



dare to be YOU(th)
make your mark

2024/2025 Impact Report

PUBLISHED JUNE 2025



Shannon Tobin

Founder & CEO

A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER & CEO

LOOKING BACK OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

As I reflect on this past year, I feel deep gratitude. For the young people who continue to rise with courage, for our dedicated team and volunteers who bring our programs to life, and for the donors, partners, and champions who make this work possible. What's inspired me most, is not just the growth but the transformation. Youth found their voices, built confidence, and stepped into leadership. They showed us that real change happens when we create spaces where every young person feels seen, supported, and encouraged to lead from within. In 2024, we expanded our Leader Within program, launching an asynchronous version and reaching more youth than ever before. We saw a 52 percent increase in completion rates and welcomed hundreds of youth into our community, each with their own story and potential.

At the end of May, we completed our new three-year strategic plan, funded by United Way Halton & Hamilton. The Roadmap to Sustainable Expansion and Impact project expands on our commitment to empowering young people from diverse backgrounds by building our capacity to ensure long-term growth and effectiveness through a clear, comprehensive approach. It was shaped through the dedication of our Board, our task force team, and the valuable guidance of our consultants, whose leadership and expertise have positioned DTBY for the next stage of our journey and provided us with a clear path to grow with purpose and impact.

This progress is possible because of you—our Change Partners. Your belief and support help us reach farther and stay true to our mission. Whether you gave your time, resources, or encouragement, you have helped create a future where youth can thrive.

Looking ahead, we are focused on closing service gaps before they emerge by collaborating with community youth-serving organizations to embed a youth-driven leadership, resilience and wellness curriculum directly into trusted local hubs where young people already feel safe. Through co-designed workshops, peer-led facilitation and experiential learning, youth will enhance their resilience and coping skills, build stronger social connectedness, and gain the confidence and support networks they need to thrive now and in the future.

Together, we are not just preparing youth for what's next—we are walking beside them as they shape it. Thank you for standing with us and believing in this work.

