



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SURVEY RESULTS

QUESTIONS DEVELOPED BY YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL STAFF & YOUTH BEST PRACTICE COMMITTEE



## DEMOGRAPHICS

**67%**

of respondents identified as white

**72%**

of respondents identified as girl/woman

**64%**

of respondents identified as straight/heterosexual

Other surveys that we've done with our membership, such as our chapter reports and our membership survey show that the Youth MOVE membership is more diverse than that of the average worker in these positions.

### LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The YBPC reviewed the data and discussed its limitations and edits to make to a future iteration.

\* Missing information around the linearity of roles (from peer provider, to coordinator, to administrator, etc.), and around dual roles, whether those are informal or formal (ex: Youth engagement specialist also providing peer support)

\* Missing information around where the youth workforce is working from - do they work from home? Do they work in the community that they support? Where do they live?



### YOUTH WORKER

Those youth, young adults, and adults who engage young people in coordinated programs, including those that are recreational, educational, or social by nature and design. "Youth work" is defined as activities that intentionally seek to impact young people.



### YOUTH PEER SUPPORT PROVIDER (YPS)

A person who uses lived experience within the child-serving systems and skills learned in formal training to deliver services in behavioral health settings to promote mind-body recovery and resiliency for young adults of transition-age (e.g., certified peer specialist, peer support specialist, youth partner). The age range for this role is defined by the jurisdiction or organization.

#### Most common activities

- Community Outreach
- 1-on-1 Meetings with Youth
- Community Outreach



### YOUTH ADVOCATE

A young person, typically between the ages of 15-25, who uses lived experience to educate, inform, motivate, and inspire others in an effort to create positive systems change.



### YOUTH COORDINATOR AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SPECIALISTS (YES)

A person who usually works for a nonprofit, community organization, or government agency. Primary responsibilities include facilitation of youth programs that often focus on education, leadership, and personal development.

#### Most common activities

- Community outreach
- Youth leadership development
- Social media/communications

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[The Unfair Criminalization of Gay and Transgender Youth](#)

[LGBTQ Youth in the Foster Care System](#)

# THE DATA



## WHERE DO THEY WORK?

Youth coordinators and engagement specialists mirrored that distribution, the majority of them being in urban settings. This could be due to the fact that such positions are required by grants like SOC or HT. HT grants are awarded to the state, the YES hired would then be a state employee and likely work in the state capitol (urban area), even though they would oversee programs in rural areas as well.

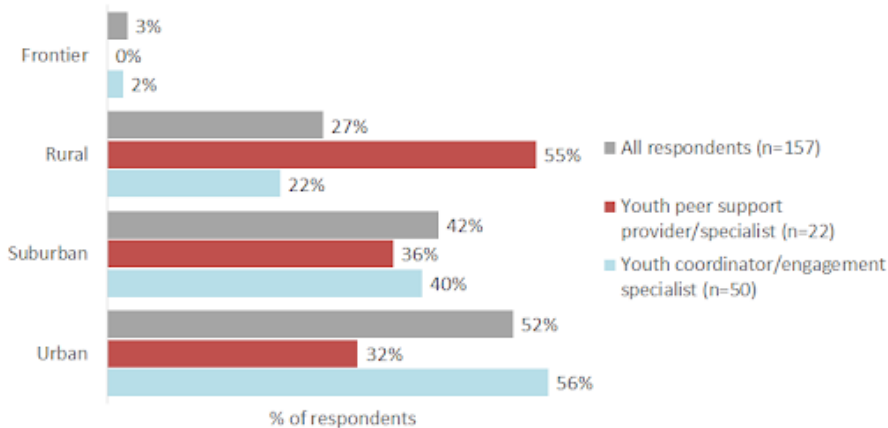
However, it was the opposite for YPS – the majority worked in rural environments (55%), then suburban (36%), and urban (32%). This could be because of the lack of formal Mental Health services in rural environments, creating the extra value added and necessity of peer support services.



