

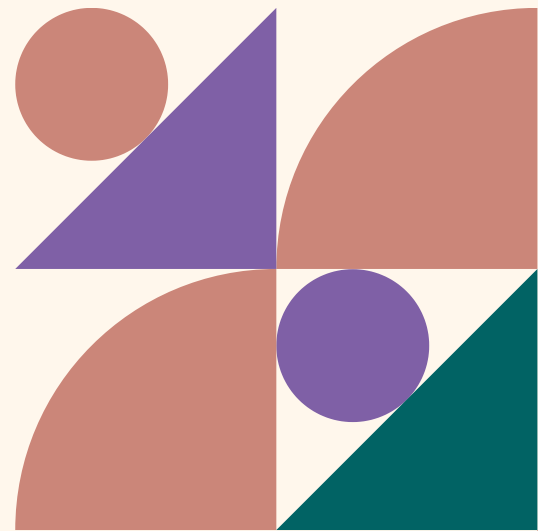
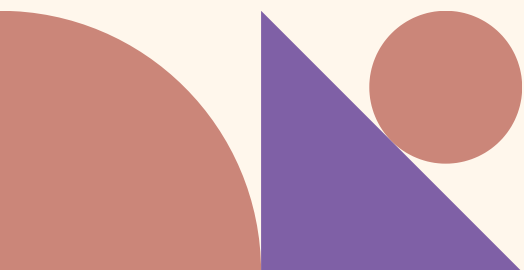
TERRITORIAL YOUTH STRATEGY (TYS)

YEAR 2

PRIORITIES

SHAPING THE FUTURE WITH YUKON YOUTH

2024



WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

This document outlines priorities identified for year 2; 2024/2025. The list of identified priorities below was composed of quantitative and qualitative data collected at the 2024 Yukon Youth Summit. The Territorial Youth Collective wanted to provide one of the most impactful guiding documents for uplifting needs and priorities for youth. We understand how important using qualitative data is in empowering youth voices. We have used quantitative data with this to try and best represent the Territory's youth voice. The following priorities were decided by analyzing the progress trackers, bracket comparison, and notes from the sessions at the summit. The team has added what was heard from the summit to the priorities to make them more relevant to what youth are asking for right now.



INTRO

1. BASIC NEEDS

1.1 HOUSING SECURITY

Increase in affordable, accessible, and adequate housing. Expand support in renovations of existing buildings and maximise incentives for contractors to work in rural areas. Provide diverse housing options including multigenerational homes, sober and non-sober shelters, and flexible rent subsidies. Alongside increased beds at detox centres, long-term supportive transitional housing, and promoting robust relationships between tenants and landlords to help meet varied needs. Offering more accessible information about housing options and considering innovative solutions like youth centres, treatment facilities, and alternative housing models will foster a stronger and more resilient community.

PRIORITIES

2. COMMUNITY SAFETY & HARM REDUCTION

2.4 FUNDING FOR TREATMENT CENTERS & INTERVENTION SUPPORTS

Provide safe, individualised, and community-based treatment options for youth. Avoid youth being sent out of the Territory for treatment, so they do not become disconnected from their loved ones. Presently, many young individuals are being sent down south for care. This geographical displacement not only disrupts their ability to learn and apply proper coping skills within their own community context but also hinders the development and maintenance of crucial relationships. By establishing local treatment centres, we can ensure that youth receive consistent, community-based support, fostering stronger social bonds and more effective long-term recovery strategies.

2.5 HARM REDUCTION SUPPORTS

Focus on harm reduction support within communities. Supporting the immediate need and safety of youth who may be at risk. A harm reduction mindset creates a safer environment where youth can stabilise and receive necessary support. Additionally, medium to long-term supportive transitional housing can provide a stable and secure environment, further aiding in their journey towards sobriety and overall health. Prioritising harm reduction measures ensures that these individuals receive the comprehensive care they need to thrive.

3. MENTAL WELLNESS AND CONNECTIONS

3.4 TRAINING FOR RECREATION CAPACITY

Create and run community specific programming such as lifeguard training, trail building and maintenance, mentorship opportunities, and a variety of certificate training. This will build a stronger community, help citizens gain useful skills to carry along with them with the ability to run recreational programs in their community.

