



2024 — 2025

WHAT WE HEARD:

REFLECTIONS ON YOUTH
VOICES AND COLLECTIVE
ACTION







LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT



The Territorial Youth Collective respectfully acknowledges that we operate on the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta’an Kwäch’än Council. Our work extends across the Yukon First Nations, Gwich’in Tribal Council, and Taku River Tlingit. We give thanks to the Indigenous Peoples who welcomed us to their traditional territories so we could do this work, and the teachings they gave us when we were in their spaces. The guidance we have been gifted uplifted this work and couldn't be possible without the knowledge of the community. We are deeply grateful to the stewards of the land.

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INTRODUCTION

This What We Heard report captures progress made over the last year and a half, including stories and data from youth engagement sessions in communities, and updates from partners working to put the strategy into action. It reflects both successes and challenges, and it will guide the next phase of work to ensure Yukon youth continue to be at the centre of the strategy.

THE TERRITORIAL YOUTH COLLECTIVE (TYC)

The TYC is a collective of youth-serving organizations. In this work, we connect youth services, and resources to engage young people, youth-serving organizations and government, etc. We follow a Collective Impact Approach to our work that aims to increase collaboration across sectors by leveraging diverse strengths, reducing duplication and filling gaps in services, achieving systems-level change through strong partnerships, and increasing funding for collaborative initiatives that help youth thrive. It has been a journey of collaborative efforts between Youth serving organizations that started with funding from Tamarack Institute.

The collective's host organization is now BYTE-Empowering Youth Society. Partners across the territory have been working together to implement these priorities through programs, policies, and community-driven initiatives.

The Territorial Youth Strategy (TYS) is a guiding document created by and for Yukon youth in partnership with governments, organizations, and communities. It was created to ensure that young people's voices directly shape the decisions, programs, and supports that impact their lives.

OUR MISSION

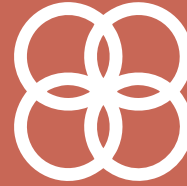
All Yukon youth have a sense of belonging throughout the Territory. This means that they feel empowered, have a positive sense of self and their futures, have mutually caring and fulfilling relationships, and feel connected to and supported by their family, community, and land.



FOUNDATIONAL VALUES



Meaningful Consideration of the Rights of Children and Youth



Intersectionality



Yukon First Nations Ways of Knowing, Doing, & Being



Youth voice, Leadership, Participation

WHO WE ARE ASKING



Yukon youth

Identify and address barriers youth face “What do you need in your community?” “What is being done?”



Signatories and Partners

Build coordinated supports and solutions for Yukon youth “What areas of the TYS have you addressed?” “What are challenges to implementing this change?”



Communities

Identify individual needs for the communities to “personalize” and address the community priorities to identify gaps “What isn't being implemented in your community?” “What supports does your community need to prioritize?” “What challenges are preventing change?”

THE METHODOLOGY

The following data was composed of quantitative and qualitative data collected through sessions across the Yukon and the Territorial Youth Strategy (TYS) Accountability Forum. We understand how important using qualitative data is in empowering youth voices. The Year 3 Priority Document 2025/2026 was decided by analyzing the progress trackers, partner tracking, and notes from the sessions in the communities.

TYPES OF DATA:



Community visits (number of communities, number of youth engaged).



Events, sessions, or digital engagement.



Partner check-ins and reporting tools.



Any surveys, stories, creative methods used.

We have started quarterly check-ins to hold partners/signatories accountable to implementing the calls to action. This report includes work done in Quarter 1 April 2025-June 2025.

We are also including partner data collected through verbal and written tracking tools between August 2024 - March 2025.

YOUTH VOICES: KEY THEMES FROM COMMUNITY VISITS

ROSS RIVER

Date of Visit:
Jan. 13-17 2025

of youth engaged:

07 

Youth Engagement:

**School sessions
grades 7-12**



Youth also said they want job-preparation training in school (like First Aid and WHMIS for grades 7–12) and more opportunities for field trips to Whitehorse or other communities.

WHAT WE HEARD:

Youth in Ross River identified Access to Learning & Education as their highest priority area. They highlighted the importance of school being a place where they feel supported, connected, and prepared for the future.

The top five calls to action identified by Ross River youth were:

4.1 Sense of Belonging in Schools: More breaks, access to art, music, woodshop, and land-based content to make school engaging and welcoming.

2.4 Funding for Treatment Centers & Intervention Supports: Supports for youth

struggling with substance use, with accessible, culturally relevant options.

4.3 Parents and Caregivers' Involvement in Learning: Youth emphasized the role of families in supporting education and wanted stronger connections.

1.1 Housing Security: Stable housing as a foundation for wellness and education.

1.4 Healthcare: Better access to consistent healthcare locally.

DAWSON CITY

Date of Visit:
Feb. 17-20 2025

of youth engaged:

28



Youth Engagement:

School sessions
grades 7-12



Positives in Dawson included strong cultural programming through Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the youth centre, school food programs (funding for food has been placed on hold for the time being), and a strong sense of community.

WHAT WE HEARD:

In Dawson City, youth identified Basic Needs as their highest priority section. They spoke about how access to housing, healthcare, and mentorship are deeply tied to feeling supported and being able to thrive in their community.

The top five calls to action identified by Dawson youth were:

1.4 Healthcare: Accessible and reliable healthcare services in the community.

1.1 Housing Security: Affordable and safe housing, with seasonal workers often struggling during winter.

3.6 Healthy Mentors & Positive Role Models:

Youth want mentors, especially for young men, and peer mentorship programs connecting older and younger students. One youth shared: "He doesn't

realize it, but he's like a father figure and we need more of that."

3.6 Healthy Mentors & Positive Role Models:

Youth want mentors, especially for young men, and peer mentorship programs connecting older and younger students. One youth shared: "He doesn't realize it, but he's like a father figure and we need more of that."

3.7 Mental Health Resources for Remote

Communities: Youth asked: "Where do you go?" when they need help, pointing to limited mental health services.

