

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020



ONE PEOPLE, ONE VOICE, ONE COMMUNITY

Table of contents

Message From Chair Of Board Of Directors	3
Message From The Executive Director	4
About Midaynta Community Services	6
Project Turn Around	8
Youth Outreach Worker Program (Yow)	12
The Enhanced Youth Outreach Worker (Eyow) Program	14
The Rites Of Passage Youth Mentorship Program	16
The Future Leaders Summer Camp	18
Housing and Homelessness Program	20
Mending A Crack In The Sky (Mcis)	22
Youth Resilience Conference	24
Somali Heritage Games	26
Acknowledgments	28

Message from chair of board of directors



Abdirahman Dhore
Chairman, Board of Directors

The year 2019/2020 at Midaynta Community Services has been a year of important milestones as we advance our strategic plan and vision of creating diverse communities, expanding services, and developing services for the predominantly underserved and oppressed communities.

Midaynta is committed to its mission to create communities that are vibrant, socially integrated, and unified. We have seen our group come together and show strength, determination and a sense of solidarity in sharing one voice. Every year, staff, volunteers, and members of the Board worked diligently to develop a strong framework and collaborate with other stakeholders and strategic partners to increase the ability of our organization to attract new opportunities, to provide sponsors, partners, and leadership to different programs to enhance the development of coordination, services and to provide a consistent path for young people and families seeking service.

The Board of Directors reviews and changes policies and procedures every year to provide the services required in the community. To improve agency capacity to handle defined areas of risk within the organization, we reviewed and initiated the Risk Management Tools. The process is structured to facilitate risk management activities and encourage the implementation within the company of a risk reduction strategy. The Board of Directors is dedicated to supporting the development of agencies by cultivating a culture of honesty and good governance. They kept focusing on achieving the goals of the strategic plan for 2017-2018, which allowed them to position Midaynta for continued growth and long-term sustainability.

Last year was one of the busiest years to date, and our focus continues with a new phase that aims to bring our company and our community even more success and positive change. Our strategic planning for the future, complete with a detailed fundraising strategy, involves increasing our support. We are planning to develop our current policies and processes and to focus on developing new ones. Our Board of Directors will have a renewed commitment to building capacity for African grass root organizations in Ontario and abroad.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Midaynta, I would like to thank our volunteers, placement students, workers, affiliate organizations, supporters, and funders. Special thanks to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services staff for their continued and unwavering support for the company. We will continue to build our relationship and work to improve our programs and support for our community in cooperation with other service providers.

Thank you,

Message from the Executive Director



Mahad Yusuf
Executive Director

This year, we have had success addressing many of the challenges facing the community through the support and hard work of numerous volunteers, students, and limited staff. Countless individuals have come together to work to find solutions for the many challenges facing the community, especially amongst these unprecedented times.

Over the past year, I am delighted to report that Midaynta Community Services has made great strides in addressing youth violence in the Black community through the partnership with Mending a Crack in the Sky (MCIS) group. I am thrilled to announce that our efforts have led to Midaynta and MCIS signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Toronto Police Service Board (TPSB). The M.O.U signing has been one of the biggest achievements of the group yet. The historical event was witnessed by hopeful and optimistic community members who were and continue to be eager to see the Midaynta realize its goals. The main purpose of the M.O.U is to establish a formal and equal working relationship between the TPSB, TPS and Midaynta Community Services in order to improve community safety. The M.O.U also provided an opportunity to build trust between the police force and the community.

While many developments have been made, there are still a number of challenges facing the community and our clients, and while our volunteers do a great amount to help overcome them, it is a lack of funding and systemic racism that continues to hinder our progress. Our community is also still dealing with trauma, mental health

issues and gun violence. Our team from the Project Turn Around Program, the Youth Outreach Worker Program (YOW), the Enhanced Youth Outreach Worker Program (EYOW), the Youth Mentorship Program (YMP), and the Housing programs continue to support, advocate, and raise awareness of the challenges youth and their families experience.

Our team has consistently been at the forefront of effective response to community crises. They ensure that community grievances are heard by engaging key stakeholders in order to achieve substantial positive change. Our team was involved and participated in several community roundtables and committees to address and resolve issues and concerns impacting the community. Our case workers do a relentless job in serving clients and their families by implementing several community consultations and workshops. The caseworkers support clients by accompanying them in court for hearings and providing support letters, which play a crucial role in establishing clients' commitment to the program as well as ensuring a positive outlook in the justice system.

Furthermore, we continue to support, serve, and advocate for families and youth through a range of our programs like the Rites of Passage, the Youth Mentorship Program, the Enhanced Youth Outreach Workers Program (EYOW), the Youth Outreach Workers Program (YOW) and settlement programs. These programs have proven to be the bedrock of support for the community and deliver a positive impact to our clients.

This year, Midaynta Community Services held the 4th Youth Resiliency Conference, "Call to Action: Collaborative Approaches to Build Youth Resilience and Prevent Radicalization to Violence". The Youth Resiliency Conference and monthly roundtable is an initiative led and organized by Midaynta Community Services for the purpose of having dialogue within communities about safety concerns, vulnerabilities of youth to recruitment by extremist groups, and learning how to play a proactive role to prevent youth from becoming radicalized to violence. In doing so, Midaynta helps build community resilience against radicalization to violence and the harms of violent extremism. We would like to thank the key stakeholders at the roundtables which included The Mosaic Institute, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, the Diversity Institute at Ryerson University, Toronto Police Services, York Police, Peel Region Police and the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE).

