



**OUTWARD BOUND
CANADA**

Building the next generation of leaders

Young people need us now

2026 CASE FOR SUPPORT

We want young people to thrive, but this is the reality

Across Canada, young people are facing a crisis that too many of us still underestimate. The kid next door, the teen in the classroom down the street, and the youth in the communities we care about are growing up in a world that feels heavier and more unpredictable than ever.

The systems meant to support youth are failing.

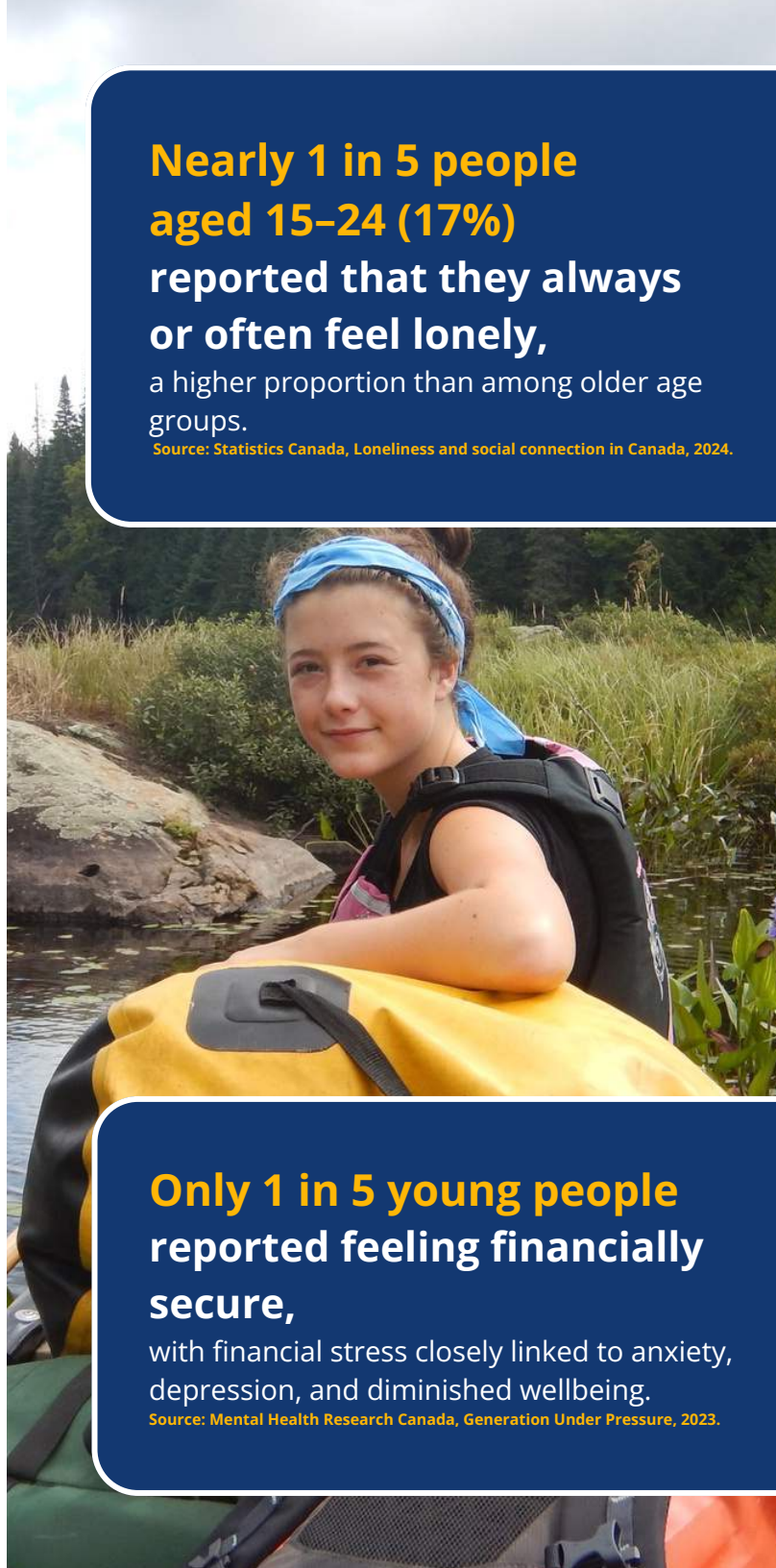
In many communities, rising costs are stretching families to the limit and eroding the stability they need to thrive. Extracurricular activities are out of reach, families are focused on basic necessities, and schools are stretched thin.

These young people have grown up through disruption that reshaped everyday life, including a global pandemic that interrupted school, friendships, and key years of social development.

Young people are now navigating two disconnected worlds. One is more digitally connected than ever, where they are constantly exposed to social media, unfiltered content with few boundaries, and social pressures without guardrails. The result is a profound sense of isolation and rising anxiety and depression. The offline world, meanwhile, is over-structured, with tightly managed schedules, less exposure to risk, and more pre-made decisions. The pressure they face is intense, complex, and constant.

Caught between over-structured environments and under-regulated digital spaces, young people are losing the chance to build judgment, accountability, and self-trust.

We cannot afford to look away.



Nearly 1 in 5 people aged 15–24 (17%) reported that they always or often feel lonely, a higher proportion than among older age groups.

Source: Statistics Canada, Loneliness and social connection in Canada, 2024.

Only 1 in 5 young people reported feeling financially secure,

with financial stress closely linked to anxiety, depression, and diminished wellbeing.

Source: Mental Health Research Canada, Generation Under Pressure, 2023.