With sincere appreciation,
Shannon Tobin

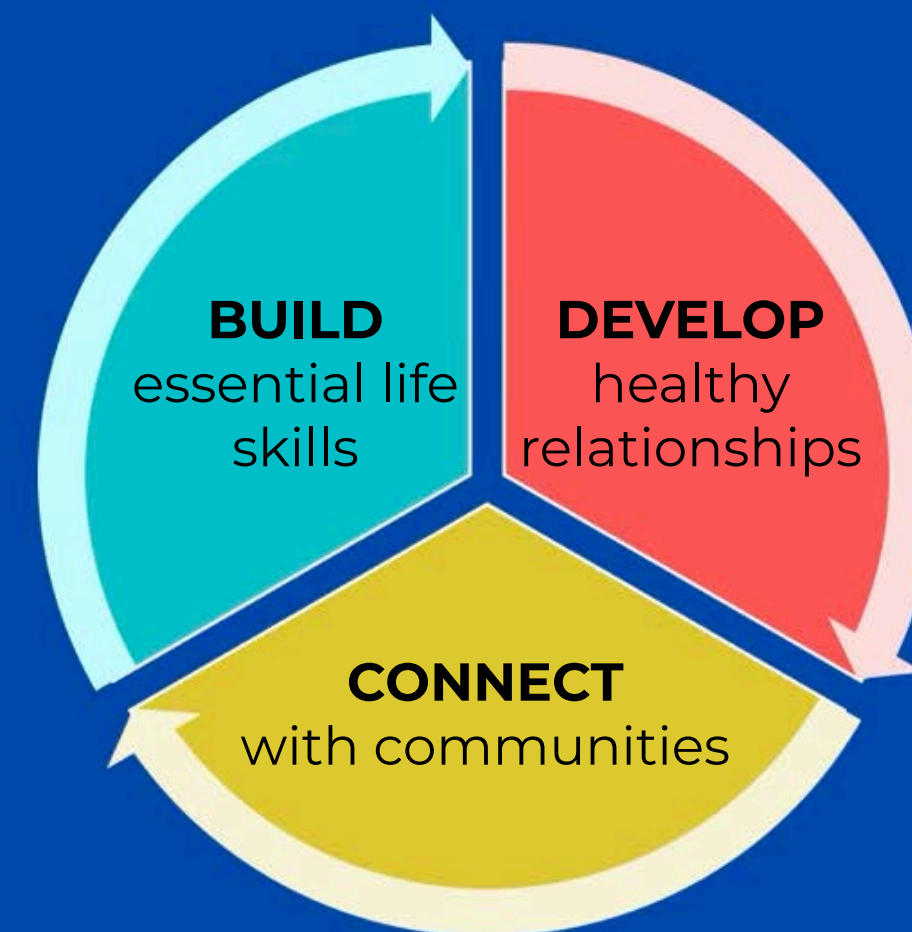


ABOUT DTBY

WHO IS DARE TO BE YOU(TH)?

Dare to Be You(th) (DTBY) is a social impact organization driven by the belief that investing in the potential of youth today shapes a brighter, more inclusive, and resilient future. As a registered charity serving Halton and Hamilton regions, its focus is dedicated to empowering youth ages 14 to 24 by providing no-fee, accessible programming that helps participants build essential life skills, develop healthy relationships and connect within their communities. Since its first program launch in 2021, well over 3,000 young people have engaged in initiatives designed to equip them for life beyond high school, empowering them to make an authentic impact.

Through our innovative core program offerings, DTBY provides youth 14-24 with the opportunities to **BUILD**, **DEVELOP** and **CONNECT**.



OUR MISSION

Inspiring 14–24-year-olds to build life skills and develop healthy community connections.

OUR VISION

A future community where all youth are resilient and empowered to make an authentic impact.

OUR CORE VALUES

Our core shared values are the deeply ingrained principles that guide all of DTBY's actions; they serve as its cultural cornerstones and reflect the spirit of who we are as an organization.



CARING

We are respectful, kind, helpful, compassionate and value our team and the young adults we serve.



COMMUNITY

Our community inspires us to support young adults and empower them to make a difference.



IMPACT

We apply our knowledge and insight to help young adults make a positive impact.



COMMITMENT

We are self motivated with a drive and dedication to our mission.

