence in the greater Toronto area. This community led action plan aims to address the alarming rates of primarily male youth violence among Somali Canadians which has exacerbated community trauma and fragmentation.

The EYOW offers many services such as providing short-term counselling and support services in accordance with the Stages of Change intervention model. The EYOWs 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 support parents and family members to help youth address their needs.

This year, an increase in the numbers of youth gun violence incidents saw many of the clients needing more counseling from the EYOW program. Many youth were also facing difficulties with the

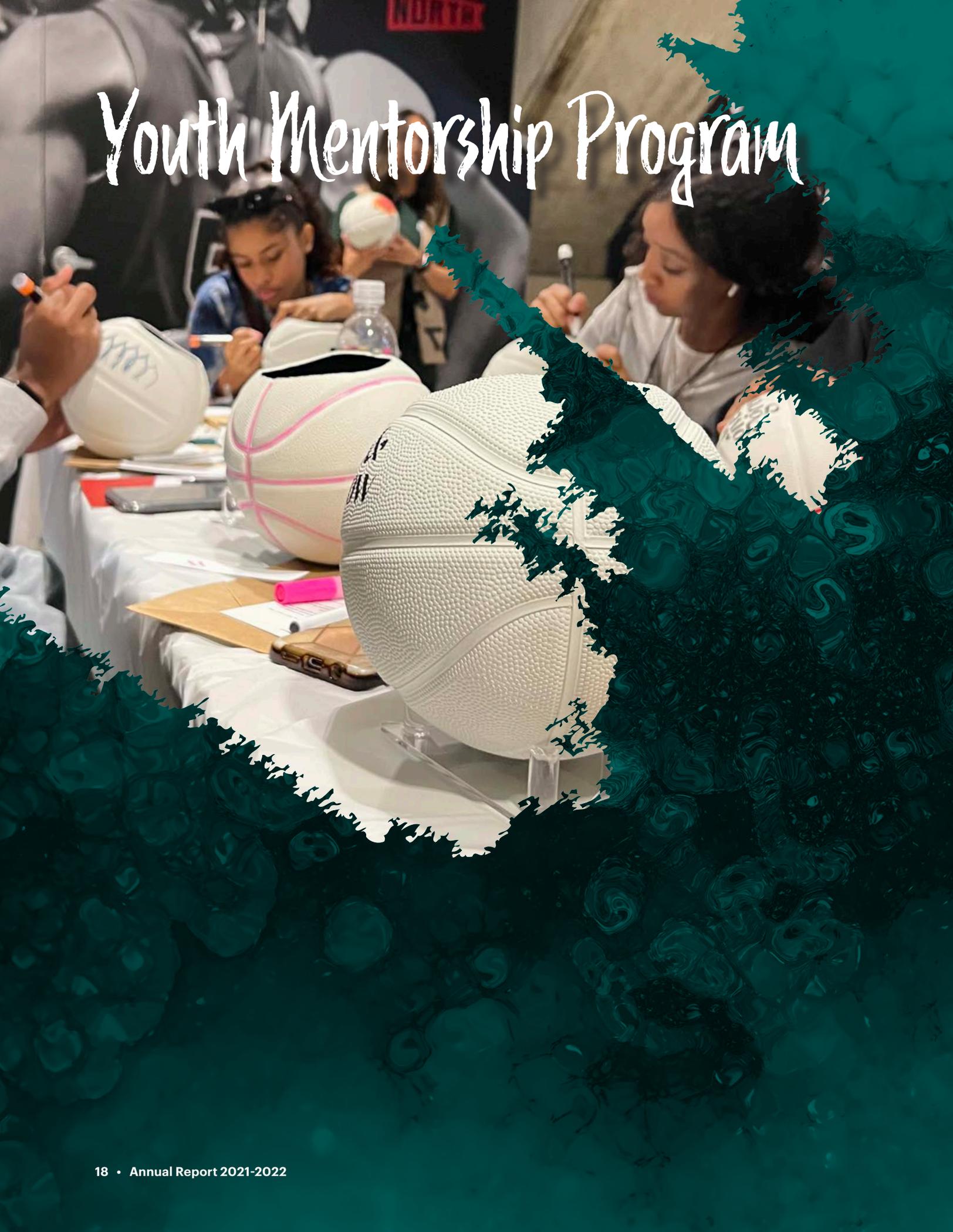
transitioning period after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. The importance this year was on properly facilitating the counseling of these youths and helping them connect to the appropriate resources. The EYOW program appropriately used resources available to them to support clients and provide the needed support to both clients and their families.