4.6 Development of Essential Skills: Life skills like budgeting, cooking, taxes, and fixing things around the house.

HAINES JUNCTION

Date of Visit:
Feb. 28 2025

of youth engaged:

12



Youth Engagement:

Focus group & informal
check-in



WHAT WE HEARD:

Youth in Haines Junction identified Mental Wellness & Connections as their highest priority section. They stressed the importance of both practical supports like housing and education, and opportunities to connect across generations.

The top five calls to action identified by Haines Junction youth were:

1.1 Housing Security: Affordable, safe housing as a basic need. Many young people mentioned couch surfing.

3.8 Intergenerational Connections: More chances to learn from Elders and community knowledge holders.

3.2 Interest-Based Activities & Recreation:

Limited options beyond seasonal activities; youth want diverse programming.

2.1 Barrier-Free Youth Shelter: A safe, substance-free place for youth.

4.4 Alternative Education: Flexible, hands-on education models that are accessible for different learners.

Youth also spoke about wanting the swimming pool back, more job opportunities (especially apprenticeships and work-study), and better transportation options to access opportunities.

TESLIN

Date of Visit:
May 12-13, 2025

of youth engaged:

12



Youth Engagement:
School session with
grades 9-12



WHAT WE HEARD:

In Teslin, youth identified Mental Wellness & Connections as their highest priority area, focusing on the need for consistent mental health support and safe spaces.

The top five calls to action identified by Teslin youth were:

3.7 Mental Health Resources for Remote Communities: A school counsellor only comes every two weeks, which is not enough to meet student needs.

2.5 Harm Reduction Supports: More local supports for those struggling with substance use.

3.3 Building Relationships Between Law Enforcement and Youth: Youth wanted safer and more supportive interactions with law enforcement.

3.2 Interest-Based Activities & Recreation:

Limited activities for older youth; they want their own space and more programming.

3.1 Programming for Young Men & Boys: Specific supports tailored to the needs of young men and boys.

Youth also spoke about challenges with the school building (leaks, plumbing, dust), the lack of transportation to reach youth programming in winter, and the impact of both supportive and unsupportive teachers.

OLD CROW

Date of Visit:
Oct. 21-24, 2024

of youth engaged:



Youth Engagement:

School session with grades
10-12 and Community dinner



WHAT WE HEARD:

Mental Wellness & Connections as the most urgent priority area within the Territorial Youth Strategy. They highlighted the need for stronger mental health supports that are accessible in a remote community, alongside opportunities for connection, healing, and meaningful activity.

The top five calls to action identified by Old Crow youth were:

3.7 Mental Health Resources for Remote Communities

2.5 Harm Reduction Supports: More local supports for those struggling with substance use.

3.2 Interest-Based Activities & Recreation:

Limited options beyond seasonal activities; youth want diverse programming.

5.4 Youth Employment in Remote Communities:

Creating more job opportunities locally so youth can gain experience and plan their futures without needing to leave Old Crow.

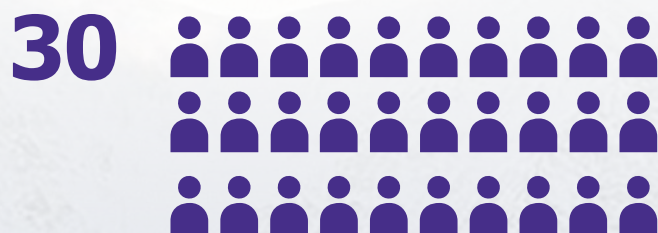
6.1 Land-Based Programming and Healing



WATSON LAKE

Date of Visit:
Nov. 19-22, 2024

of youth engaged:



Youth Engagement:

**School sessions with
grades 10-12**



WHAT WE HEARD:

In Watson Lake the highest priority section identified was Basic Needs, with young people emphasizing the importance of access to healthcare, transportation, and opportunities that help them prepare for their future. Youth also spoke about the need for more diverse recreation options beyond sports, and the importance of education around diversity, racism, and global issues to help the community grow in awareness and inclusion.

The top five calls to action identified by Watson Lake youth were:

4.6 Development of Essential Skills: Youth want to learn practical life skills such as budgeting, cooking, and other essentials that prepare them for independence.

5.4 Youth Employment in Remote Communities:

Creating more job opportunities locally so youth can gain experience and plan their futures without needing to leave Watson Lake.

1.2 Transportation: Reliable and youth-friendly transportation is seen as a barrier to accessing services, jobs, and recreation.

1.4 Healthcare: Better access to consistent healthcare services close to home was identified as a priority need.

2.3 Reduce Stigma & Increase Recovery

Support: Youth emphasized the importance of addressing stigma around substance use and creating supportive pathways for healing and recovery.

The sessions in Mayo, Pelly Crossing, & Faro were much smaller than others and we weren't able to collect as much qualitative data but wanted to highlight the communities top priorities.

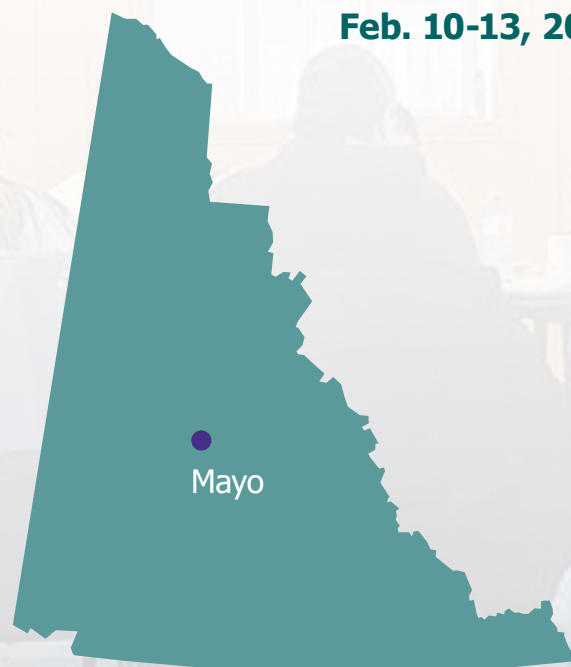
MAYO

Date of Visit:
Feb. 10-13, 2025

of youth engaged:

05 

Youth in Mayo clearly identified that accessibility to doctors and other health practitioners like counsellors and sexual health professionals was very important to them.