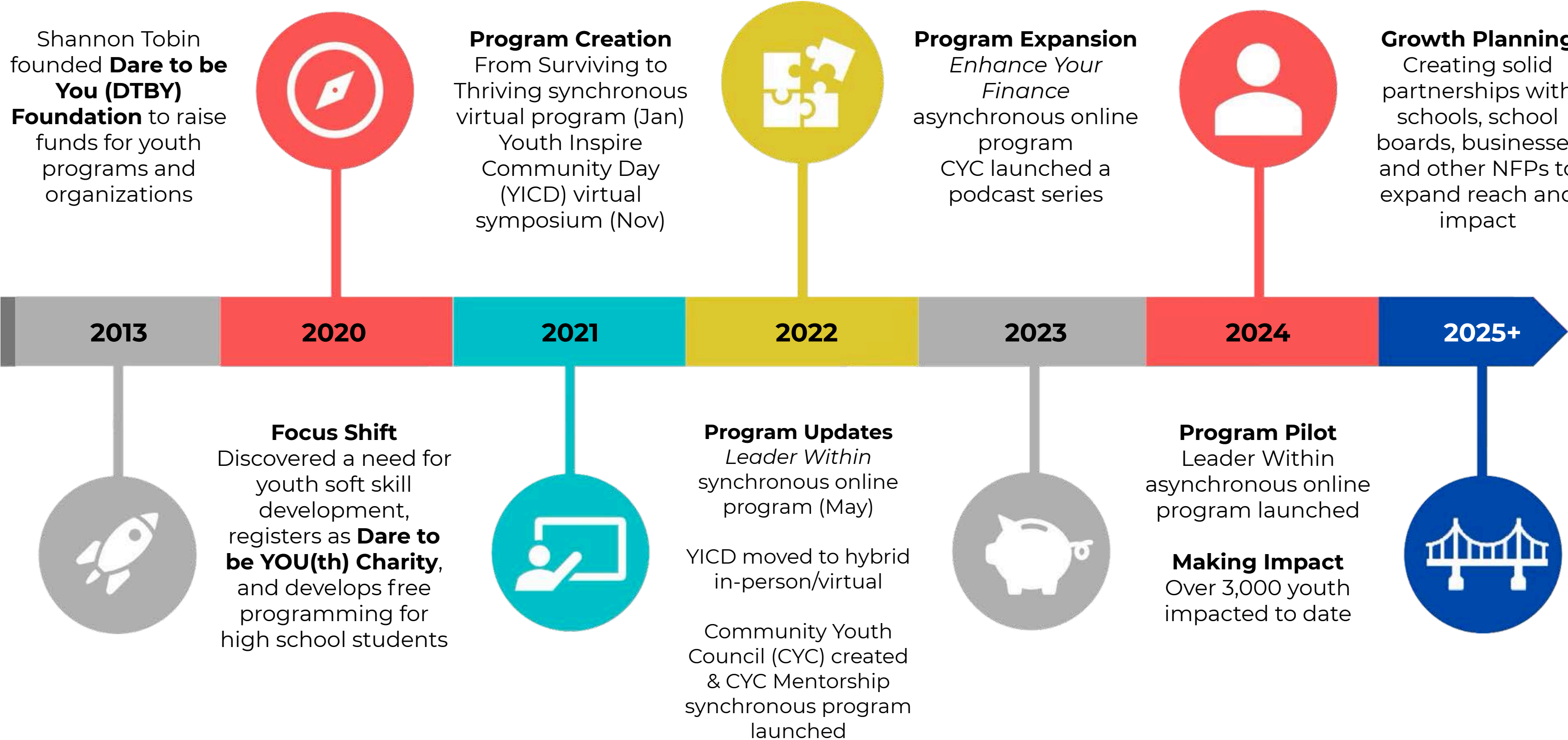


INCLUSIVE

We welcome everyone, respect one another and embrace our differences.



TIMELINE & MILESTONES





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DTBY Youth Programs

2024/2025 SUMMARY



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

(all Educational Programs are eligible for high school community service hours)



Youth Inspire Community Day Symposium (YICD)

Annual signature event in November empowers high school students by connecting them with leaders, innovators and mentors

- Speakers
- Workshops
- Community fair
- Entertainment



Leader Within Online Program

Encourages self-discovery and personal growth for 14-18 year-olds to develop emotional resilience & wellness

- 4-part online workshop,
- 6 courses + individual activities
- Instructor recordings, self-paced

LIVE 1X/Year peer led live online by CYC ambassadors



Enhance Your Finance Online Program

Annual signature event in November empowers high school students by connecting them with leaders, innovators and mentors

- Speakers
- Workshops
- Community fair
- Entertainment

COMMUNITY YOUTH COUNCIL (CYC)
Volunteer Leadership Role



Youth who complete the Leader Within program are eligible to apply to become a CYC leader/peer mentor

- DTBY volunteer opportunities – speaking engagements, community events
- Complete a live peer-to-peer mentorship program
- Host Spotlight Series CommUNITY Podcast “Ask the Expert”

CYC Youth Ambassador

- Opportunity for promotion as a Youth Ambassador



Youth Inspire Community Day Symposium (YICD) (Event)



Designed to provide youth 14-18 with an immersive experiential learning experience, led by youth – the DTBY Community Youth Council. This annual symposium is DTBY's signature youth-focused event where participants learn more about DTBY and the programs available to them while connecting with others within their community.