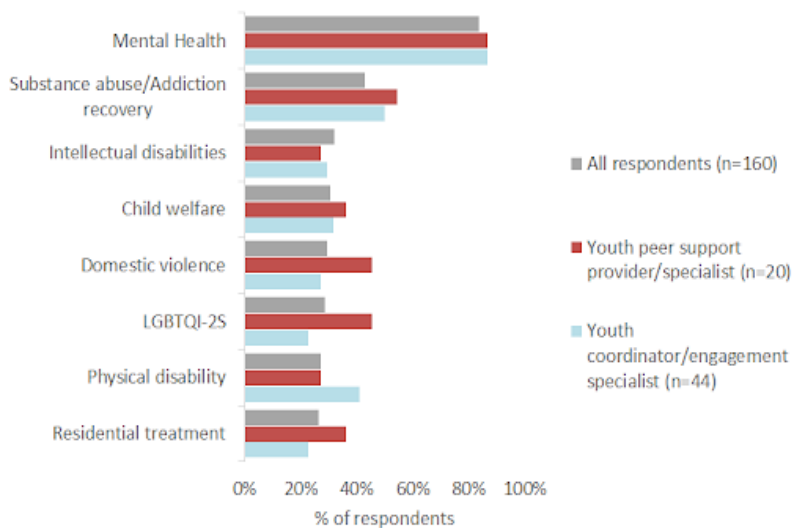
## LIVED EXPERIENCE

Most youth workforce has lived experience. More supervisors of YPS seem to have lived experience than the general workforce.

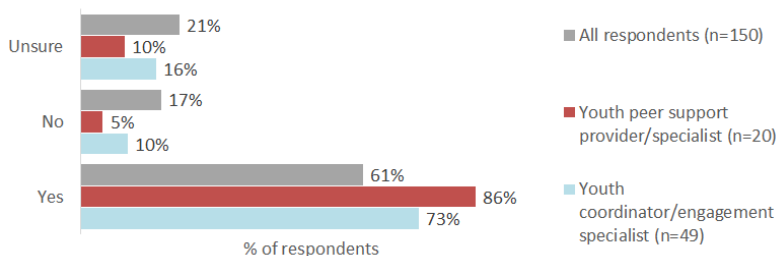
How would you describe the town/community in which you work?



Respondents' lived experience (1/2)



Are there any supervisors in your agency who have lived experience?



# THE DATA



## TRAINING & REQUIREMENTS

**67%**

of respondents receive continuing education

BACKGROUND CHECKS ARE REQUIRED IN ALMOST ALL POSITIONS, WHICH CAN BE A BARRIER FOR SOME YOUTH WORKERS.

Although few employers require YPSs to already have a peer support certification before starting their job, almost 2/3rds of YPSs were required to take that training after they were hired.



## CAREER ADVANCEMENT

**57%** **60%**  
**YPS & YEC**

reported having a career ladder within their organization

Organizations are supportive of the youth workforce (2/3rds think the organization is a good place for youth workers - 3/4 for youth peer supporters and YECs), but not very specific about how (ex: just half agree/strongly agree that the organization has programs and policies that help youth workers advance in their specialization).



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure pathways into youth workforce positions are accessible.
- Determine what certifications/experience are required and make recommendations to promote job accessibility and mobility.
- Ensure pathways for advancement for young people in the youth workforce: from professional development to career advancement opportunities. This is not a dead end career!
- Flexible work environments
- Ensure positions sustainable and offer appropriate compensation (wages, benefits, flexible work environments, etc.).
- Ensure networks between youth workforce peers: how can the youth workforce feel more connected and supported?

**NEXT STEPS:** We need more information! A second, more precise and targeted survey will be released in 2021

## LET US HELP!

YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL PROVIDES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO THE PEER WORKFORCE

Do you have a question, request for information, help, or technical assistance?

[Fill out the TA & Support Form](#)

Learn about who we are

[www.youthmovenational.org](http://www.youthmovenational.org)

Learn about our Peer Center  
(Providing TA specifically for peer services)

[www.youthmovepeercenter.org](http://www.youthmovepeercenter.org)

Contact Us

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