This year's conference panelists' discussion centred around four themes: media narratives, the increase of white supremacy and its impact on gun violence, the state of funding for community organizations, and educational reforms. These conferences serve as a way to obtain new sources of knowledge from different scholars, contributors, and speakers on how best to serve youth with multiple risk factors in the community. We incorporate most of the conferences' ideas and recommendations into our programs and into the work we do with the youth in our community.

Midaynta Community Services continue to provide internship opportunities for university students to conduct in-depth research on issues affecting the Black community, which in turn has helped to inform our youth programs and advocacy work by raising awareness and engaging various stakeholders. We have worked with and would like to give thanks to students and their professors from the Munk School of Global Affairs, OISE, the University of Toronto, York University, the Diversity Institute at Ryerson University, Seneca College and Humber College to support our youth and community.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge all of our service partners, who for many years have supported Midaynta Community Services in ensuring that we provide quality and relevant services to our clients and the community in general.

Special thanks to our key core partners who have always supported our organization in various ways: the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, the Canadian Council of Imams, Somali Immigrant Aid Organization, East Metro Youth Services, BADC, Color of Poverty - Color of Change, Northwood Neighbourhood Services, the RCMP and the members of the steering committee for our Project Turn-Around (GPIP). Thank you to all the Midaynta staff, students, volunteers, and our Board of Directors.

Thank you,

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 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 27 years. Midaynta currently has a team of 11 full-time staff and 2 part-time staff. In addition, through Service Canada Youth Jobs, we hire 15 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), 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 27 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 '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 provide 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. Midaynta also holds annual conferences for the purpose of converging together, sharing knowledge, and devising collaborative efforts. 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

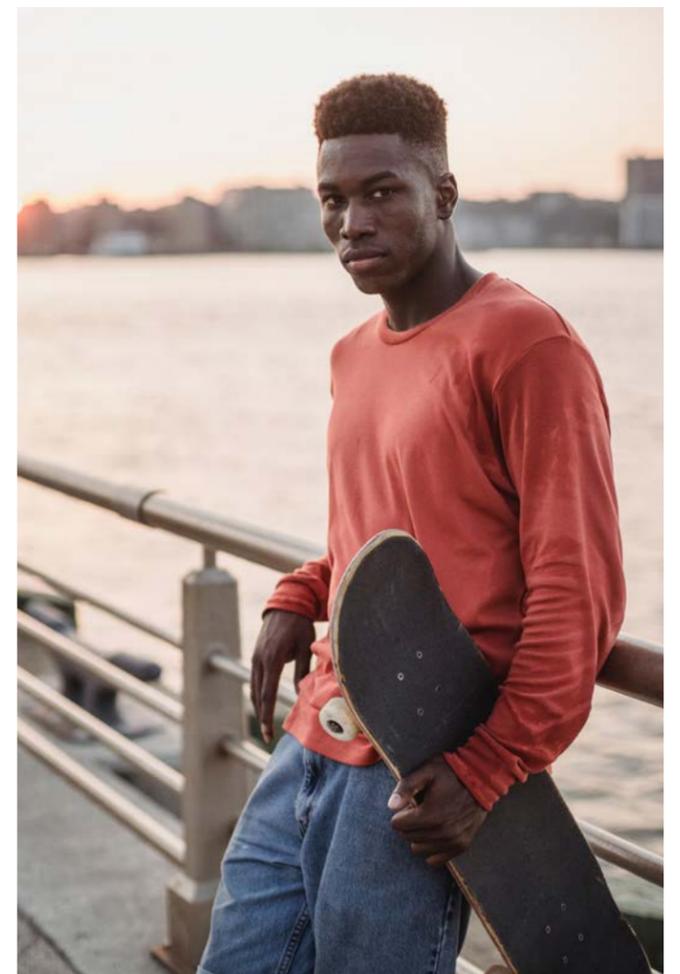
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Part of the Project Turn Around is a Family Support Counsellor who provides family interventions including counselling, psychoeducation, crisis planning and system navigation. The counsellor often meets clients in the community, at hospitals, court, schools and even online utilizing the Ontario Telemedicine Network technology.

In addition to these services, Project-Turn-Around also provides a series of workshops designed to meet the participants interest and needs, hosted at local schools and community centers. A diverse range of topics are often discussed which include: anti-racism, time management, education and mental health, post-secondary, employment, youth violence prevention. Project- Turn-Around receives referrals from various sources such as probation offices, secured and open custody facilities, youth outreach workers,

courts, Children's Aid Society, family referrals as well as self-referrals. The program has developed strong relationships with community partners, resulting in several referrals to external services and agencies to better support our clientele. Our caseworkers also participate in different community safety and community empowerment meetings and tables in the City.