Youth Healing Circles

This year we started the Healing Circles initiative. Five Healing Circles were conducted virtually with the intention of providing a safe space for youth to freely engage in an open discussion about mental health challenges, supports, resources and more. Youth participating in the student program at Midaynta attended these healing sessions. The healing circle topics occurred weekly in the months of June and July, with the following titles: Unpacking the Weight, Redrawing the Finish Line, Shattering the Mirror, Connecting the Dots, Self-Resilience. Re-occurring themes from the healing circle discussions touched upon the use of social media, cultural and racial implications, impacts of COVID-19, overall stress and resiliency. After the five healing circles, the facilitation sent out an evaluation form to be completed by youth participant in which they were able to rate the workshops and provide feedback. The over all response was that they benefitted and learned something from the healing circles and would attend a session again.



Youth Mentorship Program



This summary outlines the Youth Mentorship Program achievement, activities and challenges during the year 2021-2022. As part of the 2021-2022 fiscal year accomplishments, the Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program continues to concentrate on building positive representation and mentorship opportunities for Black youth based in the Northwest of Toronto. In order to strengthen the community partnerships and collaborating with existing stakeholders, the need to connect young Black professionals with shared life experiences and the youth was considered a crucial start point. The connections allow for the development of close and supportive mentoring relationships, which promotes positive outcomes among Black youth. Although, there were some difficulties in engaging Black male as formal mentors, the youth were still provided with informal mentorship. That has also contributed in Black boys having less access to formal mentors, in comparison to Black girls, but through the Rites of Passage Youth Mentorship Program, relevant connections were made through the facilitation of workshops and group mentoring.

In addition to the mentoring relationships, the Rites of Passage programming conducted on a weekly basis in which it covers and provides in person and virtual workshops on different subjects, such as, social justice, cultural history, social belief, freedoms, spirituality, positive self-identity, conflict resolution (with other youth or authority figures), anti-bullying, career and educational goals/opportunities, sexual health and more. The Rites of Passage Mentorship Program has constant collaboration with the TDSB by including school-based guidance counsellors and social workers, to allow for improvement and connections between youth in need of mentorship and the program. With the help of school administration referrals and personal interest from youth, from previous registration in summer camps and march break camps, the need and want for mentorship programs exceeds the program service measures.

Also, during the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the Rites of Passage program engaged 22 mentors and 78 mentees who supported the program, exceeding the annual target of 70 mentees. The vast majority of the program attendees were of African descent; however, youth of various racial and ethnic backgrounds were eager to join the mentorship groups which were taking place virtually. More mentees and mentors were able to participate in the program more due to it being online and virtual. The youth who completed the program identifies the workshops and mentorship matches as a positive experience.

Some key highlights from the year also include mentees presenting and working on their own presentation with each other. They were able to choose a topic they were passionate about and present it to their peers. They gave the opportunity to learn leadership and presentation skills. During Black History Month and Somali Heritage Month, the youth were able to share their Black and Somali culture with their fellow students that included music, dance, fashion, food and how much Black and Somali culture is influenced in many Canadians. Through this activity, students learned some research and presentation skills.

Finally, it is important to note that there were some challenges impacted the progress of the program mainly based on the COVID-19 pandemic. However, a shift was made to include remote provision of workshops through Zoom meeting as an option to continue delivering services which were attended and delivered successfully. The program also incorporated in person programming once the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

Project Real Talk



Project Real Talk, a community research initiative aimed at uplifting youth voices against violence in the community was a great success as it sought to explore solutions to addressing gun violence and improving community safety. The goal of the study was to give the youth a voice in the search for community solutions and preventative strategies. Twenty-six young people of African descent ages 15-29 were employed by Midaynta Community Services for an 8-week summer job initiative to conduct this project. Student-workers, some from community violence-affected areas, were led by a Master's-level graduate student and used their lived experiences and community knowledge to shape the project's goal, design, and implementation to create a community participatory action research initiative.

