

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 25 Years





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Figure i. RLC Youth Leadership Inc. Program Funders



Dr. Alfred E. Deacon
Medical Research
Foundation Inc.





A quarter century milestone for Rotary Leadership Circle



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This summer marked the 25th year of the Rotary Leadership Circle program. The quarter century milestone is a testament to Youth Agencies Alliance and the network's dedication to provide sustained programs which afford Positive Youth Development. Rotary Leadership Circle originated in 1996 as a collective effort of youth-serving organizations and the formation of the Coalition of Community Based Youth Serving agencies. The cover photo above is from that first year of the program. The longevity is indicative of the program's ability to adapt and evolve to the present needs of youth and communities.

Youth participated in Rotary Leadership Circle along with the joint Youth Green Action Plan and Collaborative Art Show initiatives this summer through a combination of outdoor, on-site, and virtual

programming. This report is a composition of qualitative and quantitative details that provide narratives to highlight the program's value.

The Rotary Leadership Circle program relies on the annual support received from funders. We are grateful to The Winnipeg Foundation, Rotary Club of Winnipeg, Graham C. Lount Family Foundation, Province of Manitoba, Dr. Alfred E. Deacon Medical Research Foundation, Bell MTS, The Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Company, and TELUS Friendly Future Foundation for their commitment to communities and initiatives like Rotary Leadership Circle.

Please connect if you would like to learn more about Youth Agencies Alliance and the programs offered. We send our heartfelt gratitude to you for your support.

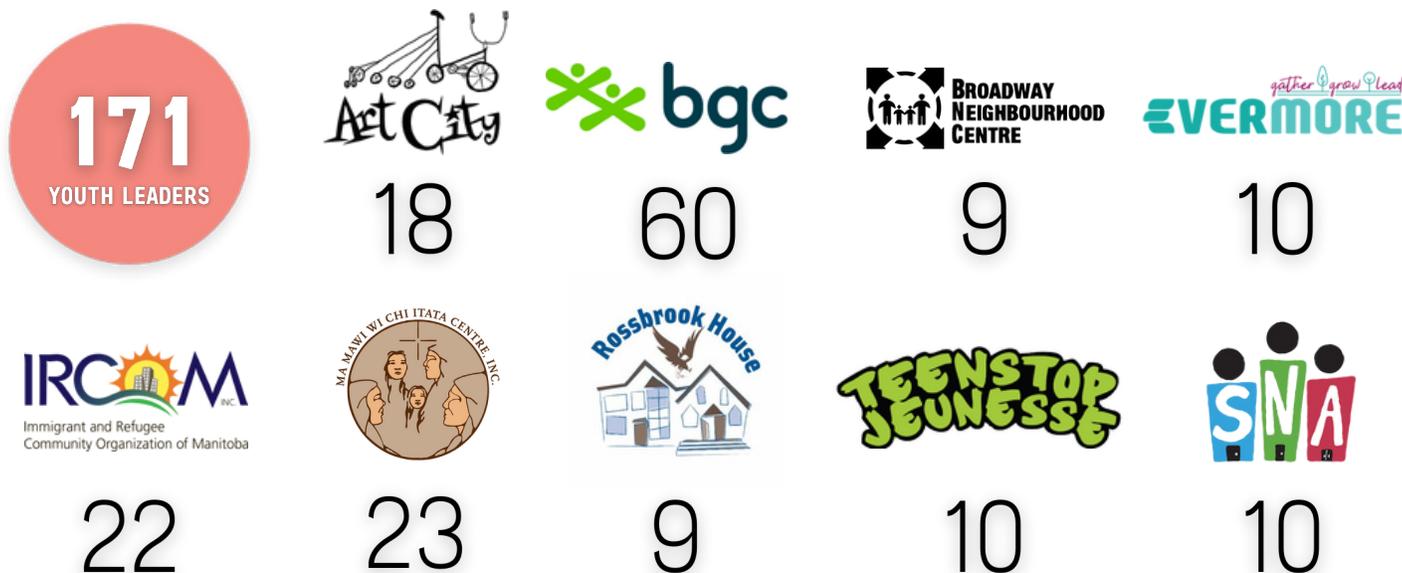
RLC Youth Leadership Inc.
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Rotary Leadership Circle (RLC) is a collaborative program that serves youth aged 10 to 14 throughout Winnipeg, Manitoba. Not-for-profit organizations in the Youth Agencies Alliance (YAA) network are involved in facilitating the program. These organizations are strategically located to best serve community members and support youth experiencing oppression. RLC was inaugurated in 1996 to reduce youth gang recruitment. Since then, the program has expanded to support education, employment, and volunteer opportunities for youth through the outcomes (Employment Skills, Neighbourhood Pride, and Leadership Skills) inherent to RLC.