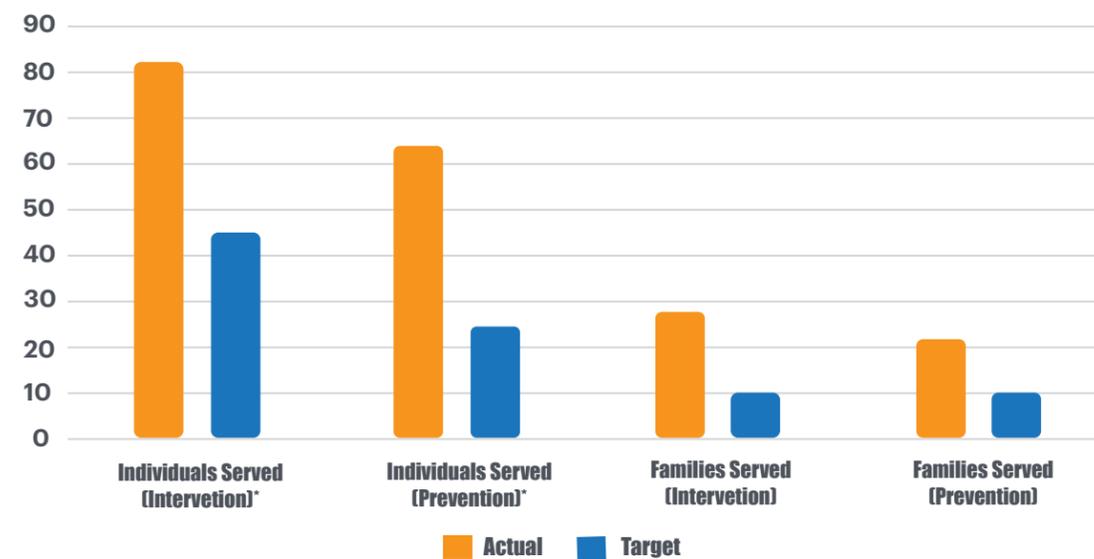


Client sources and Referrals

Referred From	Referred To:	Referred From	Referred To:
Finch Youth Court	Youth Employment Services	MCCSS Youth Probations	'Building Up' Program
Yorktown Family Services	Costi Employment Services	Community Agency Referrals	Career Foundations
Criminal Lawyers	Various Adult Schools programs	Mending A crack in The Sky	Neighbourhood Links
Focus Rexdale and Blackcreek	CAMH	Children's Aid Society Toronto	TDSB Safe Schools
Toronto District School Board	TDSB Alternative Schools	Community / Self Referrals	Housing Program
	ID Clinics		'Steps 2 Success'

Source: Project Turn Around Database.

Clients Served 2019-2020



YOUTH OUTREACH WORKER (YOW) PROGRAM



This section outlines the accomplishments and challenges of the Youth Outreach Worker program (YOW) over the course of 2019-2020 fiscal year. Over the last year, the YOWs conducted advocacy and raised awareness of the challenge's youth are experiencing, whereby a quick and effective response to community crises were made as well as engaging key stakeholders to achieve substantial positive change. The YOWs participated in several community roundtables and committees to raise issues and concerns impacting Black youth

YOW program have supported youth and their families by providing them with access to different programs and services that they require such as pre-employment and employment, summer job readiness, after school programs, mental health, community crisis response, recreation programs, among others. In partnership with the TDSB, the YOWs facilitated workshops at several schools, hosted the Rising Star Awards to

support, acknowledge, recognize and celebrate youth's academic and athletic accomplishments, community contributions and important roles played as student leaders in enriching their own lives and communities. As an incentive to outstanding students, various recognitions were made to students who have improved their educational standing despite the challenges to achieve their learning goals.

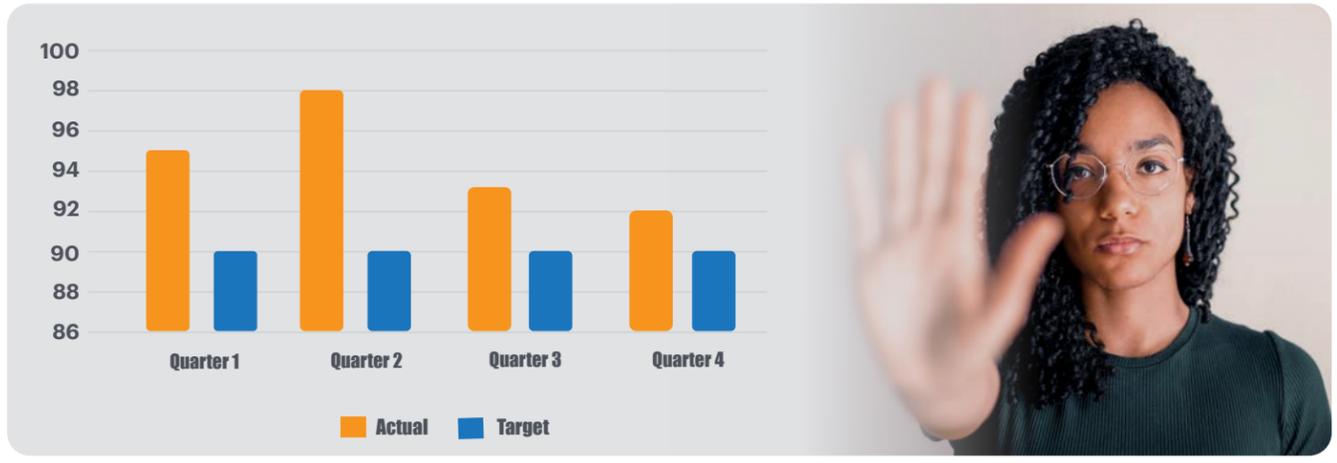
Internally, the YOW program has made connections with the Youth Mentorship Program to provide support in running the 2020 Future Leaders summer camp. At about the same period, the YOWs organized the 2020 Somali Heritage Games, an intensive summer sports program developed to celebrate Somali-Canadian heritage, empower Somali youth through educational workshops, and promote civic engagement within the Somali Community. The program combined sports and education whilst providing a platform where pressing community issues can be discussed. This also provided an opportunity for YOWs to further engage the youth in their community and for connections and support. The summer heritage games were an enormous success to which more opportunities were made to engage youth in addressing and discussing the different challenges they face, especially being racialized and/or of Somali descent. The initiative was also used to engage parents and other community members on ideas of how to address different issues through a solution-based approach.