WHAT WE HEARD:

In Mayo the top priority section identified by youth was Basic Needs.

The top five calls to action identified by Mayo youth were:

1.2 Transportation: Reliable and youth-friendly transportation is seen as a barrier to accessing services, jobs, and recreation.

4.6 Development of Essential Skills: Youth want to learn practical life skills such as budgeting, cooking, and other essentials that prepare them for independence.

1.4 Healthcare: Better access to consistent healthcare services close to home was identified as a priority need.

4.4 Alternative Education: Flexible, hands-on education models that are accessible for different learners.

3.2 Interest-Based Activities & Recreation: Limited activities for older youth; they want their own space and more programming.

PELLY CROSSING

Date of Visit:
Feb. 10-13, 2025

of youth engaged:
03 



WHAT WE HEARD:

In Pelly Crossing the top priority section identified by youth was Access to Learning & Education.

The top five calls to action identified by Pelly Crossing youth were:

1.2 Transportation: Reliable and youth-friendly transportation is seen as a barrier to accessing services, jobs, and recreation.

4.6 Development of Essential Skills: Youth want to learn practical life skills such as budgeting, cooking, and other essentials that prepare them for independence.

1.4 Healthcare: Better access to consistent healthcare services close to home was identified as a priority need.

4.4 Alternative Education: Flexible, hands-on education models that are accessible for different learners.

3.2 Interest-Based Activities & Recreation: Limited activities for older youth; they want their own space and more programming.



FARO

Date of Visit:
Jan. 13-17, 2025

of youth engaged:

08 



WHAT WE HEARD:

In Faro the top priority section identified by youth was Mental Wellness and Connections.

The top five calls to action identified by Faro youth were:

2.3 Reduce Stigma & Increase Recovery
Support: Youth emphasized the importance of addressing stigma around substance use and creating supportive pathways for healing and recovery.

5.2 Work-study Opportunities

4.4 Alternative Education: Flexible, hands-on education models that are accessible for different learners.

6.1 Land-Based Programming and Healing

3.7 Mental Health Resources for Remote Communities



YOUTH SUMMIT: CROSS-COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

During the 2025 Youth Summit, regional voices were brought together to identify gaps and cross-cutting themes emerging across communities.

"We need people who actually care to see the community thrive."

Other communities from across the territory attended this event.

Whitehorse

WHAT WE HEARD:

Opportunities & Gaps:

Anti-Racism and SOGI Education — youth noted that adults also need education here.

Community Hubs — youth want stronger local connections to programs and centralized spaces.

Funding Alignment — youth suggested that grants should align with annually updated TYS priorities.

Themes:

Young Girls' Self-Confidence: Not explicitly named in the current strategy but seen as a priority for specific programs and supports.

Age Separation in Sports: Youth want more age-appropriate and inclusive opportunities in recreation.

Life Skills & Housing Education: Youth consistently ask for financial literacy, housing navigation, and practical life skills.

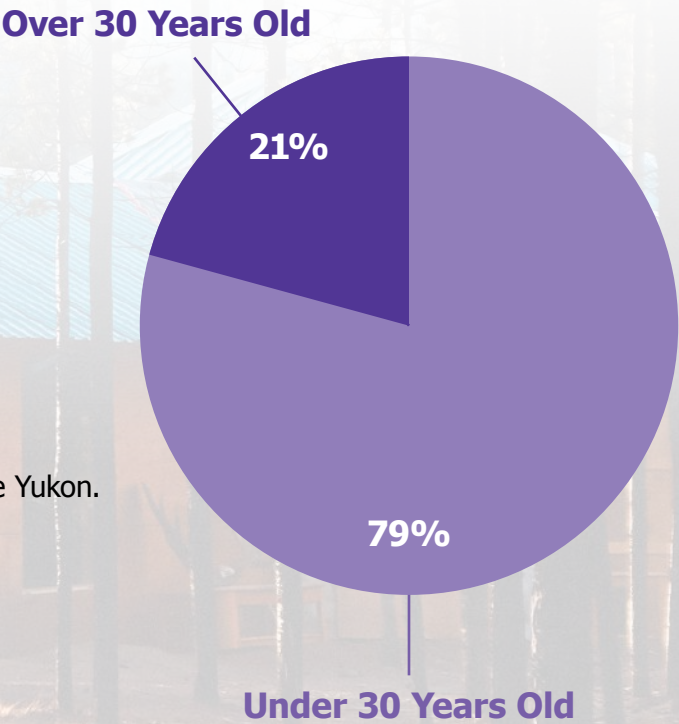
Mentorship & Youth Worker Retention: Youth emphasize that support workers are essential, especially in remote areas. Calls for better pay, housing, benefits, and recognition for youth workers were voiced clearly.

Systemic Change & Clear Accountability: Youth want to know who is responsible for funding, changing policy, and making decisions (e.g., municipal vs. territorial vs. federal).