RLC is facilitated for six weeks throughout July and August. YAA organizations dedicate or hire a staff member to act as the 'RLC Site Coordinator' in-kind. These Site Coordinators (n= 20) plan and deliver the activities for the selected youth participants, known as 'Youth Leaders'. Nine YAA organizations (Art City, BGC Winnipeg, Broadway Neighbourhood Centre, Evermore Gather Grow Lead Inc., IRCOM, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, Rossbrook House, Teen Stop Jeunesse, and Spence Neighbourhood Association) participated in RLC and branches were located in 18 different physical RLC Sites and one virtual RLC Site. A total of 171 Youth Leaders graduated from the RLC program this summer.

Figure 1. RLC Sites and Number of Youth Leader Participants



Youth Leaders participated in activities which encouraged the RLC outcomes and facilitated Social Emotional Learning (SEL). SEL is the process of developing the self-control, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills that are essential for school, work, and life success. The Site Coordinators planned and implemented activities that followed COVID-19 protocols beyond the Youth Green Action Plan (YGAP) and Collaborative Art Show initiatives that provided diverse experiences tailored to participant's needs. This summer, RLC included activities such as mock interviews, Indigenous studies, painting wall murals, square foot gardening workshops, cultural cookbook sales, Bear Clan Patrol outings, and First AID/CPR training as examples.

At the end of the summer, youth who completed 60 (or more) hours of volunteering throughout RLC were remunerated with a \$200 honourarium to spend on a supervised shopping experience. The honourarium instilled a sense of commitment in the Youth Leaders as they understood RLC as a 'job' experience. Youth Leaders used their honourarium on items such as shoes, clothes, school supplies, and electronics. A Youth Leader said "I wanted to be in RLC this summer because my Mom told me she doesn't have any money for school supplies this year so I had to find a way to earn it myself" (Youth Leader, 2021). Another Youth Leader inquired about investing their stipend in the stock market. Throughout RLC, participants gain a sense of financial maturity and these few anecdotes demonstrate the significance of the honourariums for the Youth Leaders.

Figure 2. Participant Ages

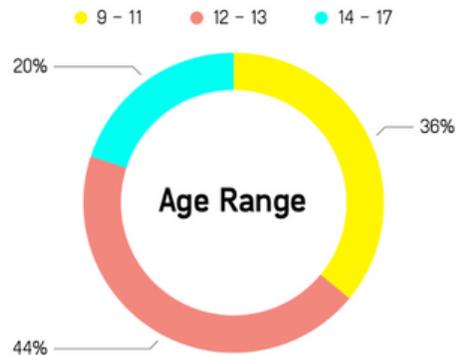
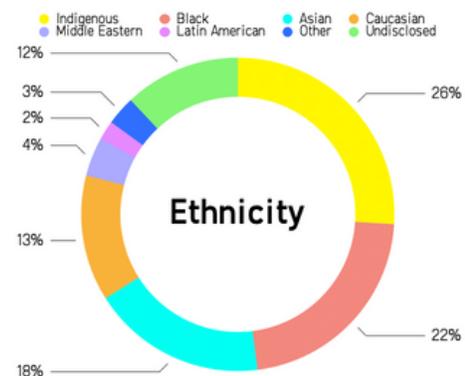
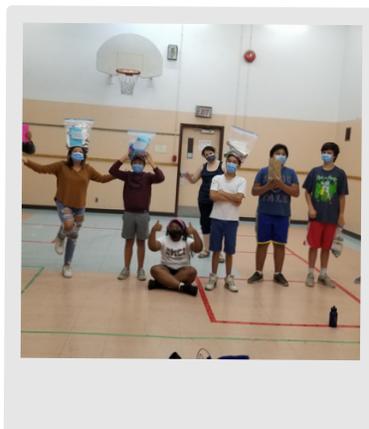