“Life became a constant struggle to make ends meet, and family trips or wilderness adventures were things we could only imagine.

When I learned about Outward Bound Canada, I knew it would be meaningful for my son. But when I saw the registration cost, my heart sank. Without financial support, it was simply beyond what our family could afford.

My son wanted to go so badly, but he never begged. He understood our situation, and that understanding hurt even more.

Thanks to sponsorship support, he was able to attend. What was out of reach became possible because someone chose to help.”

— Parent of a 2025 scholarship recipient

Outward Bound Canada is the solution

Young people thrive when they are given real opportunities to test themselves, build confidence, and discover what they are capable of. Outward Bound Canada creates those opportunities through time in nature, challenge, and shared responsibility, helping them build self-trust and resilience that stay with them over time.

We believe, like you, that every young person has the potential to become one of Canada’s future leaders, problem-solvers, builders, and caretakers. But potential alone is not enough. It grows when real opportunities exist to build the skills, self-trust, and perspective needed to thrive.

Our society depends on the investments we make in them now. The stakes are high, and we have no time to waste.

Only 33% of boys and 8% of girls aged 12–17 met Canada’s recommended daily physical activity levels,

indicating limited access to regular movement and outdoor time.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS), 2022–2024.

What Outward Bound Canada Makes Possible

Our programs give youth what scientific evidence shows they need most: meaningful connection, a sense of belonging, and opportunities to challenge themselves in supportive environments. We conduct ongoing research during our programs. These findings continue to show that outdoor experiences improve resilience, emotional wellbeing, and readiness for life's demands. Research from Outward Bound International and other leading institutions aligns with our data and reinforces the impact we see in our own work.

In the wild spaces we take them to, youth discover strengths they did not know they had. They learn to move with confidence and understand that they matter. These experiences are essential protective factors that help shape life trajectories.

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“No other organization holds a candle to what Outward Bound is doing in the field of character education.”

— Angela Duckworth, PhD

Celebrated researcher and professor, MacArthur Fellow and Author of *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*



RESILIENCE

71% of participants reported working through challenges instead of stepping away*



SELF-CONFIDENCE

79% returned saying, “I believe I can do it.”*



SOCIAL CONNECTION

68% strengthened trust and communication with peers*



WORKFORCE READINESS

64% strengthened teamwork and leadership skills relevant to future employment*

*Outcomes based on participant pre- and post-program evaluations.

Just 28% of youth met the recommended guideline of no more than two hours per day of recreational screen time,

a factor linked to poorer mental health outcomes.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS), 2022–2024.

Your investment at work

This is how your investment shows up in our work, supporting the people, programs, and partnerships that make it possible for more young people to take part across the country.



EXPANDING ACCESS

removing barriers so more youth can take part in wilderness programs



RESEARCH & EVALUATION

measuring outcomes and strengthening our role in learning and socio-emotional development



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

working with mission-aligned organizations to deliver programs and support communities



EXCELLENCE & TRAINING

developing a skilled workforce that reflects the communities we serve



GEAR & EQUIPMENT

providing high-quality gear and safety equipment so all youth can participate

We can't do it without you

Outward Bound Canada is stepping forward with a clear plan.

We want every young person, especially those facing barriers, to have the chance to disconnect from daily pressures and reconnect with themselves through powerful, research-backed outdoor experiences.

Your donation removes financial barriers so youth who are underserved can access outdoor learning and the experiences that help them thrive. Your support ensures their education includes more than academics and gives them the chance to develop courage, collaboration, compassion, and the ability to meet adversity with clarity instead of fear.

Through your gift, you're investing in the confidence, resilience, and long-term wellbeing of the next generation shaping Canada's future.

More than 4 in 10 people (41%) reported that financial pressures were negatively affecting their mental health, with impacts particularly pronounced for younger age groups.

Source: Mental Health Research Canada, Mental Health and the High Cost of Living, 2023.

\$10,000

supports community-based programs reaching up to 100 youth

\$25,000

supports a gear library and equipment so every young person can participate

\$50,000

establishes a wilderness access fund supporting 50 youth

\$250,000+

invests in infrastructure that sustains our regional bases

Stand with Canada's youth



We cannot do this alone, nor do we want to.

Every Outward Bound Canada participant carries an ethos of community and service. We are calling on our community to extend that service to youth who need it most. When you invest in them, you are helping to provide a critical part of their development that public education systems are increasingly unable to fund.

Across the country, outdoor and experiential learning are often among the first things cut from school budgets as costs rise. As financial pressures grow, fewer young people have access to experiences that build confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging outside the classroom.

The crisis facing youth in Canada is real. It's happening in towns, cities, and neighbourhoods across the country, including your own community. The opportunity to respond is just as real.

Outward Bound Canada offers a proven, effective way to support young people in building themselves up before they reach their breaking point.

The path forward starts with you.

“Every year, we meet young people who are ready to step into challenge, growth, and possibility, but the cost of participating can put that opportunity out of reach. When that financial barrier is removed, the change can be remarkable. Youth take on real responsibility and discover resilience they didn't know they had. They return home more confident, more capable, and more certain of who they are and what they can contribute.

Those qualities don't stop with them. They ripple outward into families, classrooms, workplaces, and communities. Confidence grows into leadership and resilience becomes perseverance. One experience can shape the direction of a young person's life.

An investment in Outward Bound Canada is more than a gift to one young person. It helps strengthen communities and contributes to a more resilient Canada.”

— Josephine Baran, Executive Director, Outward Bound Canada