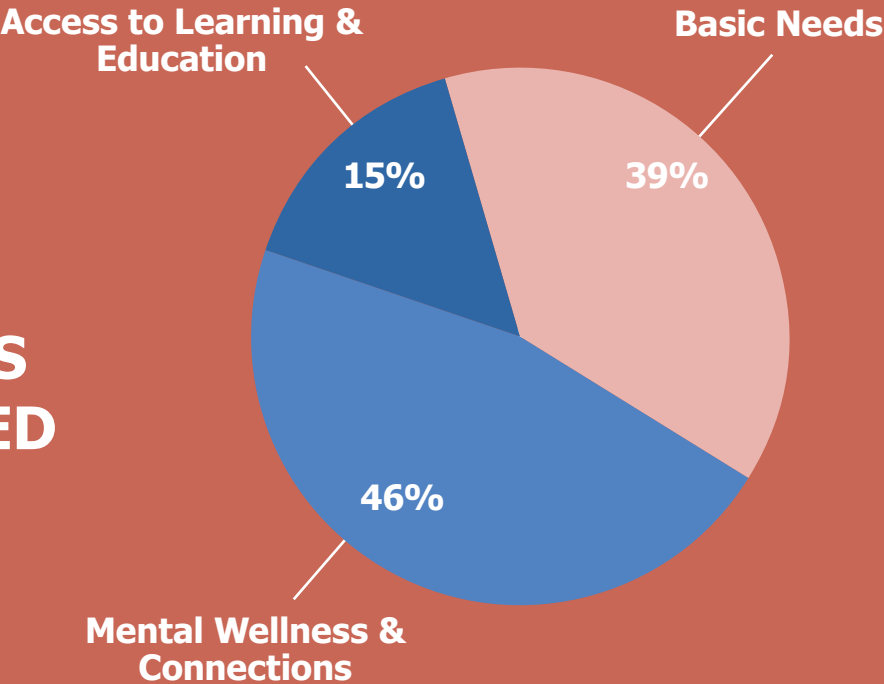


AVERAGE AGES ENGAGED IN TYS SESSIONS

There were approximately ~250 youth engaged in the Yukon.
(Not including Talks with youth individually or outside of session)



TOP RANKED STRATEGY PILLARS CHOSEN BY VISITED COMMUNITIES



This data excludes the two new calls to action and was gathered prior to the release of the revised Territorial Youth Strategy.

COMMUNITY RANKING OF CALLS TO ACTION

CALLS TO ACTION	Dawson City	Faro	Haines Junction	Mayo	
1.1 Housing Security					1.
1.2 Transportation					2.
1.3 Food and water security					3.
1.4 Healthcare					4.
2.1 Barrier free youth shelter					5.
2.2 Sober events and spaces					
2.3 Reduce stigma & increase recovery support					
2.4 Funding for treatment centers & intervention supports					
2.5 Harm reduction supports					
2.6 Building relationships between law enforcement and youth					
2.7 Programming for young men & boys					
3.1 Youth centers and drop ins					
3.2 Interest based activities & recreation					
3.3 Communication with youth					
3.4 Training for recreation capacity					
3.5 Funding for recreation capacity					
3.6 Healthy mentors & positive role models					
3.7 Mental health resources for remote communities					
3.8 Intergenerational connections					
3.9 Support for caregivers of young people					
3.10 Reduce stigma & increase support for people struggling with mental wellness challenges					
4.1 Sense of belonging in schools					
4.2 Educators support					
4.3 Parents and caregivers' involvement in learning					
4.4 Alternative education					
4.5 Wrapping school around culture					
4.6 Development of essential skills					
4.7 Healthy relationships & consent					
4.8 Training on responding to unhealthy relationships					
4.9 Support resources in schools					
5.1 Exposure to career opportunities					
5.2 Work-study opportunities					
5.3 Employer support for youth development					
5.4 Youth employment in remote communities					
6.1 Land based programming and healing					
6.2 Climate action & stewardship					
6.3 Renewable energy career opportunities					

This data excludes the two new calls to action and was gathered prior to the release of the revised Territorial Youth Strategy.

