

FACT SHEET: YOUTH ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM

Youth are often described as disengaged or apathetic, yet findings from our study suggest that young people are deeply aware of the social issues shaping their lives and futures. Youth in Atlantic Canada describe both a strong desire to contribute to change and significant barriers that limit meaningful participation and influence.

What We Learned

Insight without influence: youth feel capable, but not always taken seriously because of their age.

"If you're younger, you have to speak way louder."

Advocacy often begins small: youth believe in helping others, being kind, and standing up for peers.

"Conversation starts conversation, which can create something bigger."

Relationships matter: youth become engaged because issues affect them or people they know or are connected to their identities and communities.

"When things personally happen to you... your eyes are more open to the problem."

Collective action creates confidence: youth emphasized the importance of solidarity, shared voice and collective influence.

"There's power in numbers."

Pathways to Activism

Awareness

Advocacy

Activism

Advocacy often begins through awareness, conversation, and care for others. With support, information, and opportunities to participate, youth can move toward more visible forms of collective action and activism.

More about our study: This study was conducted between Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 using a Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) approach. A team of 13 youth researchers conducted 35 interviews with youth in Atlantic Canada.

WHAT ADULTS CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOUTH ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM



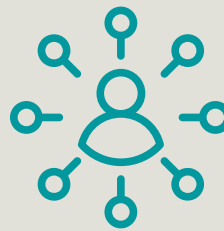
Take Youth Seriously



Create Safe Places



Access to Good Information



Supportive Mentorship



Meaningful Participation



Prudentia Institute is a purpose driven, charitable research and development organization with a mission to empower and develop youth in Atlantic Canada. The institute supports the inclusive development and empowerment of youth through research and knowledge mobilization. To learn more or read more about our research, visit www.prudentiaexchange.ca or email info@prudentiaexchange.ca.