Also, to further empower Black youth, the YOW staff attended Midaynta's weekly Zoom meetings to discuss challenges, successes, workshops, events, and relevant information to help progress programming. Also, continuous assistance was provided to clients virtually and connected them to different resources. In addition, the YOWs program actively provided capacity building and training to clients in areas that related to their needs, including but not limited to employment, post-secondary workshop and Mental health workshop.

The YOWs continue to work with courts and detention facilities; engaging with referred young people to

meet their community service order requirements by connecting them to volunteering educational and employment opportunities and supporting them in the successful transition from detention to community release. This relates directly to their work in raising awareness of the many crises facing black youth, in culturally sensitive ways. They serve to deeply engage Somali youth, parents and communities; one event can include their support in organizing the flag raising ceremony at Queen's Park. This is an annual event where the Somali flag is being raised to celebrate the rich Somali heritage in the city and contributions of Somali-Canadians to Canada. In order to build youth resilience and prevent radicalization to violence among youth, the YOW program worked in collaboration with Black youth to build their resiliency, access opportunities in education and employment and overcome challenges and barriers through access to services and programs. This youth resilience collaboration has resulted in organizing a successful 2019-2020 Annual Youth Resilience Conference.

Finally, one of the challenges that the YOWs program faced during the 2019-2020 fiscal year were related to the COVID-19 pandemic which has impacted the delivery of in person services to clients. Accordingly, starting in March 2020, the YOWs activities have shifted its activities virtually via Zoom meeting platform as per provincial Public Health regulations. Therefore, the participation in round tables with several partners were attended virtually to address key issues facing Black youth. Round tables attended were the Ward 1&2 Safety Committee, the Ward 11&12 Safety Committee, and the African Canadian Coalition of Community Organization (ACCCO) and TDSB Roundtable.



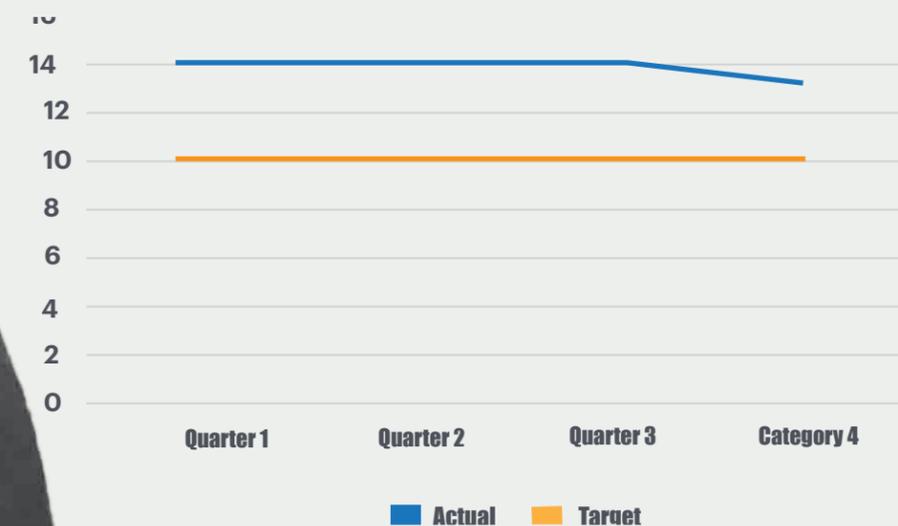
ENHANCED YOUTH OUTREACH WORKER PROGRAM

The Enhanced Youth Outreach Worker (EYOW) program delivers services to youth between 12 to 25 years with an intensive one-on-one support. The EYOW provides services based on short term counselling as well as provision of support services based on the Stages of Change intervention model. For effective and relevant services for Black youth who require our support, the EYOWs works in collaboration with youth outreach workers to identify their needs and intervene accordingly. The EYOW also conducts youth referral to appropriate service providers in the community and support them to access these services as well as support parents and family members to help youth address their needs.