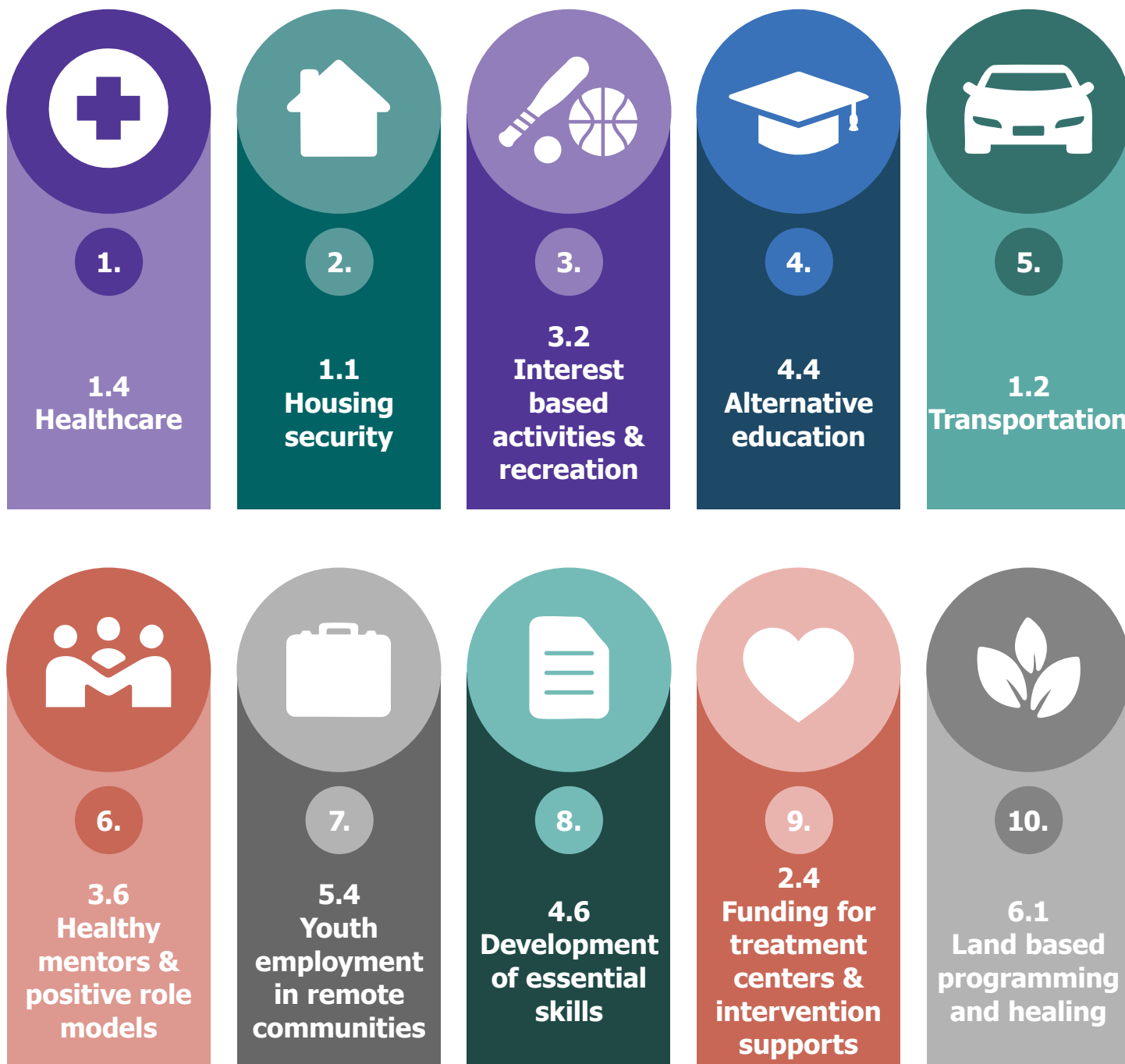
COMMUNITY RANKING OF CALLS TO ACTION

CALLS TO ACTION	Old Crow	Pelly Crossing	Ross River	Watson Lake	
1.1 Housing Security					1.
1.2 Transportation					2.
1.3 Food and water security					3.
1.4 Healthcare					4.
2.1 Barrier free youth shelter					5.
2.2 Sober events and spaces					
2.3 Reduce stigma & increase recovery support					
2.4 Funding for treatment centers & intervention supports					
2.5 Harm reduction supports					
2.6 Building relationships between law enforcement and youth					
2.7 Programming for young men & boys					
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5.4 Youth employment in remote communities					
6.1 Land based programming and healing					
6.2 Climate action & stewardship					
6.3 Renewable energy career opportunities					

This data excludes the two new calls to action and was gathered prior to the release of the revised Territorial Youth Strategy.

TOP 10 RANKED PRIORITIES

Faro, Haines Junction, Watson Lake, Pelly Crossing, Mayo, Dawson City, Ross River, Old Crow



This data excludes the two new calls to action and was gathered prior to the release of the revised Territorial Youth Strategy.

COLLECTIVE WORK WITH OUR PARTNERS

OF SIGNATORIES: 41

(as of September 2025)

Over the past year and a half, partners across the Yukon have been working together to turn the Territorial Youth Strategy (TYS) into action. Through quarterly check-ins, community visits, and shared accountability conversations, the collective has shown what collaboration looks like when youth voices guide the process. Dozens of organizations, departments, and programs shared updates. Across all responses, one theme stood out: youth wellbeing and belonging grow when people and systems work together.

KEY AREAS OF ACTION (ALIGNED WITH TYS PILLARS)

1. BASIC NEEDS



Several organizations and departments worked to address core needs such as housing, food security, and access to basic services.

- [BGC Yukon](#) supported four families diverted from homelessness and helped youth access employment through the Inspire program.
- [Adventure Time](#) launched in 2024 to provide safe transportation and programming for youth in remote areas.
- [Health and Social Services](#) increased community outreach through new partnerships between primary care teams, the Mental Wellness & Substance Use Services (MWSUS) hubs, and youth-serving organizations.
- Community partners also engaged youth in food security projects, including school gardens and local meal programs supported by [HSS and Food Network Yukon](#).
- [The Women and Gender Equity Directorate \(WGED\)](#) worked closely with [Queer Yukon](#) to improve access to gender-affirming healthcare, offering navigation supports and connecting youth to safe, inclusive medical services.
- [Beyond Borders Youth Network](#) offers free bus tickets accessible to immigrants and refugees especially youth.
- Partnerships between [HSS](#) and the [Council of Yukon First Nations \(CYFN\)](#) also distributed free menstrual products through schools and community hubs, promoting dignity and access for youth.

2. COMMUNITY SAFETY & HARM REDUCTION



Partners emphasized creating safe, sober, and welcoming spaces for youth.

- [BGC Yukon](#) maintained gender-based and gender-diverse support groups, offering inclusive, stigma-free environments.
- The [Women and Gender Equity Directorate \(WGED\)](#) provided funding to support sober and inclusive community programming, including initiatives like Sally & Sisters, which bring together youth and families around food, culture, and wellness.
- [Department of Education](#) Provided 500 students with Yukon Resources for Youth booklet this year (in YTS Kits)
- [BYTE](#) offered safer partying (in Teslin) and healthy relationships and healthy minds workshops (Baker Lake Nunavut through Connected North)
- [Youth Achievement Centre](#) provides access to Naloxone kits and Naloxone distribution as needed. Resources from [Bloodties](#) for safer partying, safer snorting are available.
- [Les Essentielles](#) in partnership with [Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre](#) have conducted an Awareness Campaign in May for the Sexualized Assault Prevention Month in Whitehorse.

3. MENTAL WELLNESS & CONNECTION



One of the most active areas, with over half of partners aligning their work here.