AT THIS EVENT:

- Community Fair with Local Businesses and Other NFPs
- Speaker Series
- Hands-on Workshops
- Entertainment

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Meet new people and connect youth with peers across the region
- Introduce to local organizations through the resource fair about opportunities available
- Engage with leaders from across the local communities
- Engage in meaningful dialogue about key topics of impact to youth
- Gain mentorship, build leadership and life skills

LEVEL: All Levels, Grades 9-12

FORMAT: 1x/Year, Live 5-hr Event in Nov

DETAILS: Event Outline Provided Each Year

OTHER: Applicable for High School 4-6 Community Service Hours

YOUTH PROGRAMS

On November 28, 2024, the fourth annual **Youth Inspire Community Day (YICD)** sponsored by RBC was hosted at Appleby College in Oakville.

312 students attended the event.

Career Pathway Understanding

Strong understanding of different pathways: 4.2/5 average

Confidence in exploring new career paths: 4.1/5 average

Understanding of post-high school transitions: 4.3/5 average

Personal Development

Feeling inspired: 4.4/5 average

Self-confidence: 4.2/5 average

Community connection: 3.9/5 average

The event was a day of empowerment, innovation, and authentic engagement, centred around the theme "Empower, Engage, Achieve, Creating Pathways to Success."

RBC SOCIAL IMPACT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (SILP)

Through the RBC Social Impact Leadership Program, DTBY was matched with a team of RBC professionals who provided strategic insights, tools, and an enhanced revenue tracking system to help us strengthen donor engagement and scale our impact.

This partnership fostered lasting relationships and deepened our organizational capacity to empower youth across Halton and Hamilton.



84% of attendees feel better prepared for their future.



84% of attendees plan to attend the 2025 event.





Leader Within (IntensiveLive Online Workshop)



Designed to provide youth 14-24 with quality educational programming to help them understand themselves through a journey of discovery and growth. The course contains a combination of educational content and immersive personal development activities to help them unleash their inner leader and embrace their full potential.

IN THIS 4-PART COURSE, OUR INSTRUCTORS TEACH:

- MODULE 1: Strengths
- MODULE 2: Challenges
- MODULE 3: Energy
- MODULE 4: Trust

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Embrace unique strengths
- Learn ways to help tackle challenges
- Master emotional intelligence
- Develop healthy relationships with yourself and others

LEVEL: All Levels, 14-18 Year Olds

FORMAT: 1x/Year, Online, approximately 4 hours, Instructor-led, recorded videos

DETAILS: 4 Modules, 6 Lessons, Individual Activities
Approximately 8 hours including Zoom

OTHER: Course Certificate, Applicable for High School Community Service Hours



Halton Region Community Investment Fund continues to support DTBY and the Leader Within Program

Of particular interest in 2024 is the shift in participation among our community youth population. This year, 80% of participants come from racialized or marginalized backgrounds. Additionally, **male-identified youth account for 31.5% of participants.**

84%

of the CYC reported that their coping skills have improved.

52%

increase YOY in the number of youth completing the Leader Within program.

