

2026

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO MAKE AN AUTHENTIC IMPACT



dare to be YOU(th)
make your mark



THRIVING through Change

Dare to be YOU(th) (DTBY) is a grassroots charity built on the belief that every young person deserves a strong foundation for life beyond high school. Serving youth ages 14-24 across Halton and Hamilton, DTBY provides accessible, no-fee programs that remove barriers and build a genuine sense of belonging and connection. Through emotional and financial literacy, peer mentorship, and leadership development, our "ME, We, Community" model equips youth with the resilience, self-awareness, and real-world skills needed to thrive through change. Since launching, DTBY has reached more than 3,000 young people across the Halton and Hamilton region, preparing them not just for what comes next, but for everything that follows.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR THE FUTURE

Through experiential learning, online courses, engagement events, peer support and mentorship, youth will learn greater self-awareness, how to embrace challenges and improve decision making. Our programs and initiatives help participants navigate life's challenges by helping them develop skills that build resilience, confidence, and emotional and financial well-being.

PREVENTION IN ACTION

Young people today are looking for a sense of belonging and connection.

In 2025, 573 youth engaged in DTBY programming, with a 52% increase in Leader Within participation, reflecting growing demand for preventative leadership development.

Prevention is economically responsible and fosters community connection. DTBY strengthens emotional resilience, financial capability, and self-leadership to prepare youth to navigate challenges. This reduces long-term strain on health care and justice involvement

THE SOLUTION: LEADER WITHIN 2026

Delivered Online and In Person.

Youth build:

- Self-awareness and goal clarity
- Communication and problem solving
- Adaptability and resilience
- Financial literacy skills that reduce stress includes a Finance AI App designed to strengthen digital money management skills.

Youth Voice:

"As a participant, I felt empowered seeing so many young people in leadership roles. The program helped me build confidence and believe in my voice."
— Leader Within participant

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Leadership Through Sport

86% expressed interest in the Leader Within program following the event. Sport creates the conditions. DTBY builds the leadership.

CYConnect Events

Regular youth-led experiences and Peer mentorship opportunities.

DTBY builds these skills before the pressure hits.

ACCESSIBLE BY DESIGN

All programs are delivered at no cost to youth - because money should never be a reason a young person misses out on support, skills, or belonging.



*Reserve
your seat
today
and join us*



*Scan to watch an
important message*

*"When things didn't go my way, I learned how to stay calm and keep trying instead of giving up."
— Leadership Through Sport participant*

WORKFORCE READY

The World Economic Forum ranks resilience, adaptability, and self-efficacy among the top future of work skills.

Employers and educators consistently report that technical ability is not what determines long-term success. Confidence, self-leadership, communication, and grit are.

*"Reports show that youth and recent graduates are at risk of losing employment within their first year not because they lack technical skills, but because they lack self-leadership, adaptability, and grit. These skills remain at the top of recruitment priorities across industries." — Dr. Cherie Werhun, PhD
Leader Within 2.0 Curriculum Partner*

DTBY builds these skills before the pressure hits.



PEER MENTORSHIP AT IT'S CORE

Peer mentorship is the heart of Leader Within and the Community Youth Council. Youth do not just participate in programming. They grow into mentors, facilitators, and ambassadors who guide others through the same leadership journey they once began themselves. They learn to lead themselves and then lead others.

This creates a sustainable leadership pipeline where experience becomes mentorship, and mentorship becomes community impact.

YOUTH LED. YOUTH DRIVEN.

Participants become peer mentors and Community Youth Council leaders.
77% stronger leadership
80% stronger collaboration and teamwork

When youth lead, communities thrive.

"I have learnt that becoming a good leader starts from self reflection and truly looking inwards. I have to truly understand myself before I will lead other people. Thank you DTBY!" – Program Participant

COMMUNITY YOUTH COUNCIL (CYC)

The Community Youth Council is DTBY's youth-led volunteer council made up of 10 + graduates of Leader Within who are ready to step into deeper leadership. As the voice of youth, CYC members:

- Provide insight on youth trends
- Support program development
- Participate in fundraising and community engagement
- Represent DTBY at events

Grounded in service above self,

CYC builds leadership through action, accountability, and community impact.



"Through DTBY & the CYC, 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." – Program Participant



Community Youth Council

ABOUT Dare to be YOU(th)

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

Caring - Community - Impact
Commitment - Inclusive



INVEST IN IMPACT

\$425 provides one student with 12 months of leadership development, financial resilience programming, peer mentorship, and experiential learning.

www.dtby.ca/donate-now/



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Join us in building resilient, workforce-ready young leaders across Halton and Hamilton.