- [Teslin Recreation](#) offers multi-age land-based programs, daily youth recreation, and mentorship through skill clubs and local leadership training.
- [The Skookum Jim Friendship Centre](#) provided transportation to and from Whitehorse practices, as well as to the communities of Carmacks (Airport Lake) and Ross River for the Hand Games Tournament, helping to increase youth access to recreation opportunities.
- [BGC Yukon](#) continues to operate gender-diverse, boys' and girls' groups, promoting inclusion and emotional wellbeing.
- [Rivers to Ridges](#) provides land-based learning and wellness programs connecting youth with nature, identity, and peers.
- [BYTE – Empowering Youth Society](#) strengthened youth communication and wellness across the territory through a refreshed newsletter, active social media, and workshops in schools and communities. [BYTE](#) trained youth workers in Whitehorse and Teslin, supported youth participation in leadership, recreation, and international arts opportunities.
- [MWSUS & BYTE](#) collaboratively run a youth advisory committee to embed youth voices in mental wellness work.
- [YFNED's Mobile Therapeutic Unit](#) offers localized, in-person programming in communities, providing culturally grounded mentorship and mental wellness supports.
- Elders employed through [YFNED](#) and [Yukon University](#) provide mentorship, cultural guidance, and emotional support for students, strengthening intergenerational connections and community within learning spaces.

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4. ACCESS TO LEARNING & EDUCATION



Partners expanded educational engagement through alternative and experiential learning:

- [Association Franco-Yukonnaise \(AFY\)](#) participated in a youth congress for ages 14–25 focused on engagement and leadership, and hosted workshops at Selkirk and St. Francis schools to build belonging and connect learning to culture.
- [Skills Yukon](#) and school partners continue to expand Skills Clubs, Try-a-Trade Week, and Territorial Skills Competitions, building pathways to trades and technology careers.
- [YFNED](#) continues to advance culturally grounded and inclusive education across the territory. Through initiatives such as Dashāw K'e (Indigenous Academy at FH Collins), collaborative trades programming with Yukon University, and a numeracy support team, YFNED is helping create flexible, hands-on learning pathways that strengthen belonging and academic confidence for Indigenous students. They have partnered with the [Youth and Child Advocate Office](#) to address systemic racism in schools and promote equity in education.
- [Teslin school](#) organized a camp for youth ages 7-15, where [Yukon Food Security Network \(YFSN\)](#) hosted food making workshops like campfire bannock, moose meat sausages, and other food workshops.
- [BYTE](#) advanced healthy relationship education through a gender-based violence prevention campaign, workshops, and a roundtable at the Youth Summit. The organization is also updating its three-part workshop series — Healthy Relationships 101, Consent, and Boundaries & Breakups — to better support youth in navigating relationships safely and respectfully.
- [The Department of Education](#) continued to advance inclusive, culturally responsive learning across Yukon schools through the Ready to Learn initiative and new policies that strengthen belonging and accessibility. The department expanded the RISE and SOGI programs, created the Yukon SOGI Educator Network, and introduced an attendance policy recognizing Indigenous cultural and religious participation as excused. In partnership with the [Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society](#), Education also committed \$400,000 for the 2024–25 school year to support locally designed projects that remove barriers, improve attendance, and foster belonging in school communities.



5. EMPLOYMENT & CAREER OPPORTUNITIES



Employment readiness continues to be a strong theme:

- [Skills Yukon](#) engaged youth across the territory in trades and technology through mentorship, workshops, and competitions. Skilled tradespeople and facilitators provided hands-on learning and diverse role models through programs like Skills Clubs, the Territorial Skills Competition, and Try-A-Trade Week in Dawson City, where rural students gained rare, hands-on exposure to multiple trades and technologies. Apprenticeship presentations and community outreach further helped youth explore career pathways, build confidence, and develop essential skills for future employment.
- [Teslin Recreation](#) created student employment and local leadership positions through recreation and land-based programming.
- [Rivers to Ridges](#) continued to employ youth as facilitators and mentors in land-based education programs.
- [Women and Gender Equity Directorate \(WGED\)](#) hired practicum, co-op, and STEP students during the summer, providing youth with professional experience in policy, research, and gender equity work.
- [First Nation School Board \(FNSB\)](#) is developing localized credit programs that link classroom learning with paid work placements (e.g., Junior Land Guardian positions with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and FNSB high school credit in Old Crow). They are building partnerships between [First Nation Development Corporations](#) and [FNSB schools](#) to expand local work-study and on-the-job learning opportunities.
- [BYTE](#) partners with the [Youth Achievement Centre](#) to deliver a Trail Crew Summer Employment Program, providing funding, PPE, and staff support to create safe, hands-on work opportunities for youth.



6. LAND & STEWARDSHIP



Several partners integrated land-based and environmental education into programming.

- [Teslin Recreation](#) offered land-based programming rooted in culture and wellness, including seasonal camps, hunting trips, river expeditions, and the Warriors of the Water Paddle Program, helping youth strengthen leadership and connection to land and community.
- [BYTE](#) hosted a Leaders in Training on-the-land camp from March 13–17, 2025, at Land of Plenty on [Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in](#) traditional territory. The camp focused on leadership development, cultural connection, and wellness through land-based learning.
- [Rivers to Ridges](#) continued the Heartwood Youth Leadership Training Program (now in its third year), supporting youth ages 13–18 to develop leadership and outdoor education skills through experiential, land-based learning.
- The [Yukon Invasive Species Council](#) engaged youth in local stewardship and environmental learning, linking hands-on activity with ecological awareness.
- [CPAWS Yukon](#) partnered with Yukon First Nations youth for community river trips that foster connection to the land and environmental stewardship. Hosted screenings of *Voices from the Wind River* and *Letters to Our Future*, sharing youth perspectives on the importance of being on the land. Organized workshops in Mayo and Whitehorse as part of the Superbloom climate resilience art project and is planning a river trip with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun youth this summer.
- [Youth Achievement Centre](#) Wilderness Wellness Therapeutic Recreation Program.
- [Traditional Camp at Porter Creek Secondary School](#): the new Nètsāw Chù Kets'edän Kų Traditional Camp on school grounds, developed with Elders, to enable year-round land-based learning for Indigenous culture, language, and traditional crafts.