Figure 3. Participant Ethnicity



"My Mom told me she doesn't have any money for school supplies this year so I had to find a way to earn it myself" (Youth Leader, 2021)





Collaborative Art Show

The Collaborative Art Show was titled “‘Build Up’ to Winnipeg’s One Million” and facilitated in partnership with Art City Inc. and Graffiti Art Programming. The theme and concept centred on community members such as the thriving Indigenous and Newcomer youth who will be the generation to advance Winnipeg’s population to one million residents. With this understanding, it is important that youth are involved in the visualization of what their city needs and that built environments reflect necessary supports.

This project had Youth Leaders walk throughout their communities to find vacant land or unused buildings. Site Coordinators lead a group discussion on what the community needs are and what built environments the Youth Leaders thought would best support the area.

“Who lives in that area?” “What are their favourite places in the neighbourhood?” “What are some things they would like to see in the community?” “What kind of spaces would reflect the community who resides there?” are examples of the guiding discussion questions. Youth Leaders received individually packed supplies kits and ‘built’ what they envisioned after their reflections. Their model creations were photographed and superimposed into the community spaces to demonstrate the thoughtfulness of the ‘real world’ applicability.

Feedback collected from the workshops noted that participants' favourite part of the Collaborative Art Show was making the models and “the thought process because I had a lot of ideas and I was able to make them come to life” (Youth Leader, 2021).

You can watch The 'Build Up' to Winnipeg's One Million film at www.youthagenciesalliance.com/artshow





Youth Green Action Plan

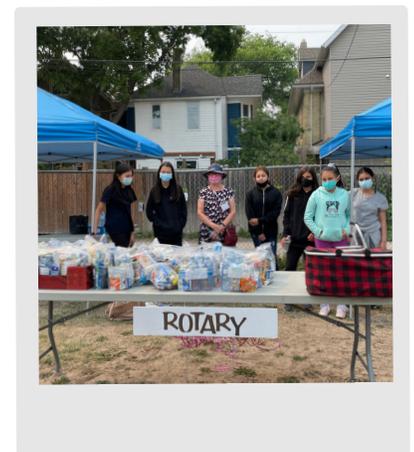
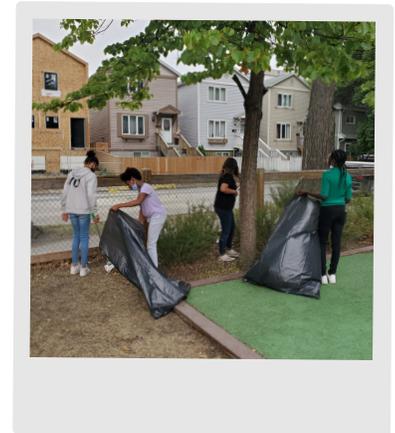
The Youth Green Action Plan (YGAP) initiative empowered youth with a forward thinking perspective on climate change and sustainability. It brought together Indigenous land-based educators, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Indigenous activists, YGAP Mentors, RLC Site Coordinators, and Youth Leaders for intergenerational dialogue on climate action.

Six YGAP Workshops offered hands-on, experiential, and land-based learning opportunities. The workshops centred on climate change and awareness; Indigenous-led, land-based teachings; and climate action and justice. The workshop content was guided by The Story Source, Lee Mae Spence, Green Action Centre, Youth Agencies Alliance, Tasha Spillett, Elder Carolyn Moar, Norbert Mercredi, Kakeka ThunderSky, Kris and Natasha Turner, and Jayce Chiblow. The YGAP Workshops were facilitated by nine trained Mentors and (re)inspired Youth Leader's individual identities, sense of belonging to nature, and equipped them with knowledge to inform action.