The purpose of the project was to uplift youth voices to address youth violence in the GTA Area and the disproportionate loss of life by African Canadian youth to gun violence. To gain a better understanding of possible solutions to this problem, youth researchers asked youth ages 16-29 who identified as being Somali/African/ Muslim/Black from neighborhoods in the Greater Toronto Area impacted by violence: What changes could be made to keep your community safe? Participants were asked to answer questions from a semi-structured interview guide to voice their opinions, thoughts, & feelings on topics such as gun violence, safety, community supports, police engagement, peer groups, the role of family, school, and the criminal justice system.

Data was collected through anonymous interviews. The youth were divided to perform data analysis on the information that was collected. They categorized the findings into themes or topics, and the collected

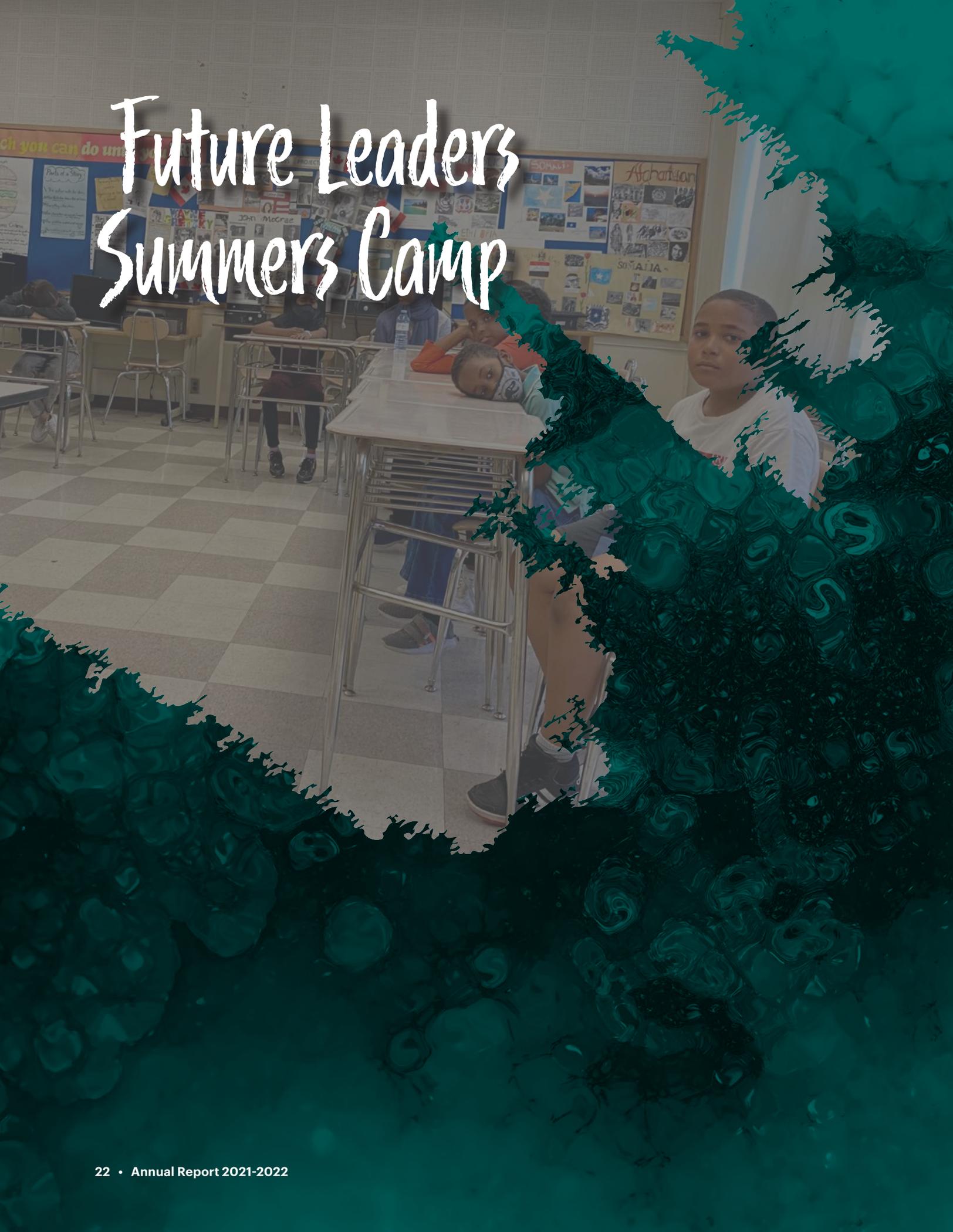
quotes from participants under each topic. The main themes in the data analysis that were found were community, barriers to being black, risk & protective factors, safety and violence, the role of the police, support systems, generational relationships, and solutions. The recommendations to creating solutions were closing the generational gap, increasing leadership in the community, improve police-community relationships, and investing in youth programs.