TEACHINGS & REFLECTIONS



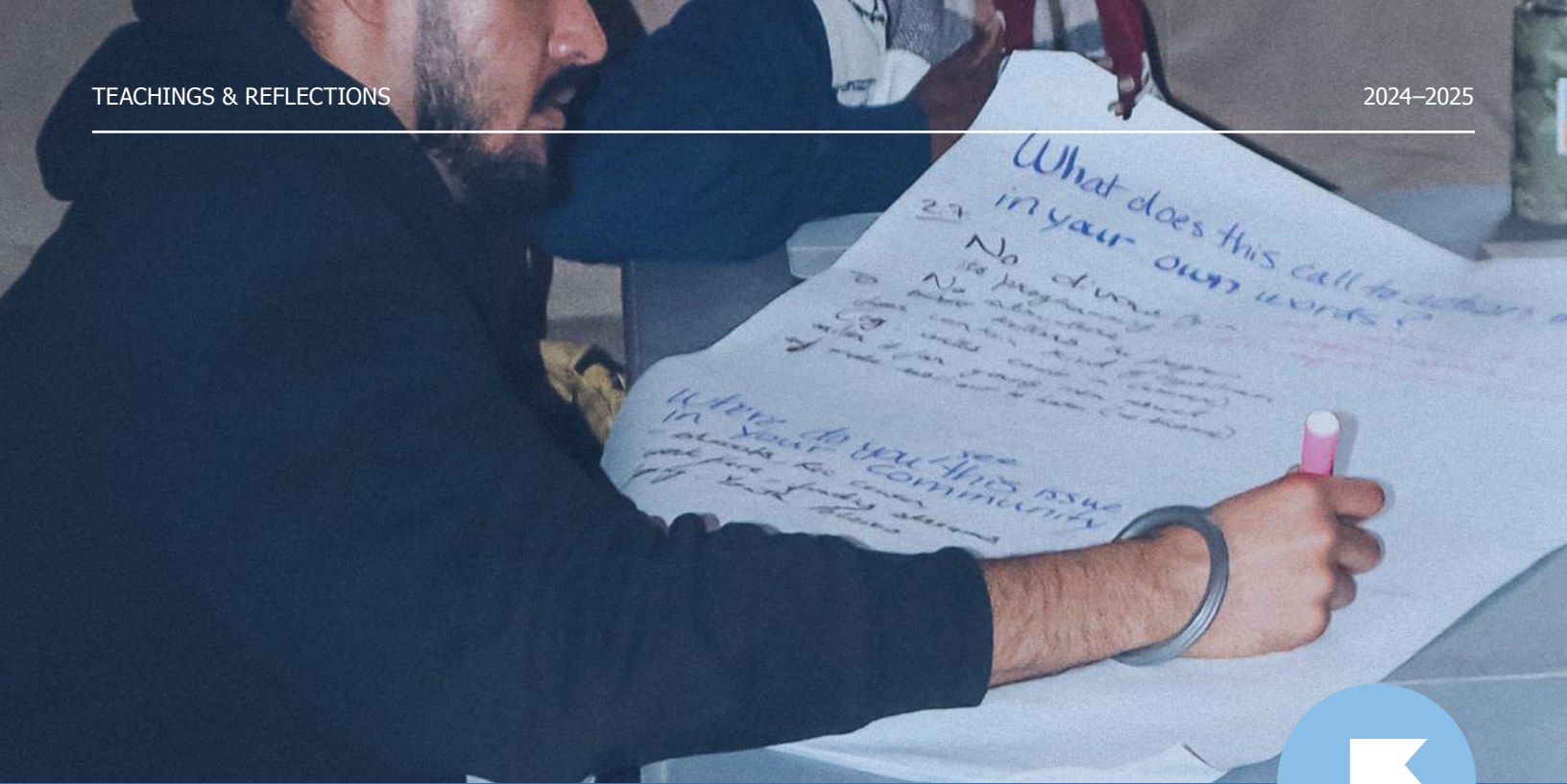
REFLECTIONS ON IMPACT

Over the past year and a half, the Territorial Youth Strategy has shown that meaningful change happens when communities, governments, and youth work together. Across Yukon, the strategy is creating real, visible shifts, not only in programming and policy, but in how people think about, engage with, and support young people.

When adults follow through on youth feedback through a workshop, a community gathering, or a new initiative it builds trust. This has helped strengthen a sense of belonging and connection for many young people across the territory. Partners are seeing that the TYS is more than a plan, it's a framework for collaboration. The accountability process, shared updates, and collective check-ins have encouraged organizations and departments to move beyond silos and build real working relationships. Government staff, community leaders, and youth workers now share a clearer understanding of how their efforts align, creating a stronger, more connected system of support.

The strategy is helping open new pathways for youth across multiple pillars. Alternative education models, leadership camps, skills training, and youth employment programs are giving young people ways to learn and lead that reflect who they are and where they come from. Land-based programs continue to be one of the most powerful ways for youth to learn new skills, heal, and connect with others. These programs are helping youth reconnect with land, language, and Elders. This work supports healing, strengthens cultural identity, and reinforces intergenerational relationships.

Partners across the territory have expressed pride in the collective progress made so far. The Territorial Youth Strategy is shifting the focus from isolated projects to a long-term, relational approach to youth wellbeing.



CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

Across communities, partners continue to face capacity and coordination challenges that affect their ability to deliver consistent, youth-centered programming. Common themes include:

- Staffing instability and turnover: frequent changes in youth workers and government service staff have disrupted programming continuity and relationship-building.
- Limited organizational capacity: small teams face difficulty maintaining regular programming and balancing seasonal transitions, especially during school exams or summer ramp-up.
- Funding constraints: budget cuts, denied funding applications, and limited resources from schools or partners make it challenging to sustain programs and outreach. The rising cost of living and inflation issues have impacted the whole territory but especially youth and community governments/organizations.
- Housing and mental wellness barriers: lack of safe housing for youth and limited access to mental health supports continue to impact participation and stability.
- Coordination and communication gaps: partners report challenges organizing events across communities, navigating role changes, and finding time to connect or collaborate effectively.
- External disruptions: factors such as wildfires and travel limitations have forced program cancellations and delayed community visits.
- Need for stronger youth inclusion: partners highlighted the importance of involving youth earlier and more meaningfully in planning and decision-making processes.



