

# IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR CHILD WELFARE INVOLVED CHILDREN AND YOUTH: HSBC NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

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## SUMMARY REPORT



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## BACKGROUND

The HSBC National Transformation Project, hereafter referred to as HSBC:NTP, seeks to significantly improve primary and high school graduation rates and post-secondary enrollment amongst young people involved in the child welfare system. Achieving an education is crucial for any young person on their journey toward future employment. For Canada's most vulnerable and at-risk youth, those who have experienced abuse and neglect, there can often be many barriers along the way to achieving an education. By providing the support they need to succeed at school -including intensive and flexible wraparound supports tailored to their needs, the HSBC:NTP ensures that child-welfare involved children and youth can define a new vision of success for themselves and break the cycle of abuse, neglect and poverty for future generations.

In addition to the effects of child maltreatment, children and

youth in care may also face a range of other challenges such as family breakdown, instability within foster placements, multiple school placements, academic difficulties, economic uncertainty, poor developmental outcomes, mental health challenges and other systemic barriers, such as un/under-employment and homelessness. 46% of youth from care will graduate from high school vs 83% of their peers. Moreover, youth from care are 50% less likely to attend post-secondary institutions than their peers.

Research, particularly Canadian research, has identified tutoring programs and educational supports at all levels (primary, secondary, post-secondary) as having the potential to help child-welfare involved students realize



## THE NEED

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YOUTH FROM CARE ARE **50%** LESS LIKELY TO **ATTEND POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS** THAN THEIR PEERS.

academic, social, emotional, and behavioural improvements. Educational support has also been shown to have a positive impact for child welfare involved children and youth on retaining academic skills, homework completion, school attendance, and student-teacher relationships.

Children's Aid Foundation of Canada worked in collaboration with six child welfare agencies in four provinces across Canada (Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec) to implement the HSBC:NTP from 2015 to 2021, providing intensive wraparound educational supports from the primary to undergraduate level. By facilitating access to a broad range of urgently required supports, this project reduces or eliminates financial and access barriers and supports children and youth to achieve educational success, ultimately building the foundation toward meaningful and sustainable employment. The four program streams are as follows:

## RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

The HSBC:NTP provided **3,047 grants** to support children and youth in **primary and secondary school** (1,784 young people received Tutoring support and 1,263 were supported with the Student Support Fund) **and 966 post-secondary support grants** (503 post-secondary students received Scholarships & Bursaries and 463 received Youth Opportunity Funds).

As a result of receiving educational supports:

- Children and youth made substantial academic, behavioural, emotional and social gains
- School performance and attendance improved for the majority of those supported (most markedly for those receiving tutoring supports)
- Higher proportions of children and youth receiving primary and secondary supports were working at or above grade level
- For post-secondary students, the supports decreased stress and increased the likelihood of achieving their long-term career goals (81%), passing their required courses (82%), and graduating (82%)



### PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TUTORING AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS

This stream provides elementary school students (as young as four years old), middle school students, and high school students with educational supports such as intensive, customized coaching, tutoring and advocacy. The goal of this program component is to ensure young people are able to graduate from high school. The program ensures that vulnerable young people feel supported and can focus on their school activities so they can continue moving forward with their education.

### STUDENT SUPPORT FUND

This stream provides students with short-term, necessary supports in order to remove barriers to educational achievement for students of all ages. In some cases, the fund is also used to ensure youth transitioning out of the child welfare system are able to secure safe, sustainable housing after leaving their foster or group homes. Retaining housing

will enable youth to focus fully on balancing their studies.

Additional support could cover:

- Housing-related costs such as first and last months' rent
- Start-up housing supplies
- School supplies
- Access to physical and mental health supports
- Emergency funds for unforeseen costs that threaten a student's ability to succeed at school

### POST-SECONDARY SCHOLARSHIP AND BURSARIES

This stream provides incoming and current post-secondary students with scholarship and bursary funding to move through and complete post-secondary education.

### YOUTH OPPORTUNITY FUND

This stream supports the goals and aspirations of young people who require additional assistance in their pursuit of higher education or their chosen career. Funding provides students with short-term, career track training such as employment-centered certificates, first aid courses, application fees, and other educational supports.



**RILEY** - HSBC Youth Opportunity Fund participant

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To access the full report with detailed outlines, evaluations, findings, recommendations based on the findings, and sources [click here.](#)

**NATASHA** - HSBC Youth Opportunity Fund participant



Children's Aid Foundation of Canada is our country's leading charity dedicated to standing up for children and families involved in the child welfare system and standing alongside youth with lived experience.

We raise and grant funds and deliver a wide range of high-impact programs and services in partnership with 104 child- and youth-serving agencies across the country. Last year, we supported over 46,500 children and youth and 12,300 families.

Stand Up for Kids is our national public movement uniting caring Canadians in changing the futures of our nation's most vulnerable kids - those who have experienced abuse and neglect. We know that by helping these young people to overcome their trauma and break the cycle for future generations, they gain the strength and resilience to create a lifetime of their own unstoppable successes.

To learn more please contact:

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