3.6 HEALTHY MENTORS & POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

Provide programming to increase accessibility and capacity of healthy mentors and positive role models. Programming can provide culturally relevant guidance and support, fostering resilience, and promoting mental well-being. By prioritising mentors and role models, we can empower individuals, build stronger communities, and create a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone. Additionally, advocate for more cultural context into the Yukon Mental Health and Substance use framework.

3.7 MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR REMOTE COMMUNITIES

Increase the capacity and accessibility of mental health resources in remote communities. Adequate mental health support for all community members is essential. Increase the number of clinical counsellors in schools and build on the knowledge and qualifications of support workers already in the community.

3.8 INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Create more opportunities for intergenerational connections within all aspects of events such as language learning in schools, tradition teaching out on the land, guidance counselling, and other culture-engaging activities, while minimizing barriers such as capacity and transportation.

3.10 REDUCE STIGMA & INCREASE SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL WELLNESS CHALLENGES

Prioritize the reduction of stigma and increase support for individuals who face mental wellness challenges. All youth deserve safe spaces that are free from harm, where they can express themselves without fear of judgment or discrimination. By reducing stigma, we create an environment where seeking help is seen as a strength rather than a weakness, encouraging more individuals to access mental wellness services. This proactive approach not only promotes early intervention and better outcomes but also cultivates a culture of empathy and understanding, ensuring that every youth has the opportunity to thrive.

4. ACCESS TO LEARNING AND EDUCATION

4.1 SENSE OF BELONGING IN SCHOOLS

Focus on acquiring a sense of belonging in schools in such a manner that youth have the tools they need to be successful. A strong sense of belonging can lead to improved academic performance, better mental health, and higher levels of engagement among students. This must include expanding on the adequate support and resources that educators need in order to foster a sense of belonging for their students and working with the students to meet their needs, such as incentivizing attendance and contributing to overall school success.

4.4 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Bridge the gaps within alternative education that are causing learning pathways to be disconnected. Addressing these gaps, as suggested by youth, should be a key focus this year to ensure cohesive and continuous educational experiences. Alternative education provides diverse learning pathways that cater to the unique needs and interests of students and is a helpful tool for many youth who are experiencing difficulties in formal education. Increasing ease of access to alternative education will benefit many youth and allow them to further their education.

4.7 HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS & CONSENT

Heighten education on healthy relationships and consent. This includes what healthy relationships look like and what the signs of an unhealthy relationship are. It is also essential that youth have the knowledge of how to prioritize their own wellness, have healthy boundaries with others, and what it precisely means to give or receive consent.

5. EMPLOYMENT & CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

5.2 WORK-STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Establish work-study opportunities in all communities, advocate for youth to gain credits for their work, and ensure resources such as “cooperative education” are readily available for all ages of youth to take advantage of. Youth have voiced their concerns about being required to leave school in order to keep up with their economic requirements. It is crucial to remember that education is the most important element in youths’ lives and we should be prepared to support youth in their success in their education while being able to work so they are not forced to withdraw from their education.

5.4 YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES

Increase the number of training and employment opportunities for youth in remote communities in order to increase the labor capacity. Educate youth on how to advocate for themselves in the workforce, ensuring they do not get taken advantage of. Advocate for mandatory on-the-job training for new youth employees to improve engagement, reduce turnover, create a safer work environment, and better employer-employee relationships.

6. LAND & STEWARDSHIP

6.1 LAND BASED PROGRAMMING AND HEALING

Prioritize funding for land-based programming and healing particularly in the communities that currently do not have any. Move away from the adopted European practices and revitalize traditional ceremonies and reconnection to the land, history, teachings, ways of life that are significant to the Indigenous culture. For example, the Mental Wellness and Substance Use services have on the land camps and Kwanlin Dün First Nation's facilitate Jackson Lake Healing Camp, but these are both located close to Whitehorse therefore there is a call out for on the land programming in the other communities.