During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, a noticeable increase in gun violence in several communities in the city of Toronto resulted in crisis response service being delivered by the EYOWs program to meet the Northwest Toronto community's needs. Priority was given to mental health response to provide

immediate trauma-informed emotional support to families and neighbors affected by the exposure to violence in the community. In collaboration with the Mending a Crack in the Sky (MCIS), a community-led action which was established by Somali mothers, the EYOW provided the necessary socio-emotional support on a weekly basis to address youth violence in the Greater Toronto Area. Over the last year, the EYOWs program facilitated several mental health workshops as well as participated in the City of Toronto weekly FOCUS round tables which included several partners addressing key issues facing youth. Midaynta's EYOW worked with multiple service providers to support and lead service plans for FOCUS table clients who face acutely elevated risk factors.

Finally, during the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the EYOW program utilized several resources to support service delivery such as the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN). The OTN is a private and secure digital network that supports the delivery of virtual care offering a variety of ways to communicate with and care for patients, and for health care providers to connect with peers and specialists.



rites of passage

YOUTH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



BELIEVE
IN YOUR
DREAM

This summary outlines the Youth Mentorship Program achievement, activities, and challenges during the year 2019-2020. As part of the 2019-2020 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 starting 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 males as formal mentors, the youth were still provided with informal mentorship. However, this led Black boys in the program having less access to formal mentors compared 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 mentorships, the Rites of Passage programming conducted workshops 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 constantly collaborated with the TDSB and Al-Ikhlaas Foundation School, 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 in previous registration in summer camps and march break camps, the need and want for mentorship programs exceeds the program service measures.

During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, there was an increase in numbers of mentors and mentees who participated in the program, exceeding the annual target of mentees, and mentors. Due to the large number of youths, the number of mentees outnumbered the mentors which created a high demand and wait time for matching, but overall the program was a success. 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 during the lunch hour workshops at Dixon Grove Junior Middle School and Martin Grove Collegiate Institute. Youth who completed the program identify the workshops and mentorship matches as a positive experience. Some key highlights from the 2019-2020 year also include mentees presenting at their schools about Black History Month Assembly in which students shared their Black culture with their fellow students that included music, dance, fashion, food and, how much Black culture has influenced many Canadians. Through this activity, students learned some research and presentation skills. The program's sport events were greatly attended by youth which are mostly not available to them and that has facilitated the linkage of cultural identity to mentorship group workshops. The opportunities and experiences truly resonated with youth and parents, as youth from marginalized backgrounds had the chance to build a stronger sense of cultural and racial identity that, in turn, lead to positive effects in all aspects of their lives (e.g., academic outcomes, personal relationship...etc).

Finally, it is important to note that there were some challenges that impacted the progress of the program mainly because of the TDSB strike within the school system and other factors related to 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 well attended and delivered successfully.



FUTURE LEADERS SUMMER CAMP

The Future Leaders Summer Camp provides students with a safe place which children of various Black ethnic backgrounds develop literacy, leadership, character skills, and strengthened cultural awareness.

The Future Leader's Camp attendees accessed recreational opportunities (i.e., Rides, basketball, soccer, dodgeball, baseball, soccer-baseball, swimming etc.), go on excursions to key sites in Toronto, completed traditional arts and crafts (i.e., water-painting) and were provided with lunch and refreshments. The youth campers are also engaged with their community members, making new friends and engaging with old ones. Parent(s)/ guardian(s) were also engaged to build awareness of community safety and improve their knowledge of how to be better involved in their child's education. For instance, they were informed of programs and services provided by community service providers to serve their child's educational, extracurricular and recreational needs. Through the camp TDSB Focus on Youth Student Counselors also got access to professional development and community engagement opportunities. The Camp strives to provide children, youth and their families with opportunities that enhance student and community learning, engagement, and well-being.

Mission

- Literacy development
- Leadership and character education development
- Somali language and cultural awareness
- Art instruction
- Recreation and sports
- Community engagement and awareness

2019 Future Leaders Summer Camp ran from Tuesday July 02 to Friday August 09, 2019 at Martingrove Collegiate Institute. A total of 40 campers, 20 boys and 20 girls, with an age range from 8 to 14 years of age registered for the program.

The program also provided work placement opportunities for TDSB Focus on Youth Summer Counselor, and Service Ontario Student Placements. Key activities included gym activities, dodge ball, basketball, puzzles and card games, outdoor field activities, movies, trips to queen's park (Ontario Legislature), High Park, Ontario Science Centre, and Skyzone.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PROGRAM

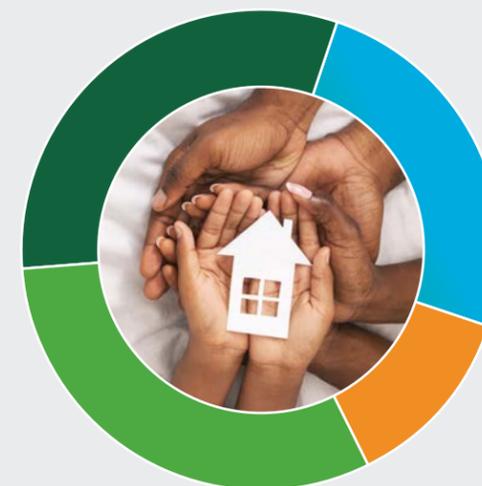
Midaynta's Housing Program serves low-income individuals and families who face many barriers and challenges in finding and maintaining appropriate and affordable housing and who are struggling to pay their rent.