By listening to them, the project team can address youth violence by bringing recommendations such as early prevention or building support systems to support youth needs in their community which offers youth a different path. This was the second year the project was run, and it took place to reach more people and to hear more voices of the youth.

Below are the recommendations presented by youth participants discussing the topics of education, gang/gun violence, community safety, policing and mental health:

1. Provide resources and support in Education for equal opportunities and academic success.
2. Provide community programming/initiatives to create positive environments and reduce violence in the communities
3. Police should build trust with the communities and collaborate to implement positive community initiatives
4. Proper tools and resources to support youth, families, and communities along the path of recovery from trauma

Future Leaders Summers Camp



On July 4th, 2022, the Midaynta Summer Camp started with leadership and supervision from the Midaynta Youth Outreach Workers (YOWs). The Toronto District School Board Focus Youth Staff supported the camp. The main goal behind the summer camp was to foster a safe and fun space for children aged 6-12 years to develop their play and social skills. The camp was held at Kipling Collegiate Institute in Northwest Toronto. In addition to developing the children's social skills, the camp provided the opportunity to explore the city in depth as the children were taken on excursions in the city.

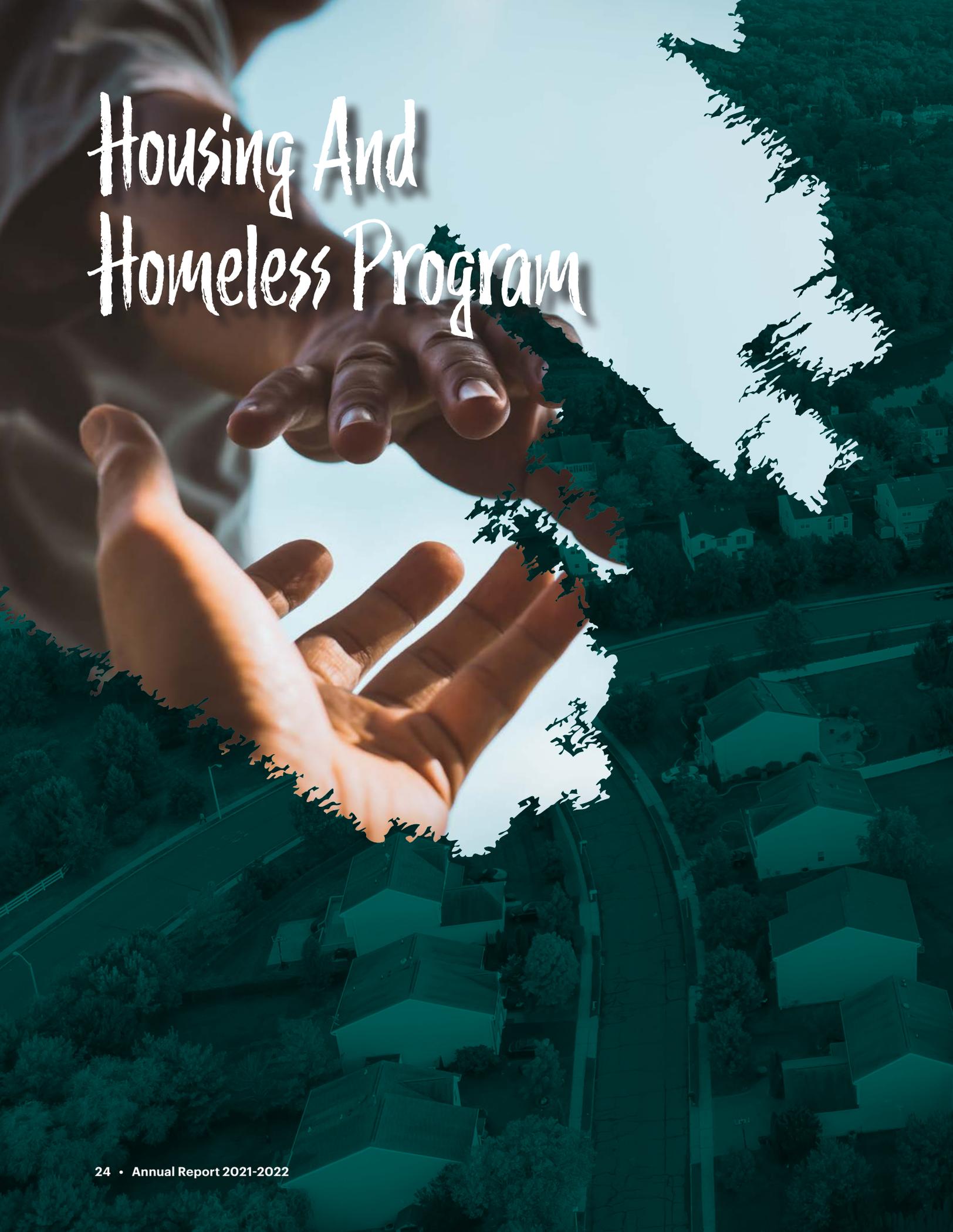
For the 2022 edition of the camp, the kids dubbed it the "Royal Empire" Summer Camp. The "Royal Empire" Summer Camp ran for six weeks from July 4th, 2022 to August 12th, 2022, culminating in a community barbecue. The community barbecue was held on August 15th, 2022 at Centennial Park to celebrate the end of Midaynta's summer programs and the "Royal Empire" campers.