EMERGING THEMES & TOPICS

Through ongoing conversations with youth, community partners, and front-line workers, two new Calls to Action emerged. Across multiple communities, partners spoke candidly about the persistence of racism within schools, programs, and systems, emphasizing that meaningful change requires collective responsibility and learning for everyone, not just youth. These discussions shaped **Call to Action 4.10: Anti-Racism Education**, which calls for decolonized, community-led approaches to dismantling systemic racism and promoting inclusion.

Many youth and partners highlighted the urgent need to support and retain the people who make youth programs possible especially in smaller and remote communities. High turnover, burnout, and limited housing or benefits continue to disrupt trust and continuity for youth. These conversations led to **Call to Action 5.5: Retention of Youth Support Workers** in Remote Communities, ensuring that youth workers are supported, trained, and connected to the communities they serve.

Youth also spoke about a range of other important issues that reach beyond the existing Calls to Action. Many shared experiences of **grief and loss**, emphasizing the need for spaces where healing and emotional support can happen in community, not isolation. Conversations about **LGBTQ+ inclusion and trans care** highlighted the gaps in resources and the importance of safe, affirming services for gender-diverse youth across the territory. Youth also reflected on the challenges of **transitioning into adulthood** navigating housing, employment, and independence while trying to stay connected to their communities and culture. Partners noted growing requests for **support for neurodiverse youth**, including more flexible learning environments and mental wellness resources that recognize diverse needs. Finally, **First Nation language revitalization** emerged as a core priority, with youth expressing pride in reclaiming their languages and a desire for more opportunities to learn, speak, and carry those teachings forward.

ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION

ACCOUNTABILITY

Ongoing reflection, tracking, and responsiveness are essential to ensure the strategy remains relevant, youth-driven, and effective. Rather than a one-time event, the accountability process will include regular engagements with youth and community partners throughout the year. These engagements will help assess progress, identify gaps, and inform next steps.

MINI ACCOUNTABILITY FORUMS IN COMMUNITIES

During each of our planned community visits, we will include a mini accountability session.

These sessions will:

- Invite local youth to reflect on what has changed (or hasn't) since the launch of the Territorial Youth Strategy.
- Provide space for feedback on progress from schools, governments, or organizations.
- Identify local gaps and new emerging priorities.

REGIONAL AND COLLECTIVE EVENTS INTEGRATION

- We will integrate accountability conversations into key youth gatherings across the territory.
- These won't be formal "forums," but guided sessions designed to reflect on territory-wide themes and gaps, ensuring broader youth participation across regions.
- This approach allows youth from multiple communities to build collective understanding and momentum.

LEADER-FOCUSED ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION

- Youth leaders (SLAY + other trained youth) will lead a dedicated accountability dialogue with decision-makers (ADMs, First Nations, nonprofit signatories).
- Youth can apply to be question-askers or facilitators, and adult allies must come ready to listen and respond to youth feedback on their commitments.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP TABLE (CPT)

The CPT is a network of local leaders from youth-serving organizations, governments, businesses, youth, and other key stakeholders committed to advancing the TYS. The CPT exists to foster collaboration, accountability, and alignment, ensuring that collective efforts across the territory reflect and respond to youth-identified priorities.

Members speak to what they are doing and how their work connects back to the TYS, creating a shared culture of responsibility and progress tracking. The table also helps ensure that Committees and Implementation Teams are supported and chaired, either through youth leadership or by identifying support within their organizations.

The CPT is also a key part of the collective's accountability and evaluation system. Members are expected to share regular updates and reflect on progress through structured tools and shared reporting.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS

As the collective moves forward with the implementation of the Territorial Youth Strategy we will shift the focus of the teams to implementing priority areas within the strategy.



S.L.A.Y: Strong Leaders Are Youth

S.L.A.Y. is a youth-led action and advisory team that drives youth led initiatives aligned with the TYS. Members of S.L.A.Y. lead community-based projects, amplify youth voices, and ensure that youth perspectives are meaningfully included in decision-making processes. In addition to carrying out action projects, the team also serves as an advisory group for Collective partners, offering feedback, insight, and lived experience to support more youth-responsive programs, policies, and services.

Y.A.P: Youth Adjacent Professionals

Y.A.P. is a team of youth and supportive professionals who work alongside youth to shape and strengthen the Territorial Youth Strategy. This team is responsible for maintaining and evolving the strategy document itself, developing clear milestones for implementation, integrating new calls to action as they emerge, and revising language to ensure it remains youth-friendly and accessible. Y.A.P. helps to ensure the strategy remains a living, responsive document rooted in youth experience and vision.

H.Y.P.E: Helping Youth Prepare for Employment

H.Y.P.E. is focused on improving youth employment outcomes across the territory by advancing strategies that build skills, readiness, and opportunity. This team works at the intersection of education and employment, co-creating milestones for these key sections of the Territorial Youth Strategy. H.Y.P.E. engages directly with youth, educators, and employers to identify barriers and solutions, ensuring that northern youth have meaningful pathways to employment that reflect their goals, cultures, and communities.

STORIES



A youth shared that their school mentor has become a father figure to them, offering a presence they've deeply needed.

"We need people who actually care to see the community thrive"



Youth explained that they want more life-skills programming, including buying a house, renting, taxes, budgeting, cooking, and basic home repairs. They talked about needing more mentorship, especially for young men, and said many are interested in peer mentorship. They suggested a program linking older and younger students. They also said retaining youth support workers should be a priority. They want more learning about careers as well.

"Where do you go?"

- youth on mental health and other services



SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

The following data was composed of quantitative and qualitative data collected through sessions across the Yukon and the Territorial Youth Strategy (TYS) Accountability Forum. We understand how important using qualitative data is in empowering youth voices. The Year 3 Priority Document 2025/2026 was decided by analyzing the progress trackers, partner tracking, and notes from the sessions in the communities.





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