LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

for youth

BC YOUTH PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT 2023

WHAT IS THE YOUTH PROGRAM?

The Living Life to the Full - Youth program provides youth aged 13 – 18 access to an evidence-based, group mental health education and training opportunity.

Over the course of 8 weekly sessions that each last 1.5 hours, the program helps equip youth with skills to deal with life stressors, and manage common issues including isolation, low mood, anger, and anxiety. Adapted from an adult-focused version and based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) principles, a certified facilitator teaches topics around self-management skills, problem solving, and healthy thinking.

The program was developed to be provided in-person within settings such as First Nations communities, schools, youth clubs, and local Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) branches. It has additionally been adapted to an online format, allowing the program to also reach youth struggling in rural, remote and isolated areas.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

LevelUp

LevelUp Planning Collaborative conducted a multifaceted research project to identify the successes, challenges, and areas of recommendations for the Living Life to the Full - Youth program from August 2021 to March 2023.

Methods

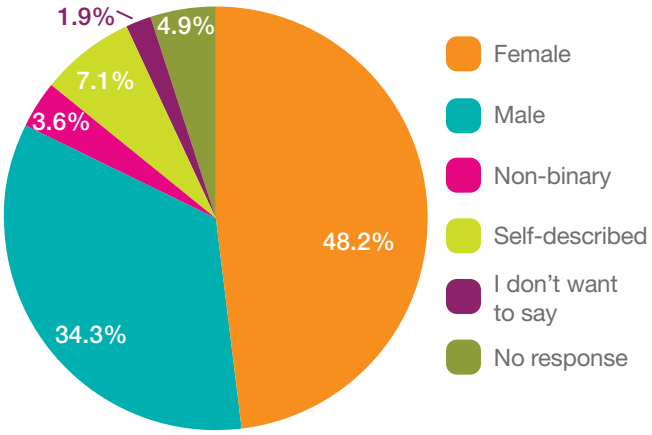
- Three youth participant surveys (pre, end, and post-course)
- Two youth participant focus groups
- One course facilitator focus group
- Interviews with course facilitators, participants and parents

> "It has helped me to set goals, think optimistically, and live my life in healthier, happier ways"
>
> - Youth Participant

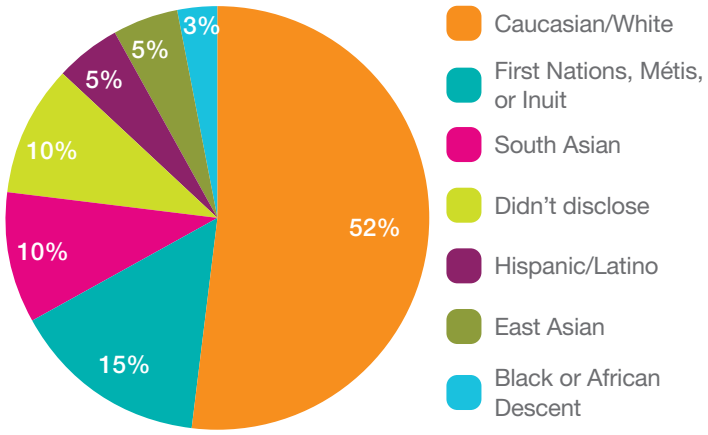
PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

AVERAGE AGE: 15 years old AVERAGE GRADE: Grade 10

GENDER

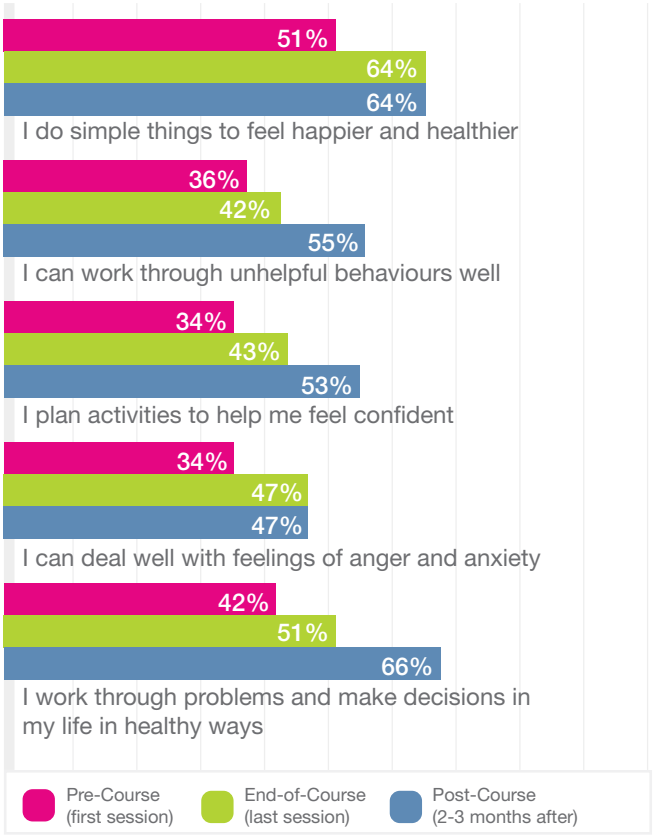


ETHNICITY



PARTICIPANT MENTAL HEALTH SELF-ASSESSMENT

Youth participants expressed improvement in several areas of mental health and mental health-promoting behaviours, and continued to show improvement in most areas several months later. Months after completing the course, 66% agreed with the statement "I work through problems and make decisions in my life in healthy ways," compared to only 42% prior to taking the course.



SKILLS ACQUIRED FROM THE PROGRAM

When asked about the skills learned from the course, youth made the most significant gains in areas of goal setting and self-care. Three months after the course, those who felt skilled at focusing on daily self-care had increased from 48% to 62%.

"[The course's] content is something you never forget – "like riding a bike". The skills are so useful in life in general. Everybody should take this program. Everyone can benefit from a program like this, especially now (post-pandemic)"

- Course Facilitator

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

80% of youth 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they were **treated with respect during the course**

86% agreed that facilitators had **good course content** knowledge, and **84%** agreed they **created a safe space to learn and share**

Most popular topics included **building confidence**, **managing anger**, and **planning activities you enjoy**

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Youth:

- Shorten session times
- More engaging content and more real-world scenarios

Facilitator and Parents:

- Cover a wider range of issues that youth are struggling
- Empower students to sign up for the course themselves

To learn more, contact living.life@cmha.bc.ca or visit livinglifetothefull.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association British Columbia
Mental health for all

Association canadienne pour la santé mentale Colombie-Britannique
La santé mentale pour tous

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