Midaynta Community Services continues to strengthen effective services delivery that will meet the varied and unique needs of our clients.

In this program, we adopt a holistic approach and look at several issues, such as the number of children, financial status and neighbourhood, health, and mental health, all of which tend to have a negative impact on our clients' housing status. While we serve everyone who needs the service, the main emphasis of the program is to provide culturally sensitive assistance to prevent homelessness in the Somali Community. Also, housing services include assisting clients with Access to Housing application, assistance to find and

maintain affordable housing, sharing information about housing/rental opportunities, referral, eviction prevention by advocating on behalf of clients at Landlord and Tenant Board Court, housing stabilization and counseling, mentoring programs and peer-support initiatives. To provide appropriate support to clients, we work in collaboration with several other service providers including Toronto Community Housing and Access to housing/Housing Connections. We encourage home ownership when it is possible, as we aim for our client to fully integrate into society.

SERVICES DELIVERED IN 2019 - 2020 FISCAL YEAR



- NEW CLIENTS**
- EVICTON PREVENTION**
- HOUSING ACCESS**
- STABILIZATION**

MENDING A CRACK IN THE SKY (MCIS)

“IF PEOPLE COME TOGETHER , THEY CAN EVEN MEND A CRACK IN THE SKY .”

Mending A Crack in The Sky (MCIS) is a dynamic program composed of a devoted group of mothers who are passionate about creating safe spaces for healing, advocacy, and participating in transformative cultural change.

Mending a Crack In The Sky (MCIS) is a dynamic program composed of a devoted group of mothers who are passionate about creating safe spaces for healing, advocacy, and participating in transformative cultural change. Mending a Crack In the Sky is a Somali proverb states that “they can even mend a crack in the sky if people come together.” This sentiment has been the basis of a community-led action plan to counter the unprecedented rates of predominantly male youth violence among Somali Canadians, which has intensified community distress and fragmentation. Somali mothers, who have lost their loved ones because of violence in the neighbourhood make up the core group. The group also consists of additional community members, organizations, and representatives who assist the mothers in achieving their objectives. A ground-breaking movement has been coordinated by the Mending A Crack in The Sky (MCIS) Healing Initiative to provide direct assistance to young people and families affected by gun violence.

In the past year, the MCIS Somali Mothers called on community members to take action by holding community gatherings in the West-End of Toronto’s priority neighbourhoods. In Lawrence Heights Group, Falstaff, Driftwood (Jane & Finch), the mothers successfully held healing forums and have planned future forums in Rexdale, The East Mall and West Mall, as well as Regent Park. To date, they’ve met over 200 mothers. A neighbourhood leadership team is nominated at each meeting to keep community members responsible for continuing to engage, and the MCIS group has also been working very hard on a documentary film. The goal of the documentary film is to capture the raw stories of Somali mothers who, because of community violence, have lost their youth. It also acts as a mechanism within the Somali community to raise awareness of this problem and a call for action by community members. In addition, the video also discusses other Somali group members and leaders’ views. A variety of fears, obstacles as well as recommendations and solutions to overcome these problems are also captured in the documentary.

Memorandum of Understanding with Toronto Police Service Board

The Mending a Crack in the Sky, Mother Outreach Workers, presented to the Toronto police service board at the July 2019 Toronto Police Service Board meeting, detailing the issues facing the Somali-Canadian population in the north-west part of the City. In addition, the group also provided the Police Service Board and MCIS with opportunities for collaboration and creativity to work together to create trust and resolve key issues and challenges. The group highlighted three core elements that they want to directly collaborate on:

1. Transparency
2. Building Trust
3. Community Safety

After this meeting, the board adopted a motion that generated the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). To establish a structured and equitable relationship between the board, TPS and Midaynta, the MOU was formed. The MOU was formally accepted on December 16, 2019 and was officially signed at a formal ceremony hosted by Midaynta Community Services on February 8, 2020. The MOU term is in effect from January 1st, 2020 to December 31st, 2022.

For minority communities, particularly the Somali community, the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding was a historic event. The MOU offers the community the opportunity to create trust and openness between the Toronto Police Services community and (TPS).

YOUTH RESILIENCE CONFERENCE

For seven years, Midaynta Community Services has brought together experts from across Canada and beyond, in a variety of fields to explore the causes of youth radicalization, hate and racism and strategies for preventing young people from joining extremist groups globally and domestically. In 2013, Midaynta Community Services and the Somali Action Alliance Educational Fund delivered the Broken Dreams Project on violent extremism. The documentary film tells of the plight of Somali refugee families whose sons were recruited by Al-Shabab. Learning from the lived experiences of the Somali communities of Ontario and Minnesota, Midaynta increased their expertise on youth radicalization and strategies for community and policy mobilization around countering violent extremism. The film helped Midaynta to engage Somali youth in discussions of violent radicalization,

with a focus on the root causes leading some youth to join extremist groups.

