



# THE WORLD ACCORDING TO US

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Boys & Girls Clubs

## National Youth Survey 2013

### What do Canadian Youth Say?

Canadian youth of all ages believe they can make a difference in the world when they feel loved and supported by family, friends, and adult mentors.

'Encourage me to pursue my dreams'  
boy, 13-17 yrs

'Trust me, help me, believe in me, love me'  
boy, 13-17 yrs

'Love me for all that I do and praise me when I have done well'  
girl, 8-12 yrs

# 83%

of all youth believe they can make a difference in the world.

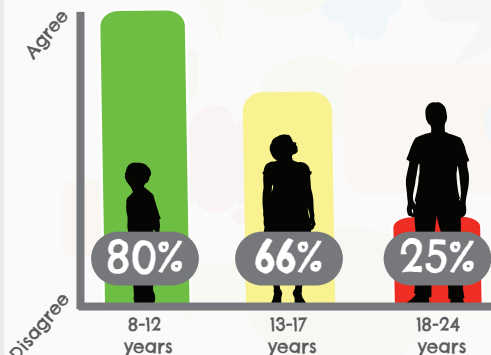


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'Teach me new things and things you think will be important for me in the future'  
boy, 8-12 yrs

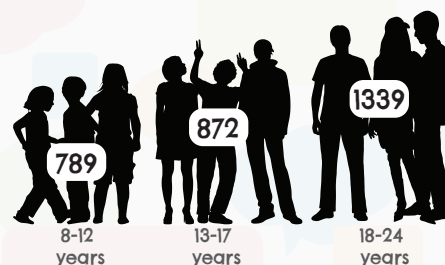
'Give more guidance about finding a career, earning money, and be patient when we need a moment to just have fun being young.'  
girl, 18-24 yrs

### "Adults listen to the worries of young people like me"

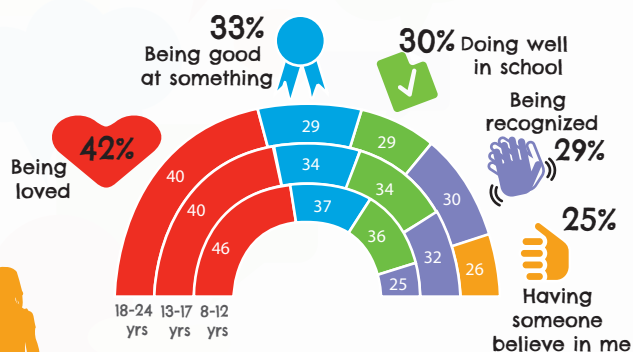


Listen up!

### 3000 Canadian youth surveyed



### What makes youth feel confident?



## 2 in 3

say being with their family or friends makes them most happy.

'The best place is in the family when you are loved'  
boy, 8-12 yrs

### What can adults do?

Youth say:

- provide support and encouragement
- teach new skills
- help with school studies
- believe in youth
- provide guidance

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www.theworldaccordingto.us.ca  
www.bgccan.com

study conducted by:

GLOBESCAN



# It is time to listen honestly and seriously to the thoughts, perceptions, opinions and ideas of youth on issues that affect their lives.

'Love me for all I do and praise me when I have done well. Give me encouragement to become whatever I want.' girl, 8-12 yrs

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada is dedicated to supporting and encouraging children and youth as they grow and develop. We believe it is important to engage young people and listen carefully to their voices and ideas. We launched The World According to Us National Youth Survey to effectively listen to young people themselves about their hopes, dreams, ideas and needs.

3000 young people across Canada in three age cohorts – 8-12, 13-17 and 18-24 – were asked their opinions on a range of topics: What makes you happy and confident? What issues are they concerned about? Can young people make a difference in the world? How can adults help young people be happy and successful now and in the future?

This survey is one of the most comprehensive of its kind ever conducted in Canada, and one of the first to gather the voices and opinions of young people aged 8-12. Boys and Girls Clubs also actively involved young people in all phases of the project – from survey design, to the analysis and release of the results.

## A new platform for youth

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada is engaged in action research about best practices in youth engagement in their clubs and launched The World According to Us, an on-line platform where Canadian youth can voice their thoughts, opinions, and creative solutions on issues that affect their lives. To learn more about the survey, visit: [www.theworldaccordingtous.ca](http://www.theworldaccordingtous.ca)



'As youth get older they are less excited, more jaded – we need to do something to make them feel empowered, engaged, and motivated at a younger age.' girl, 13-17 yrs

## Are adults listening?

A recent UNICEF study found that Canada ranks 25th of 28 countries when it comes to relationships between teens and their family and friends.

The results from our survey show that, as young people grow up, they become less and less confident that their voices and concerns are being listened to, and heard, by adults. 80% of tweens (aged 8-12 years) agree that adults listen to them, while just 66% of teens (aged 13-17) and 25% of young adults (aged 18-24) agree that adults listen to their ideas, dreams and concerns.

The fact that young people feel less heard just as they are seeking to establish their identities and contribute their skills to their communities and to the world is of concern.

'Love me, listen to me, encourage me to try things that scare me and always do my best' girl, 18-24 yrs



'Be attentive and offer me your life experiences to help me weather a crisis.' boy, 18-24 yrs

Boys and Girls Clubs believe that the findings of the survey are important for everyone who cares about young people's development. Here is how you can help:

### Parents/Caregivers

Communicate how much you love your children. Listen to their dreams, affirm their passions and validate their observations. You mean so much!

### Educators/School Administrators

Recognition for a job well done is important at all stages of development. Let youth know when they're on the right track and help them through life challenges.

### Community/Business Leaders

Demonstrate you believe in tomorrow's leaders through mentoring. You can provide guidance and coaching to a young person in your circle of influence.

### Youth Development Professionals

Support youth and help them to discover and develop their skills, interests and talents. Engage youth in designing, running and evaluating programs. Help youth to explore ways they can contribute and make a difference.

### Government

Youth have much to say and contribute. Find ways to involve them in developing policies that support positive development. Work with those who know best and can support their engagement: parents, schools, youth organizations.

### Children and Youth

We believe your voices, opinions and insights are truly valuable and need to be heard. We know you offer refreshing new wisdom and transformative ideas. Our commitment is to hear you, encourage you and support you. Together we can make our world a better place. Let the caring adults in your life know what you think!