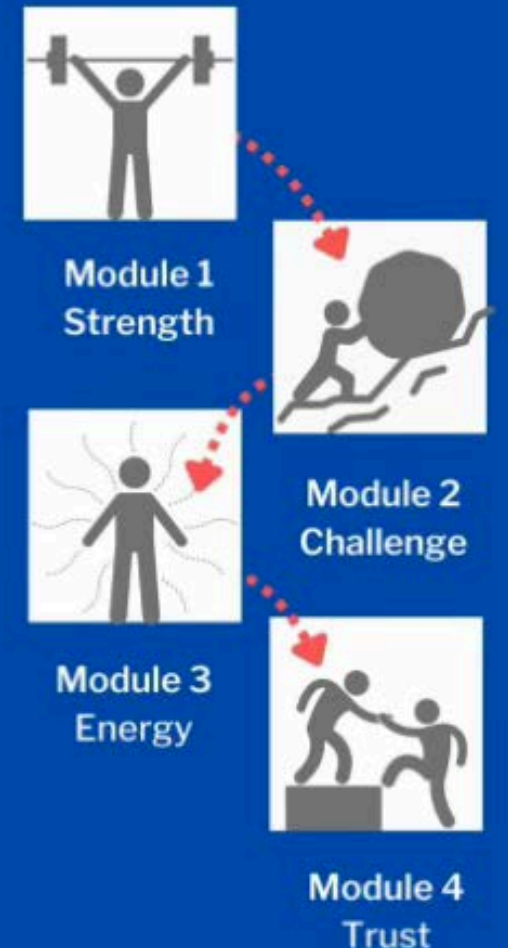


Unleash Your LEADER WITHIN

This dynamic four-part online workshop series is carefully crafted to empower 14-24-year-olds with the skills and confidence needed to thrive in today's challenging world.

Participants will embark on a transformative journey of growth and discovery where they will learn:

1. How to embrace their unique strengths
2. Tackle challenges
3. Master the art of emotional intelligence,
4. Foster healthy relationships with themselves and others.





Leader Within (Online)



Designed to provide youth 14-24 with quality educational programming to help them understand themselves through a journey of discovery and growth. The course contains a combination of educational content and immersive personal development activities to help them unleash their inner leader and embrace their full potential.

IN THIS 4-PART COURSE, OUR INSTRUCTORS TEACH:

- MODULE 1: Strengths
- MODULE 2: Challenges
- MODULE 3: Energy
- MODULE 4: Trust

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Embrace unique strengths
- Learn ways to help tackle challenges
- Master emotional intelligence
- Develop healthy relationships with yourself and others

LEVEL: All Levels, 14-18 Year Olds

FORMAT: Online, Instructor-led, Self-paced, Recorded Videos

DETAILS: 4 Modules, 6 Lessons, Activities
Approximately 4 Hours

OTHER: Course Certificate, Applicable for High School Community Service Hours



Dare To Be Youth Charity Receives a Grant from the Burlington Community Fund to Advance the Well-Being of Burlington

In a world where challenges often feel overwhelming, DTBY has stepped up to offer hope and resilience through its newly launched **Leader Within Online** program. This innovative initiative is designed to empower participants with the tools and mindset necessary to face life's challenges with confidence and resilience.

As the program unfolds, it stands out with an impressive **20% completion rate**, a remarkable achievement in the realm of online learning. In contrast, many free open online courses struggle with completion rates as low as **3% to 15%**. This success reflects DTBY's commitment to fostering a supportive community that encourages engagement and personal growth.



Community Youth Council (CYC)



The Community Youth Council (CYC) is DTBY's youth-led volunteer council made up of 10+ youth who have completed DTBY programs and ready to take on a leadership role. As the voice of youth, they provide input to all youth programs and initiatives.

In the spirit of "service-above-self", the CYC gives young leaders an opportunity to develop their leadership skills, engage with a network of like-minded peers, to make a mark in their community. They also gain community service hours. Those who are ready for a more active leadership role become CYC Youth Ambassadors. CYC members are required to participate in a unique small- group professional mentoring program. Through guided mentorship seminars, these young leaders develop their resilience and essential life skills and move towards thriving.

The CYC produce the Spotlight Series CommUNITY Podcast where they interview community leaders in an "Ask the Expert" style Q&A covering topics important to youth. They also manage an Instagram channel.

PREREQUISITE: Leader Within, Enhance Your Finance

REQUIREMENT: Complete Mentorship Program

DETAILS: Volunteer throughout the Year

OTHER: Applicable for High School Community Hours





COMMUNITY YOUTH COUNCIL

DTBY's Community Youth Council is a group of student volunteers who help spearhead and promote DTBY initiatives, such as the Ask the Expert Podcast, Youth Inspire Community Day, Leader Within, and Enhance Your Finance programs.



