

**ACTION PLAN:**  
**Creating Opportunities for Youth**

# **ALLAboard:**

**Manitoba's Poverty Reduction and  
Social Inclusion Strategy**





# All Aboard Action Plan: Creating Opportunities for Youth

Young people in Manitoba should have high hopes for a prosperous future – rich in relationships and rewarding at work. Helping young people to make a successful transition to adulthood is the focus of this action plan. Sometimes, this transition can be difficult. Success requires a comprehensive understanding of what young people need, the barriers they face and the tools that will prepare them for happy, healthy and satisfying lives in Manitoba. Young people are society's foundation for the future, so they must be the primary beneficiaries of society's resources.

This action plan, focused on youth, is one of seven under *All Aboard: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy*. It envisions a future where all Manitobans – young people included – are connected to their communities, participating in the economy and contributing to our province. For the most part, our young people are vibrant contributors who benefit from a community they help to shape. Statistics Canada's *Canadian Community Health Survey* found that 73.4 per cent of Manitobans between the ages of 12 and 19 reported a somewhat or very strong sense of belonging to their local community in 2013. Building on this success, our strategy targets those on the periphery of society, young people who have been dealt an unfair hand or who are ill-prepared to share equally in the opportunities available in Manitoba.

We want Manitoba youth to transition to adulthood with a strong sense of self, a clear picture of how they fit into their community and a firm understanding of how to turn hopes and dreams into lives well-lived. These outcomes require good physical and mental health, which come from the support and guidance of parents, elders, teachers and coaches, access to recreational opportunities, safe communities and creative outlets. It also requires our young people to have the academic and life skills to become well-rounded adults who will thrive in the labour force.

**In April 2012, the Manitoba government released its four-year (2012-2016) *All Aboard: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy* which focuses on seven priority areas. There is an action plan for each priority area:**

- 1. Building Blocks for Employment**
- 2. Targeted Supports for Those Most in Need**
- 3. Food Security**
- 4. Housing**
- 5. Closing the Gap for Aboriginal Peoples in Manitoba**
- 6. Creating Opportunities for Youth**
- 7. Early Childhood Development and Parenting Supports**

For our children to successfully transition from childhood to adolescence and then adulthood, they need respectful guidance, nutritious food and a secure home. Under the All Aboard Strategy, three action plans will address these critical needs: housing, food security and early childhood development and parenting supports. This plan identifies actions to ensure that young people facing barriers of low income and/or marginalization are on the right trajectory to succeed and participate fully in society as adults.

Unfortunately, some young Manitobans and their families face barriers rooted in poverty. A lack of financial resources may compromise a family's ability to provide youth with opportunities for enrichment. It may make some options seem unrealistic or result in sacrifices that have lasting effects. Some youth may feel very disconnected from their families and carry adverse childhood experiences and trauma into adulthood.

**“Adolescence involves a number of transitions, including new experiences in the labour force, the development of autonomous and responsible relationships with others and the formation of self-concepts and identities. Families and communities help prepare adolescents for these transitions and teens become increasingly active participants in this preparation process.”<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Healthy Child Manitoba. *Report on Manitoba's Children and Youth*. Government of Manitoba. 2012.

At the extreme, some youth become involved with the justice system. Some are placed in the care of Child and Family Services agencies and others grapple with finding their place in families that struggle with addictions and/or mental or physical disabilities. Living in poverty is considered to be the greatest health risk for adolescents. It is closely related to obesity, injury, high-risk behaviors, low self-rated health and physical and mental illness.<sup>2</sup>

Young Manitobans are usually living in poverty for one of two reasons: their families live in poverty or they suddenly find themselves in the adult world without the necessary skills to thrive. In 2011, 17.4 per cent of persons under the age of 18 lived in poverty. This means that approximately 46,000 Manitoba children (those under the age of 18) and their families struggle with poverty on a daily basis. Some young adults struggle to live independently, including some of those leaving the care of Child and Family Services agencies (usually at age 18), starting families of their own, living with a disability or moving to urban centres for opportunities and alternatives unavailable in their home communities. These youth are at increased risk of living in deep poverty.

In 2011, Manitobans living in families where the primary income earner was under the age of 25 faced a rate of poverty of 31.9 per cent. That same year, the average income of these vulnerable families was 55.0 per cent below Market Basket Measure low-income thresholds.<sup>3</sup>

Many Manitoba youth live with the hardship of poverty and the indignity of discrimination. This is most prevalent in the labour force. In 2011, the average unemployment rate for all Manitobans aged 15 to 24 years was 13.3 per cent, compared to First Nations Manitobans, who experienced 34.7 per cent unemployment.<sup>4</sup> Prolonged unemployment discourages participation in the labour force and employment is an important route out of poverty. In 2011, 19.2 per cent and 47.0 per cent of First Nation and visible minority youth, respectively, were employed, compared to the Manitoba average, 54.4 per cent.<sup>5</sup> The need to break down structural barriers to labour force participation continues.