The YGAP Workshops provided the foundation and knowledge for Youth

Leaders to culminate their learning into an 'action'. Each RLC Site planned and implemented independent actions. The Youth Leader's actions included letter writing and poster campaigns, distributing community care packages and personal hygiene kits to those who are houseless, creating 'garbage art', door-to-door advocacy for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit folks, and a 'Reverse Garage Sale' to keep items out of the landfill and donate to community members in need.

The YGAP strengthened participants' leadership skills grounded in Indigenous teachings while creating a safe environment for them to enact and share their personal ways of knowing. YGAP supports youth leadership across civil society movements to build a world that recognizes their resilience and positive contributions as agents of change. As a YGAP Mentor (2021) summarized "This experience has shown me that climate justice is achievable, looking at it holistically makes it easier to understand and approach. When we bring it to a community level and involve youth we can see a difference."



You can watch The Youth Green Action Plan film at www.youthagenciesalliance.com/ygap



RLC supported Positive Youth Development through hands-on activities based on the principles of Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Youth with social-emotional skills are better able to cope with daily challenges and benefit socially, professionally, and academically. From effective problem-solving to self-discipline, or impulse control to emotion management, SEL provides a foundation for positive, long-term effects on youth and communities. YAA utilized pre-program (n= 160) and post-program (n= 155) surveys validated by Hello Insight to evaluate the RLC program. Hello Insight is a not-for-profit organization with online tools used to measure SEL capacities (see Figure 4.). These assessments provide reliable data to longitudinally evaluate and improve the program.

RLC Sites saw a typical number of participants who succeeded in growing their SEL capacities. Hello Insight (2021) defines success as a statistically significant change from pre- to post- program, or those who were already advanced maintaining or showing positive increase in their pre-program scores. The most growth was shown in Academic Self-Efficacy abilities which is “one’s belief in attaining academic success” (Hello Insight, 2021). This was an identified area needing the most support from the pre-program surveys. Youth Leaders (71%) demonstrated significant gains in this capacity over the course of the program.