36% increase in CYC membership YOY.





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2024 FINANCIALS

DARE TO BE YOU(TH) CHARITY



Financial Highlights - Revenue

Revenue	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021
Grant Revenue	\$90,870	\$122,132	\$95,071	\$32,006
Sponsorship Revenue	\$88,461	\$52,144	\$35,500	\$7,000
Event & Fundraising Revenue	\$54,739	\$16,916	\$32,891	\$35,092
Donations	\$33,202	\$14,795	\$17,550	\$38,332
Miscellaneous Revenue*	\$14,371	\$14,797	\$12,106	\$6,502
Total	\$281,643	\$220,784	\$191,118	\$118,932

*Miscellaneous Revenue is comprised of HST rebates, RBC cash back rewards and other sundry income.



Financial Highlights - Expenses

Expenses	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021
Program Coordinators/ Facilitators	\$91,249	\$94,015	\$108,511	\$70,950
Program Expenses	\$107,293	\$68,142	\$47,364	\$16,626
Salaries & Wages	\$30,715	\$21,630	\$14,868	-
Donations to Community Partners	\$8,423	\$3,250	\$3,000	\$5,000
Total	\$237,680	\$188,037	\$173,743	\$92,576





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2024/2025 Change Partners



PATHWAYS PARTNERS

**“Alone, we can do so little;
together, we can do so much”.**
-Helen Keller

In-Kind Pathways Partners (\$10K+)



"At BarterPay^(R) and through the BarterPay It Forward Foundation^(R), we believe that the true value lies in people - their time, talents, and potential. That's why we're honoured to support DTBY. We're grateful that our partnership helps stretch resources further so even more youth can thrive. Together, we're building a future where young people dare to believe in themselves and boldly step into their calling."

John Porter, Founder & CEO
BarterPay & BarterPay It Forward Foundation

Pathways Partners (\$10K+)



NFP PROGRAM AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are
tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

NFP and School Program Partners



Community Partners





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2024/2025 Highlights & Testimonials

DARE TO BE YOU(TH) CHARITY



HIGHLIGHTS & TESTIMONIALS

Dare to Be You(th) Recipient of Mayor's Award at the Burlington Chamber 2024 Business Excellence Awards Gala

Dare to be You(th) embodies the spirit of equity, diversity, and inclusion in Burlington. Through their tireless efforts, they empower young people from all backgrounds to thrive, regardless of their circumstances. By fostering a culture of acceptance and understanding, Dare to be Youth sets a shining example of how diversity, equity and inclusion strengthen our community fabric. Their commitment to EDI makes them a truly deserving recipient of the Mayor's Award.

Marianne Meed Ward



HIGHLIGHTS & TESTIMONIALS

Expanding Impact for Local Youth: Dare To Be You(th) Celebrates Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant

DTBY's mission aligns well with the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) and its Resilient Communities Fund goals, emphasizing the importance of building resilience to meet the diverse needs of communities. The organization addressed the challenges nonprofits face in their early stages—particularly the 30% failure rate within the first 10 years due to a lack of strategic focus.

The OTF grant has been a pivotal factor in DTBY's sustainability and growth, enabling the hiring of two part-time employees, enhancing internal processes, and consulting with experts to expand strategic capabilities. This funding has shifted DTBY's focus toward long-term sustainability, including improving donor engagement and reducing reliance on grants.

The impact of these efforts is reflected in DTBY's strong growth metrics over the past year:

- LinkedIn impressions increased by 88%
- Website usage grew by 32%
- Instagram followers rose by 56.5%

These results demonstrate how strategic funding has empowered DTBY to strengthen its operations, expand its reach, and build a foundation for future impact.