Over the six weeks of the camp, the campers were able to have many experiences to play and socialize. Week 1 was the introductory week for the campers to get to know the staff and each other. This week was held mostly indoors, with the kids playing various games such as basketball, soccer bench ball, octopus, detective, as well as different

arts and crafts activities. The second week started off with the Islamic Holiday of Eid. That week, the campers enjoyed both outdoor and indoor activities such as playing at the park, painting, creating Origami, soccer bench ball, and watching a film. For the third week, the kids worked on teamwork and communication skills via playing organized sports such as basketball and soccer. The campers also started swimming activities on a weekly basis, having fun in local city pools. That week, the youth were also able to have a picnic at High Park, where they had fun at the High Park Zoo and explored the park.

During weeks 3 to 5, the campers were able to visit the MLSE LaunchPad, which helped the campers develop their physical literacy skills and become more confident in themselves. The fourth week involved similar activities of previous weeks such as swimming, sports, going to the park, as well as a trip to the movie theatre. During the fifth week of camp, the campers had a blast swimming, participating in water fights, visiting the MLSE LaunchPad, and creating a camp banner with arts and crafts. The campers finished out the summer camp with an exciting trip to Sky Zone, ending the "Royal Empire" Summer Camp.





Housing And Homeless Program

In the housing department, the housing manager and her team works with low-income individuals and families who face many obstacles in finding and maintaining appropriate and affordable housing.