In 2015, as hundreds of young Canadians were reported to have left to join violent extremist groups abroad in 2014, Midaynta co-organized the Youth Radicalization: Policy and Education Response Conference, with the support of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the Ontario Government, the U.S. Consulate in Toronto, and the Toronto Police Service. By bringing together a diverse group of speakers, ranging from local and international dignitaries, academics, law enforcement, policymakers, community leaders, faith leaders, as well as youth and women's groups, the conference facilitated the exchange of knowledge and expertise from diverse perspectives on the causes of and proposed solutions to youth radicalization. In 2016, Midaynta co-organized their second annual conference,

Youth Radicalization: New and Emerging Challenges, which brought together this range of stakeholders to investigate the new and ongoing challenges facing youth radicalization. The conference highlighted issues of identity, education, interfaith relations, pastoral care, mental health, the psychology of terrorism, the dynamics of global conflict, police efforts to counter violent extremism, and the role of social media in youth radicalization.

On February 18 and 19, 2020, Midaynta community Services held the 4th Annual conferences on Youth Resilience, building on previous year's conference call to action focusing on four themes, the purpose of the conference was to examine existing efforts to promote youth resilience and provide a critical look on what further action continues to be needed. This year's panel themes were:

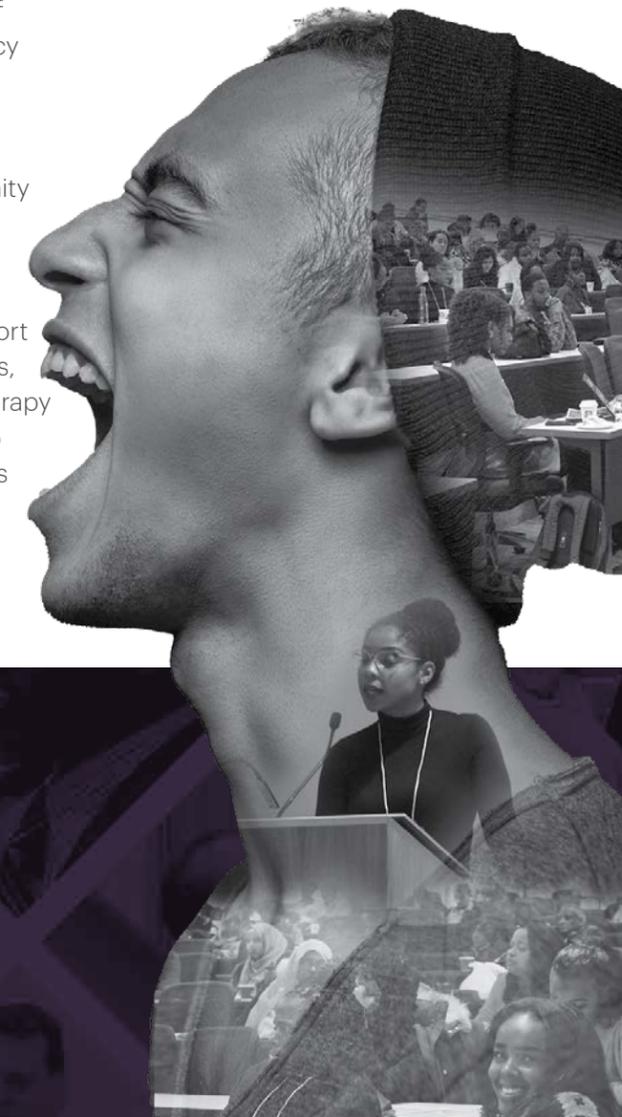
- Media Narratives
- Increase of White Supremacism and its impact on gun violence.
- State of funding for Community organizations
- Educational reforms

The panel discussions span over the two days, with the focus of Day one panel being the media's complex interactions with domestic and international terrorism, its critical role in advocacy and awareness, and the need for resources to continue to support trained journalists working on the ground. They discussed challenges and the opportunities with social media, which can lead to greater public awareness of social justice issues, while at the same time it has created a platform for terrorists to exploit this media coverage to spread their own messages of hate. The panel also acknowledged the media's responsibility in fairly representing racialized and marginalized

communities, and to be cautious of prejudicial depictions when they tell stories of these groups.

On day two, we heard from members of community organizations, as well as from the police board, in a panel discussing alternative approaches to addressing radicalization and violence. Key takeaways from the speakers include the benefits of community involvement in policy decisions, including policing. Experience of the panelists has shown that transparency and collaboration increase community trust in authorities, leading to greater safety and resilience. They also called for continued and greater investment in support systems for marginalized groups, including resources such as therapy and rehabilitation for those who have been radicalized, as well as the need to raise awareness of existing supports.

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'.



SOMALI HERITAGE GAMES

The Somali Heritage games is an intensive annual summer sport program, developed by Midaynta Community Services, to celebrate Somali-Canadian heritage and empower Somali youth through educational workshops and promote civic engagement within the Somali Community that usually takes place from June to August. The program combines sports and education whilst providing a platform where pressing community issues can be discussed.

The games kicked off with local youth (primarily black and Somali) competing in a junior soccer tournament. Each team was assigned a mentor who engaged the youth in group discussions around issues and barriers they face as well as ponder the knowledge gained through on-going educational workshops during the program.