CYC YOUTH EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

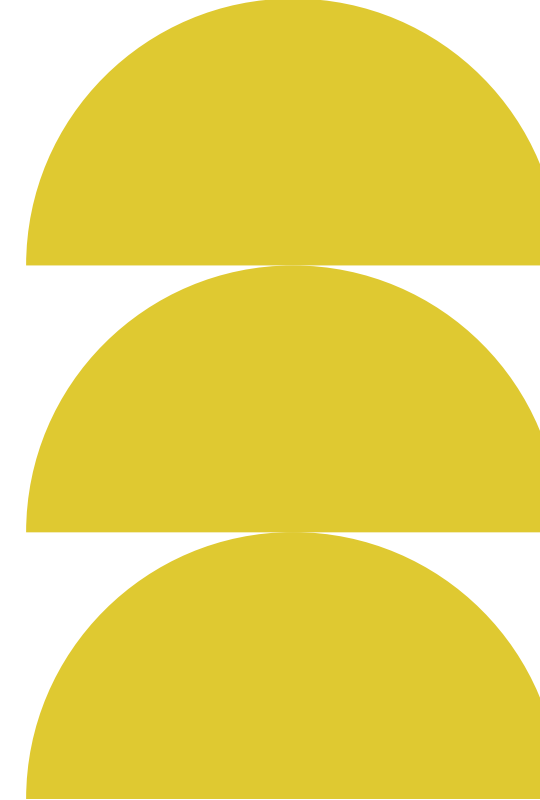
New to 2025, the CYC Youth Executive Directors plan and oversee all CYC activities and coordinate with DTBY staff to ensure DTBY's Strategic Plan for Youth engagement is achieved.

Lexi

Lexi is heading into her fourth year at McMaster University and brings a passion for public speaking, youth advocacy, and community building to everything she does. She believes every young person is a leader with the power to inspire meaningful change, and she's committed to helping amplify those voices through DTBY.

Kassia

Kassia recently graduated from Western University with a BSc and will be returning in the fall to pursue a degree in nursing. She's passionate about youth leadership, community engagement, and creating spaces where young people feel empowered to lead with purpose and authenticity.





During elementary school, I was a confident and strong presenter. However, transitioning to high school was quite overwhelming for me. I struggled with my self-confidence and was filled with doubt, which made it challenging for me to express myself in front of others. But then came Dare To Be Youth Charity into my life, and everything changed.

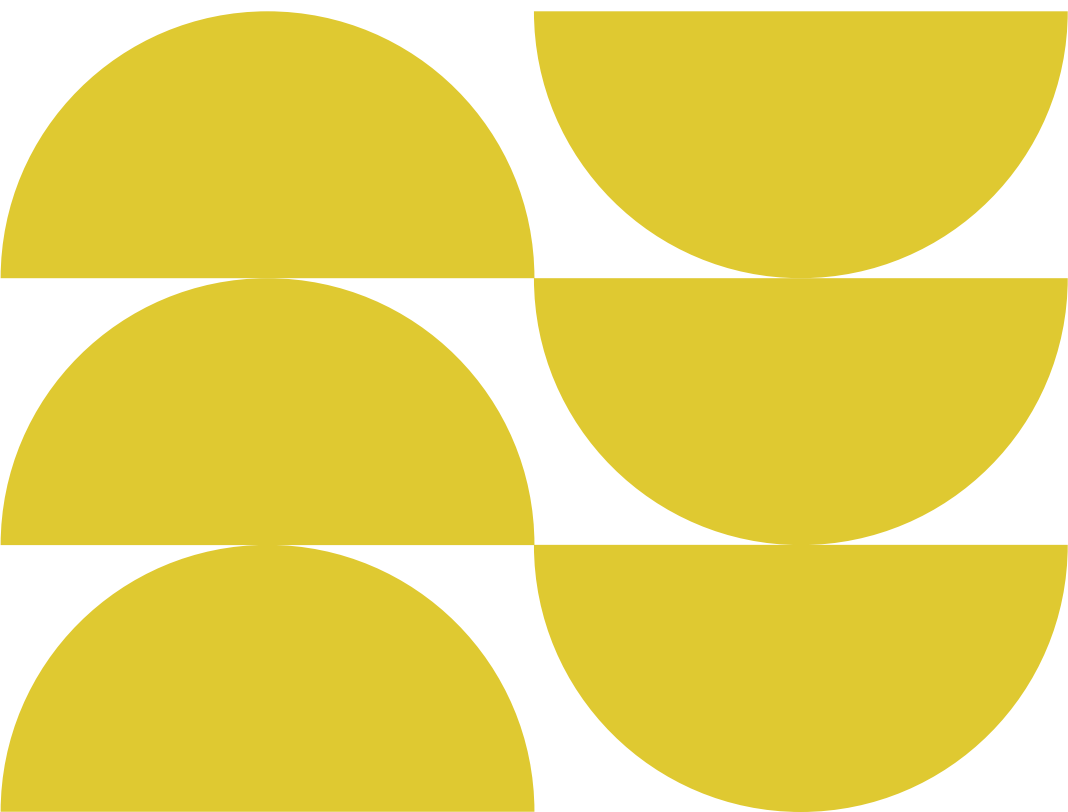
I discovered Dare To Be Youth Charity when I attended their annual Youth Inspire Community Day, and initially, I got involved because I was promised something in return for my participation. However, soon after, I realized that I shared a similar vision as DTBY, and that's when I genuinely wanted to help them. Without me even realizing it, DTBY gave me the opportunity to improve myself. Within a few months, I found a platform where I could voice my opinions and develop my public speaking skills. Now, rather than feeling nervous, I feel excited to speak!

