

Fast Facts

- **233** Somali and other immigrant children/youth participated in Homework Clubs in four locations
- **47** Somali children/youth participate in Go 4 Great mentoring
- **202** Francophone immigrant children/youth participated in mentoring
- **192** mentors and tutors participated in the Somali and Francophone programs

SROI Results

Year 1: 2.21 : 1
Year 2: 3.70 : 1
Year 3 : 3.76 : 1
Over 3 years: 3.29 : 1

Contact Details:

Sharon Moore
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary
5945 Centre St SE
Calgary, AB T2H 0C2
403-777-3535

Harry Yee
Bridge Foundation for Youth
#201, 1112 40Ave NE
Calgary AB T2E 5T8
403-230-7745

Because we are the first generation here in Canada we are learning a lot. I didn't grow up with the idea of mentors, so when I come to this program I see that my child has a lot of opportunities to grow up to be a good person.

Program Background

Mentoring for Inclusion works with Somali and new immigrant Francophone children and youth age 7 to 18. The Somali program is offered through a partnership among three organizations: Big Brothers Big Sisters Calgary (BBBS); Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth (CBFY); and the Somali Canadian Society of Calgary (SCSC). Mentoring for Inclusion offers a number of mentoring and homework club programs including:

Homework Clubs provided by CBFY in four locations that include Forest Lawn; Genesis Centre, Shaganappi and Radisson. Homework Club leaders are recruited from the Somali community, trained and paid for their services.

Go 4 Great Programs provide two site-based weekly mentoring programs managed by BBBS at the Beltline Recreation Centre, one for girls and one for boys. Mentors are recruited from the Somali community. A BBBS mentoring coordinator from the Somali community acts as a liaison with Somali families.

Francophone Mentoring programs include **In-school Mentoring; Teen Mentoring; Game On** and **Go Girls** group mentoring and **Big Brothers Big Sister one to one mentoring**. The Francophone programs work in partnership with six Francophone schools in Calgary and Projet Appartenance.

Organization Mentoring is provided to the Somali Canadian Society of Calgary to build capacity.

Theory of Change

If Somali Canadian and immigrant Francophone children/youth who are experiencing cultural and economic barriers are connected to a positive role model /mentor they will increase their sense of belonging, be more likely to stay in school, engage in positive community activities and be more resistant to negative influences that could lead to criminal behaviour.

Participant Outcomes

The children /youth participants in the programs show increased confidence and self esteem; new friendships; pride in their culture; increased interest in school; and a sense of belonging.

The mentors report increased confidence, pride, leadership skills and sense of belonging.

Parents indicate that the Mentoring for Inclusion has gained their trust. They feel their children are in a safe environment with positive role models. Parents are also pleased that there is a gender-specific program for Somali girls.

The SCSC president reports increasing trust within the Somali community and willingness to work in partnership with local service providers.

*My daughter wants to be doctor when she grows up, and here she sees this successful young woman (mentor).
 She is already asking me “when can I volunteer (as a mentor)?”*

Participant profile

In Calgary, refugee and immigrant youth and their families have been identified as a vulnerable sector of the population. They can be isolated because of language and cultural barriers. Income and employment are very important to them due to the economic pressures of having immigrated, the cost of housing and general living expenses. Even the youth feel this economic pressure as they attempt to balance school attendance with part-time jobs to help the family. As a result, these youth can become easy prey for gang related activities such as drug trafficking and other illegal activities, which on the surface provide quick money. These youth may also be targeted as victims of bullying and racism causing them to feel even more isolated.

Social Value Creation

By providing mentors for vulnerable children and youth in Calgary’s communities, *Mentoring for Inclusion* creates social value in a number of significant ways as program outcomes are achieved by children, youth, their parents, and the community as a whole.

Value is created for the participants in terms of education, health, mental health, and avoidance of criminal activity. This includes decreased use of additional

educational resources, decreased cost of not finishing high school, decreased use of health systems, decreased use of mental health systems, and decreased involvement in justice systems. Justice system involvement ranges from decreased cost of petty crime to decreased potential to be involved in gang activity and other serious crimes. For parents of participants value is created through decreased stress as well as reduced cost of Children’s Services involvement. Finally, volunteer mentors experience value through the soft skills (like leadership) that they learn, and their time has been valued with consideration of this ‘value add’ contribution.

Conclusions

The SROI analysis reveals that over three years of pilot funding, ***Mentoring for Inclusion* creates an average of \$3.29 for every dollar invested** in the program. While the first year SROI results are lower, due to program development time needed for start up, with program experience and increased participation rates, the ratio has grown over three years and would be expected to continue to grow in the future. While results from the analysis presented here speak to the significant value created by the program there are some outcomes, like improved quality of life, that may never be full valued in financial terms. For this reason, the results presented should be considered a conservative estimation of the true value created.

