

# The Future of Youth Civic Engagement

Over the last year, the Rideau Hall Foundation partnered with Abacus Data and spoke to over 2,700 individuals who had ties to youth engagement (or were youth themselves), to understand the future of youth civic engagement.

**1** Young people are eager to be involved in civic engagement. And language is key.

**89%** of youth and **94%** of children are interested in civic engagement activities.

- **69%** of youth are interested in “civic engagement”.
- **42%** of children don't know what ‘civic engagement’ means.

**2** Not all young people in Canada have an opportunity to participate in civic engagement, even if they want to.

**YOUTH:** Three-quarters are interested in community problem solving, only **42%** have the opportunity to participate.



**CHILDREN:** **87%** are interested in community problem solving, only **66%** have the opportunity to participate.

**3** Hands-on, up close and personal experiences and bringing together young people are the best aspects of an in-person learning experience.

### Interested in...



**4** Online experiences are best suited as a follow up, post-experience tool to maintain community, networks and a support system.

Online experiences should be used to maintain relationships, experiences and communities that were built through an in-person experience.



Active participation



Hands-on experiences

**5** Youth want to be given tools for leadership in an empowering, not prescriptive way.



Learn from one another



Informal networking

**6** In any learning experience, young people say it's critical to meet them where they are at rather than assume they have a pre-existing level of knowledge.

### THE IDEAL PATH TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In-person exposure to many issues & opportunities

Followed by a sustained online community

**7** An area with growth potential within youth civic engagement programming is showcasing the connection between grassroots organizations and institutions.

Showing young people **GOVERNMENT & INSTITUTIONS** doesn't always = **POLITICS**

**8** Creating an inclusive space with youth programming is about setting clear expectations and boundaries from the start.

**SAFE SETTINGS =** boundaries, guidelines and rules to support respectful agreement AND disagreement.

“A welcoming space in any community is one that is safe, respectful, responsive, and co-created.”

– Youth Online Community Participant