Through DTBY, I have met many youths like me who feel the same way about how DTBY has had a positive impact on their lives. I am a testimony to the transformation of DTBY's significance, and I am grateful for the opportunities and experiences it has given me. DTBY Charity has given me the courage to believe in myself, and I hope it continues to do the same for others.



HIGHLIGHTS & TESTIMONIALS

Kevin's Journey: The Impact of the Leader Within Program



Kevin's experience in the **Leader Within Program** is a powerful testament to how structured youth development programs can inspire personal growth and self-discovery. As an autistic student, Kevin entered the 4-week hybrid program unsure of what to expect but left with a deeper understanding of their strengths, resilience, and leadership potential.

One transformative moment came when Kevin discovered that their greatest strength wasn't creativity, as they had always believed, but curiosity. This revelation opened new doors for exploration and growth, showcasing how the program helps participants uncover hidden strengths.

"This has been an amazing experience," Kevin shared, reflecting on how the program helped them grow and build their strengths. Kevin's journey highlights the **Leader Within Program's lasting impact**, equipping young people with the tools to navigate challenges, foster self-discovery, and develop leadership skills for future success.



A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

BACK OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS



Brittany Phillips

Board Director

At Dare to Be You(th) (DTBY), we believe that young people are more than our future, they are our present. They are powerful, resilient, and deserving of every opportunity to lead, grow, and thrive. As Board Chair, I have the privilege of witnessing this truth in action every day through the work we do and the lives we touch with our programs.

This year, our impact is measured in the numbers and also in the moments: the spark of confidence in a young leader's voice, the strength found in community, and the transformation that happens when someone feels seen and supported. These are the moments that remind us why DTBY's work matters.

I'm proud of what we've accomplished together, with our dedicated team lead by Shannon, volunteers, partners, CYC, and supporters. We are living in a time when connection and belonging are more important than ever. DTBY's programs are creating spaces where young people are encouraged to be their authentic selves and build life skills.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for being part of this journey. When we invest in youth, we invest in a stronger, more compassionate world. And your belief in our vision fuels our mission

With sincere gratitude,
Brittany Phillips
Board Chair, Dare to Be YOU(th)





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Invest in Young People Today for a Better Community Tomorrow.

DARE TO BE YOU(TH) CHARITY