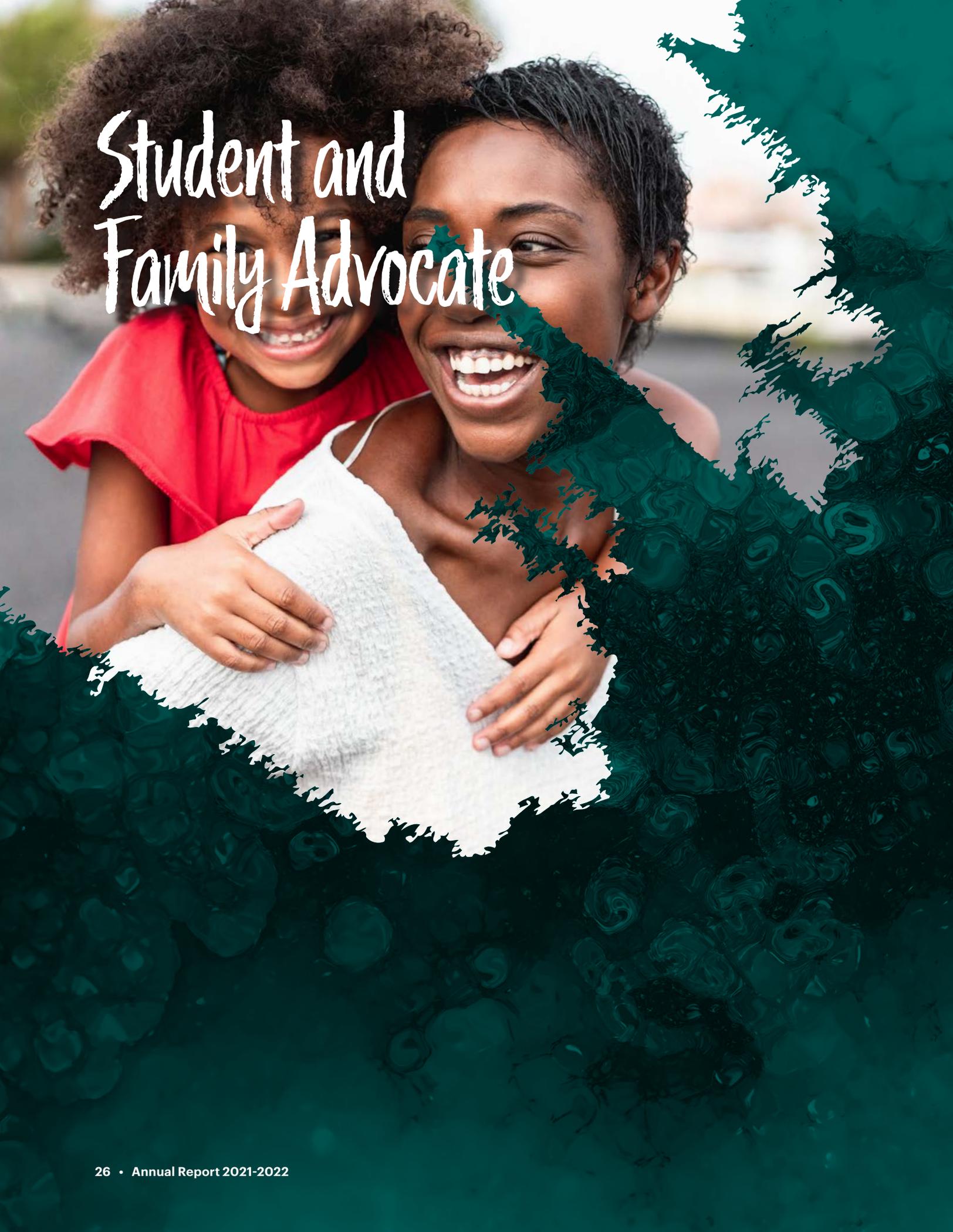
Midaynta Community Services is continuing to strive towards strengthening the delivery of efficient and effective services that will meet the varied and unique needs of our clients. Through the work of this program, we take a holistic approach and look at a number of contributing factors when looking into housing needs, such as family size, financial status and 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 housing access and maintaining affordable housing, information, referral, eviction prevention, housing stabilization and counselling, mentoring programs and peer-support initiatives.

In order to provide high quality support to clients, we work in collaboration with a number of 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 help centres like Midyanta. Housing project outreach efforts have increased this 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 as well as trainings. 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. By the same token, we will establish more beneficial partnerships and collaborate with other service providers in an effort to better support our clients. Close to 900 hundred individuals receive housing support from the housing program, 70 eviction prevention, Access to housing 350, 245 Stabilization, New clients 230. We have seen more clients that are in dire need of Canada Ontario benefit and rent bank due to COVID 19. Many people lost their job and struggle to a pay the rent and feed their children.





Student and Family Advocate

The student and family advocate program at Midaynta provides navigation guidance, advocacy, and support to parents and their children as they navigate barriers and anti-Black racism within the education system.

The objectives of the Student and Family advocates are:

- Be the voice of all parents of Black children so no parent has to fight alone for a just, safe, and equitable education for their child
- Work to eliminate anti-Black racism and the oppression of Black students at school and interconnected systems.
- Open a continued dialogue with school boards, and independent and private schools about anti-oppressive practices, culturally responsive pedagogy, and anti-Black racism within their schools and connected systems.

Many of the families that SFA supports did not have an understanding of navigating the education system due to the language barrier. When a family contacts us, they go through a history of abuse in the hands of schools and years of built trauma. Sometimes the needs of the student and the needs of the family are different, and the majority of the time, parents need one-on-one counseling support because of what they have been through. They need someone to unpack the experience with them that can help them understand that it was not their fault and that it is the system that is to blame. In one particular case, the mother felt that the school was being racist to her son, and they did not want to take the right protocol to support him. Son was being bullied online/in person, and his mom brought the issue to school. The school spoke to the children and told the mother that the situation was handled. A few days later, the bullying continued online, and the mom asked the school if she could speak to the student's parents. At this point, her son, a straight-A student, missed two weeks of school and his grades started to suffer. The concerned mom reached out, wanting the school to set up a meeting with her and the other student's parents to find a solution to this issue. When SFA contacted the school, they mentioned that the parents did not want to have a sit-down and would handle the situation on their own. SFA booked a meeting with the mom, and one of the strategies that were used that worked well