In addition to the Junior Soccer tournament (comprised of local teams), eight teams of Somali descent from various neighborhoods in Canada, UK, Finland, Holland, Australia, USA, Denmark, Sweden competed against each other in a soccer tournament. We also used this chance to recognize and honor Mr. Macalin Tuke's stellar career and expose youth to positive role models such as Mr. Tuke, who is from their community, during the tournament. Through competitive sports, the youth had an opportunity to learn from each other, share their experiences and develop a strong positive identity.

The closing ceremony for the event included a keynote speech, awards for the Junior Soccer Tournament (1st place trophy and medals for winning team's players, medals for the runner's up and third place; top goal scorer award; the Macalin Tuke player of the tournament award, and fair play award) and certificates recognizing contribution from volunteers.

By organizing and hosting this annual event, Midaynta is aiming to empower youth in various ways, including:

- Somali youth gaining transferable life skills.
- Somali and black youth gain intercultural understanding.
- Increased civic engagement and participation in decision making processes.
- Somali youth develop positive identities and knowledge of their heritage.
- Breaking social and cultural barriers that deter Somali youth from full participation in their communities.
- Increased awareness of consequences of youth violence and gang-involvement.



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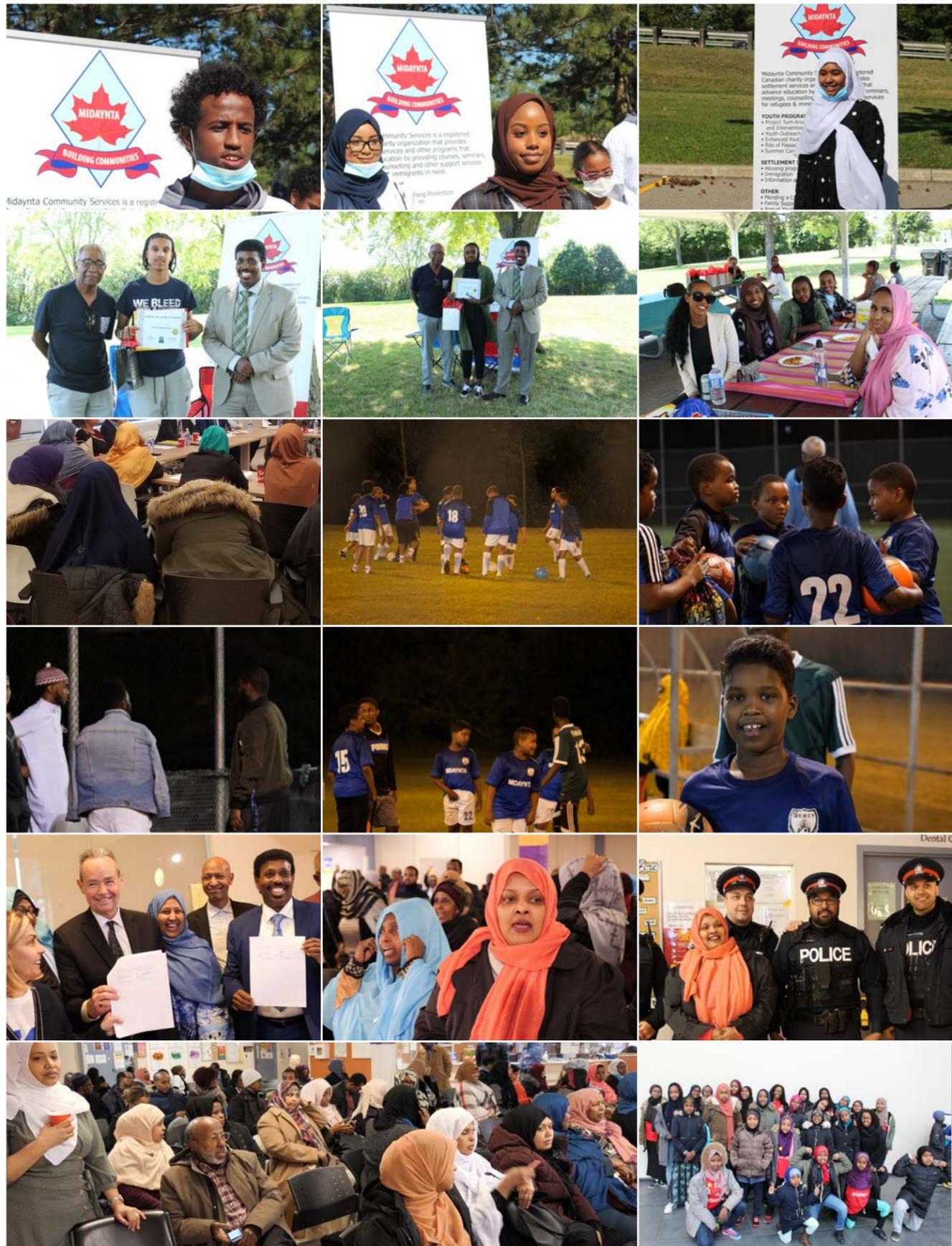


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Summer Students

Nadia Sameer Hassan
 Amal Dahir
 Zeynab Cisman
 Suhayra Warsame
 Maryama Mohamed
 Fatima Abdi Ahmed
 Kaseem Salah
 Yasmin Saidali
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 Zakaria Mahamud





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