In March 2013, the Manitoba government held public consultations about the All Aboard Strategy and youth and adults spoke passionately about the effects of poverty and social exclusion on young people. Youth were well represented at consultation sessions and 30 per cent of respondents who completed an opinion survey were under the age of 30. We heard that young people would benefit from actions to:

1. promote health and get youth active and engaged
2. get youth educated
3. get youth employed

Consultation participants felt that successful youth programs would be flexible and tailored to meet the specific needs and life situations of individual youth (ex: gang-involved youth, teenage mothers, young newcomers, Manitobans with Aboriginal ancestry, youth transitioning out of care, and rural and northern youth).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada. *Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics*. Government of Canada. 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

# 1. Actions to promote health and get youth active and engaged

Youth need access to quality programming that enables them to be active and engaged. Recreational, art, sport, music and cultural programs provide opportunities for youth to participate in activities that contribute to better health, improved educational outcomes and enhanced personal development through improved social skills and confidence.

These activities give youth positive alternatives and constructive ways to spend time after school and on weekends, while putting them on a path toward reaching their full potentials.

Youth transitioning out of care, young parents, homeless youth, youth with disabilities and others with increased vulnerability need access to comprehensive supports to gain stability and achieve their goals.

All Manitoba youth deserve access to these opportunities, but low-income youth face many barriers to participation that go beyond a lack of financial resources. These range from a lack of available programming within their neighbourhoods or transportation to/from program sites, too little family support and awareness of available opportunities. The Manitoba government is taking action to address these barriers to ensure that more youth – particularly low-income youth – are able to access opportunities to be active and engaged in their communities.

**“I work with Aboriginal youth at an after-school program – the current system is not flexible enough to respond to the constant trauma and chaos that youth face on a weekly basis. Access to healthy food and stable, safe housing would make a world of difference to success in education.”**

- All Aboard: What We Heard: Key Findings from the March 2013 All Aboard Consultations.

## Actions in progress:

- supporting Recreation Opportunities for Children to link children and youth in three regions (Eastman, Central, Winnipeg) to opportunities tailored to individual interests, while helping their families overcome barriers to participation (ex: costs, transportation and child care)
- enhancing youth recreation programs for Winnipeg’s inner-city to ensure that opportunities for inner-city youth are comparable to those available to youth in suburban neighbourhoods. Funding supports the City of Winnipeg’s efforts to improve the quality, diversity and accessibility of recreation for children and youth in the inner-city by increasing supervised programming and facility hours, introducing new programs at designated community recreation centres and encouraging youth participation in program design and implementation. Current initiatives include:
  - supporting the Sports Programs in Inner-City Neighbourhoods initiative, which eliminates barriers and increases opportunities for children (aged 6 to 17) to participate in sports
  - continuing the Community Art Initiative, supporting the artistic development of students and communities with limited access to arts education
  - continuing the Youth Mentorship and Leadership Development Program (ex: Rec and Read Program), connecting university students with high school students with Aboriginal ancestry to plan and deliver after-school drop-in programs for early-years students at inner-city schools or recreation centres

- supporting Community Youth Recreation Fund projects that increase the availability, quality and accessibility of recreation programming for youth in *Neighbourhoods Alive!* communities (outside of Winnipeg)
  - connecting with organizations that deliver specialized, community-based recreation programs for youth with unique needs and disabilities such as FASD, by creating opportunities for growth in areas of self-esteem, social connections and leadership skills
  - administering the *Neighbourhoods Alive!* Localized Improvement Fund for Tomorrow, providing support to after-school projects such as the Marlene Street Resource Centre Boys' Club, (located in a Manitoba Housing complex) as well as the Youth Co-operative of Services Project, helping Manitoba youth aged 12 to 17 learn how to start, operate and govern their own co-operative businesses over the summer and build a stronger connection to their local communities
  - supporting the After School Network of youth-serving organizations to strengthen the delivery of after-school and summer programming across Manitoba through professional development and by encouraging co-ordination and collaboration on program development and delivery models
  - partnering with schools, professional organizations, business and community organizations to implement the After School Leaders Program, providing high school students from high-needs communities with after-school career exploration opportunities in fields such as the arts, sports, communications, science and technology
  - continuing support for the Growing Active Kids program, a partnership with The Winnipeg Foundation and Employment and Social Development Canada, which awards grants to charitable organizations to provide cultural, educational or recreational opportunities to children and youth living in and around low-income housing complexes
  - partnering with schools, professional organizations, business and community organizations to implement the After School Leaders Program, providing high school students from high-needs communities with after-school career exploration opportunities in fields such as the arts, sports, communications, science and technology
  - delivering the Northern Youth Empowerment Initiative, which supports programs that create community-based opportunities that are wholly or partially youth-led and/or youth-driven, build self-esteem, empower youth, and support personal growth and development
  - strengthening Lighthouses programming – Manitoba currently supports programming in 71 sites across Manitoba by offering youth in high-needs neighbourhoods access to regular sport, art, music and homework club activities. Programming is organized by local youth and community members and is offered after school hours and on weekends.
  - supporting community-based organizations that offer youth services related to gang prevention, intervention or exit options
  - partnering with stakeholders that are active in the Gang Action Interagency Network, which is taking action to address the gang problem in Winnipeg, by building on research and current practices as well as developing the resources needed both to prevent youth from joining gangs and to help youth get out of gangs
- 