was explaining to her the protocol as well as the other family's right to privacy in handling the matter. Mom just needed someone to help her son get back to school and stop the bullying in class. If a parent does not understand the school administrator, they feel scared, helpless, and vulnerable. SFA addressed the mother's concerns through the one-on-one session and spoke to the son. After a one-on-one session with the son, he was able to go back to school and was doing much better socially as well. At that moment, they needed someone to validate their feelings, speak with the son and provide him with tools to support him in school

A parent reached out regarding her six-year-old daughter, who got pulled out of class to calm down her four-year-old brother, whom teachers and administrators could not calm down. After the incident, the teacher spoke to the daughter about the son's behavior and mentioned the situation at home. The teacher called Children's Aid Society on the family. Concerned, confused, and frustrated, mom reached out to connect with SFA for support. After scheduling a meeting with CAS, and the family, we were able to see that the teacher was discriminating against the family and that her claim was baseless. CAS wanted to join the meeting with the school to figure out why they thought they needed to make the call. After scheduling a meeting with the principal, unfortunately, the situation escalated. The principal described the four-year-old child as unsafe and a danger to students/staff. Mother had a panic attack in the middle of the meeting and could not continue the meeting. Mother was not made aware of the seriousness of the child's behavior until a week before CAS was called. After the mother was able to calm down, she told SFA that she no longer wanted her kids to go to that school. The unexpected results of the case were that after the meeting ended, the Children's Aid worker wanted to speak to the supervisor about the school behavior during the meeting. Mom also mentioned that there were five other Black families that were complaining about the administration and teacher behavior towards them and their children. This case is still ongoing and has the potential to be raised to the board and later the public to be made aware of it.



Mending A Crack In The Sky

Healing network circle

Mending a Crack in the Sky (MCIS) is a dynamic program that consists of a dedicated group of mothers who are passionate about creating safe spaces for the community to heal, mobilize, advocate and navigate relevant systems. The group is inspired by a Somali proverb stating that “if people come together, they can even mend a crack in the sky.”

Over the past year, the MCIS program has continued its work by building on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formed with the Toronto Service Police Board (TPSB) by focusing on increasing safety in the community through meetings with officers from six divisions across Toronto, including Divisions 12, 13, 22, 23, 31, and 32. Through the progression of these meetings, members of the MCIS program have been able to build trust between the community members and officers, increasing engagement by holding community events and roundtables, as well as sharing resources and attending each other’s events.

MCIS continued to hold weekly community safety meetings every Saturday, allowing community members to join an open floor discussion where community safety, community updates and resources are shared. The mothers of MCIS have also continued to attend roundtables, open houses, and community events to work with the community and build rapport with racialized and minority families.

This year, the hard work of the members of MCIS led to them being recognized by the Mayor’s office and awarded the Mayor’s 2021 Community Safety Award. This award continues to motivate the mothers of MCIS in continuing their hard work and dedication to supporting members of the community through peer-led trauma counseling and healing.

Next year, MCIS hopes to continue building on this work and creating more opportunities to increase workshops and trainings for families in the community.

Healing Network Circle

Midaynta during the past year was able to secure funding from the Centre for Research and Innovation for Black Survivors of Homicide Victims. This led to the curation of the Healing Network Circle series for MCIS mothers focusing on healing together as a community. Through the Healing network circle, MCIS utilized the partnership it built alongside Midaynta Community Services to expand its community healing network circle. The circle created a safe space for mothers affected by violence to heal together seeking strength from one another. The network facilitated healing by providing biweekly presentation learning series and one on one counselling. Due to Covid 19, some of these sessions were delivered through zoom and others were conducted in person.

Additionally, the group tried to meet every Thursday at the Keele Hub and were able to have in-person sessions and connect with the clients that needed immediate support. Based on the feedback from the participants it was noted that these workshops created a space for members to come together to learn and heal in the community. Some of the program’s success has been making services accessible to community members. The focus of the presentations has been to utilize a preventative and intervention-based approach to address the concerns faced by the community. Additionally, having multilingual facilitators enabled the group to form an instant rapport with facilitators who helped them to address their concerns without any language barriers.