Figure 4. SEL Capacities and Sub Capacities



Figure 5. Comparison of 2020 & 2021 Post-Program SEL Success

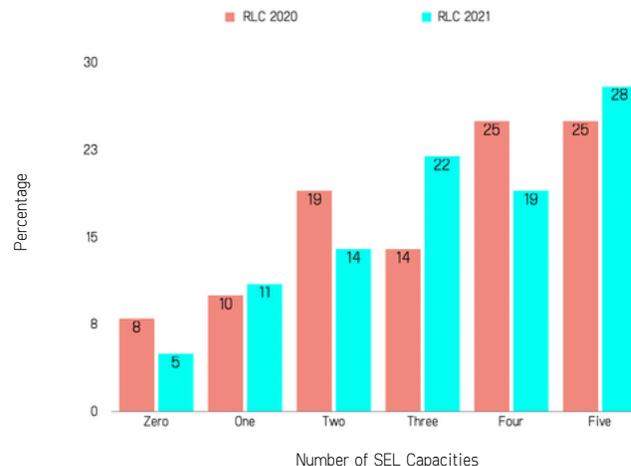
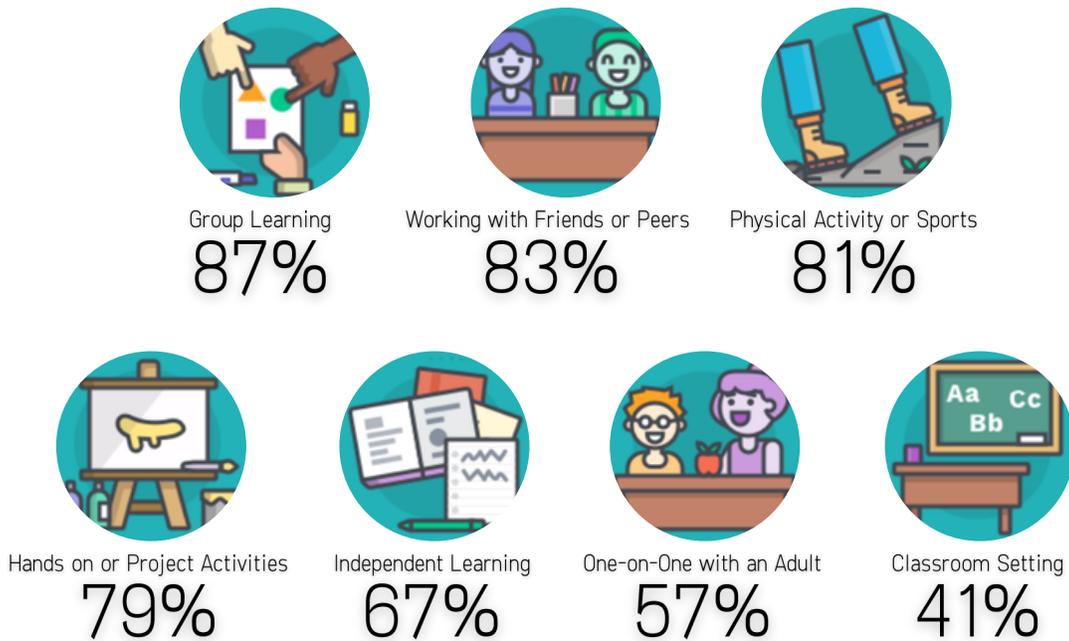


Figure 6. Youth Leaders' Preferred Ways of Learning



Similarly, 66% of all Youth Leaders showed noteworthy gains in their Contribution skills, with 36% of those pre-identified as emerging showing growth. RLC also helped 65% of participants grow in their Social Skills, which is “one’s ability to take others’ perspectives into account, and to develop a sense of caring and empathy” (Hello Insight, 2021).

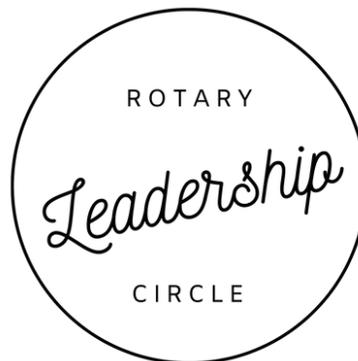
RLC proved impactful for 69% of participants this year. This is an increase (5%) from RLC 2020 as only 64% of youth succeeded in achieving at least three or more SEL capacities. This means that RLC empowered these Youth Leaders despite the many challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The RLC pre-program survey data indicated that over half of the Youth Leaders started the program with proficiency in only one (or none) SEL capacity. However, the RLC post-program data demonstrated that 36% of participants left the program with an increase in two, three, or four capacities. This is outstanding because with more SEL capacities Youth Leaders are better equipped for employment or leadership opportunities. In comparison to program data from 2020, this year the program exceeded previous outcomes by 3% (see Figure 5.).

In an unprecedented year of programming, these achievements are a testament to the Youth Leader's dedication to RLC and their desire for in-person programming and connections.

The insights presented in Figure 6. provide useful data that can be used to facilitate learning. The gathered data indicated that the vast majority of Youth Leaders (87%) desire learning in a group setting and amongst peers (83%). A classroom setting was the least suitable for the Youth Leader's learning preferences. These results suggest that out of school programs such as RLC are significant for facilitating free-choice learning for the program participants.

Although facilitation was complex due to the COVID-19 pandemic, RLC provided 171 youth with experiences to increase their Positive Youth Development skills. This report provides a high level overview of the program and only touches on the relationships and SEL capacities that are inherent. In its 25th year, RLC continues to thrive and provide safe spaces and supports for youth throughout the Youth Agencies Alliance's network.



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