



Wellness & Learning Initiatives

Below 18 - Youth Community Connection

The **Below 18 - Youth Community Connection** is a virtual support group intended for youth 9-17 years of age from various backgrounds to have a space to connect within a peer-to-peer support model; we understand and respect the notion that when we're young, our friends have a big influence on us. They have a lot of say about the choices we make, what music and clothing we may enjoy, and also, the activities we engage in. By channeling the power of friendship, connection and support, the **Below 18 - Youth Community Connection** group encourages healthy lifestyles and increases resiliency for youth who need guidance and a helping hand.

This group aims to provide emotional support to help address the challenges and transitions we each can experience as we grow up. Designed to increase positive connection, strengths, and competence, we create a safe and healthy space to share, mirror, and model prosocial behaviours, and normalize the communication of our own mental health and wellness with others. This professionally supported and participant-led group will provide youth with opportunities to:

- Practice and Learn skills of Compassion for Self and Other
- Build and Bridge the skills necessary to Create, Maintain, and Sustain Healthy Relationships
- Build capacities to find their innate value and create good lives - individually and collectively
- Learn tools to support and create lasting systematic change within our communities.

Moving towards a more specialized mode of support, the **Below 18-Youth Community Connection** is a peer-to-peer support resource for members of the community to get to know and support each another, learn from professionals how to navigate everyday challenges, and connect with long-term support resources. This group will be peer-led and facilitated by a mental health professional. This is not counselling or a therapy group, but those with individual needs are encouraged to talk to the facilitator after the group.

Join us as we endeavour to **Connect, Create, and Cultivate** healthier and more equitable communities for all.

When do I need to register for a support group?

Community Connection Group Dates:

Mondays from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. EST

Check our monthly calendar for the start date.

Registration Dates

There is no registration required.

What is needed: A device with internet access is required to participate in the exchanges and discussions.

Microphone and camera accessibility is encouraged, although use during group sessions is optional.

Email our Wellness and Learning Initiatives team at wellness@guard.me for more information.