Anti-Racism Action Program

The Anti-Racism Action Program tackles the barrier of policy issues in regard to law enforcement and institutional racism by collaborating with the Toronto Police Services Board to determine how the Toronto Police Services Board can provide better services and support to the Somali community including improving transparency, building trust, and enhancing community safety.

The program staff meet monthly with six divisions and participate in weekly community safety meetings. During those meetings, they engage with the community and different systems to discuss ways to be inclusive and combat Anti-Black Racism. For instance, the zero-gun violence movement presentation, where Mother outreach workers provided emotional support to the participants. All those who attended the presentation have agreed to resist gun violence by promoting peaceful protest, using social media to expose the impacts gun violence leaves behind, fighting systemic injustices and root causes of gun violence, demanding politicians to develop policies that address gun violence and communities to come together as one to educate and empower each other.

Another meeting that the ARAP participated was with the Prime Minister of Canada, The Right Honorable, Justin Trudeau. President of Toronto Raptors, Masai Ujuri who is a champion for the mother, facilitated the meeting. The mothers took advantage of this rare meeting and spoke about who they are, their mission, and their vision. The mothers stressed about the crime and gun violence ravaging their community and how to stop it. The mothers gave suggestions that the root causes of this dilemma be addressed. The mothers said to the Prime Minister the need to tackle systemic injustices, racism, discrimination, prejudice as well as to develop resources that will create opportunities for young racialized individuals.

In addition, they outreach to other agencies and institutions fighting against racism and deepening existing relationships. The program was able to launch healing initiatives where members can meet regularly and share their stories and experience of racism. One of the most impactful activities of the program is the monthly workshops of cultural relevance with a focus on community safety and awareness, engagement, and capacity building, and legal rights. This program provides intervention by providing peer/crisis support for families and youth impacted by discrimination and institutional racism. The program works closely with Midaynta's student and family program, which advocates and support Black families and student in navigating the Ontario education system.

ARAP has impacted institutional practices when working with people of diverse cultures, ethnicities, and faiths. The program was able to bring the community together by using different tools like meditation and spiritual guides to becoming more aware and more purposeful about their actions. It was also a safe and inclusive space where families could engage freely and receive support and referral to programs and services.

Somali Heritage Games



The Somali Heritage games is an intensive annual summer sports program developed by Midaynta Community Services, to celebrate Somali-Canadians, their Somali heritage and empower Somali youth through educational workshops and promote civic engagement within the Somali Community. The program combines sports and education whilst providing a platform where pressing community issues can be discussed and an opportunity for youth to gain transferable life skills and understand accountability and a develop strong work ethic. As the Somali community in Canada continues to face multiple barriers and challenges including high rates of youth violence, increased school dropouts, and socio-economic challenges, a program like this help empowers Somali youth, teaching them of the richness of

their Somali heritage to develop positive identities and engage them in physical activity to disrupt them from taking wrong paths. In addition, it provides youth the opportunity to gain intercultural understanding and knowledge of their heritage, breaking social and cultural barriers that deter youth from full participation in their communities.

Every year we organize games and workshops for youth, incorporate different activities and events to enhance their experience. Sports games include basketball and soccer for both girls and boys. We aim to make sure youth are occupied and engaged in a physical activity when they are not in school and continue to find creative ways to include different sports and introduce them to different sports.





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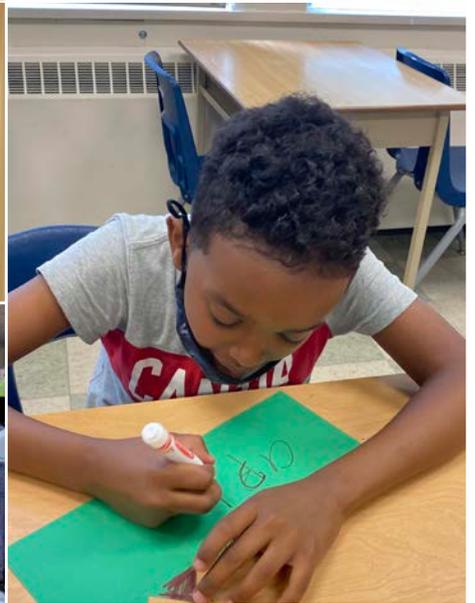
The Centre for Research & Innovations for Black Survivors of Homicide Victims (CRIB)

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