- administering the Youth Justice Program, helping youth who are involved in the justice system and may have FASD but have not been diagnosed. The program provides support for diagnosis and takes FASD into account when sentencing youth. It also provides supports during post-sentencing processes and helps young offenders access appropriate services to help stabilize them in the community.
- supporting Big Brothers Big Sisters to expand in-school mentoring programs in rural communities and to continue the Ototema young offenders mentoring program for youth (aged 7 to 18)
- supporting agencies and professionals working with adolescent parents through the Adolescent Parent Interagency Network to provide support and advocacy for young parents who have increased vulnerability because of the responsibility of parenting
- partnering with the General Child and Family Services Authority and community agencies to launch Building Futures (two-year pilot), providing services to Manitoba youth in care (aged 16 to 25) who are transitioning out of foster care with access to a network of mentors and professionals that offer emotional support, personal counselling, money management and debt counselling, in addition to guidance and support in accessing educational opportunities and job preparation training
- continued support for the Spectrum Connections program, delivered by FASD Life's Journey Inc., providing outreach and support services to Winnipeg youth with FASD, helping them live as independently as possible in the community
- sustained support for Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY) by providing Manitoba Housing units (interim housing for homeless youth) and funding homeless outreach services that connect homeless youth to appropriate housing, health and social services
- supporting the Communities That Care community mobilization process in three sites (Elmwood, Swan Valley and Sagkeeng First Nation), involving youth as active participants in the needs assessment, planning and delivery of community-scale prevention programming focusing on six main areas: delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, school drop-out, drug and alcohol use, and depression and/or suicide
- engaging all schools in Manitoba through the Healthy Schools Initiative, designed to promote the physical, emotional and social health of school communities. This approach is rooted in comprehensive school health, focussing on healthy eating, mental health, physical activity, sexual health, safety and injury prevention, substance abuse and addictions
- supporting Project CHOICES (Winnipeg), a brief intervention providing girls and young women who are sexually-active and regularly drinking alcohol with information and individualized feedback to reduce or stop alcohol use, avoid unplanned pregnancy and encourage healthy choices
- collaborating with partners to address the health service needs of teens through Teen Clinics in schools and community health centres in high-needs and underserved areas of Manitoba. Teen Clinics provide youth with accessible health care and information that promotes positive physical, sexual and mental health practices and awareness
- supporting Klinik's Teen Talk and Teen Talk North programs, delivering workshops to youth in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba including First Nations communities about sexuality, communication, mental health, substance use, body image and teen dating violence. The programs also provide training for youth to become peer leaders. Teen Talk North supports capacity-building in northern communities by providing training to local service providers to deliver Teen Talk content and programming.

- raising awareness among youth about healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships:
  - continuing a public print and web awareness campaign called Stop the Violence, providing information, tools and resources about abuse, dating violence, domestic and family violence for youth and adults, with specific materials for LGBTTTQ youth
  - supporting agencies, through the Family Violence Prevention Program, to provide workshops to children and youth across Manitoba about healthy relationships and bullying
  - funding the Sexual Assault Discussion Initiative program of the Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre which promotes the prevention of dating violence through workshops and presentations about healthy relationships for students
- supporting LGBTTTQ youth through amendments to *The Public Schools Act* which provide for the establishment of Gay-Straight Alliances upon request of students and the implementation of respect for human diversity policies in all schools. LGBTTTQ initiatives provide counselling, peer support and social groups, public education and outreach services and gender identity-related supports and services through agencies and programs such as the Rainbow Resource Centre, the Sexuality Education Resource Centre's LGBTTTQ program (Brandon), Klinik Community Health Centre's Transgender Health Program, the Health Sciences Centre's Gender Dysphoria Assessment and Action for Youth (GDAAY) initiative and Manitoba's annual Gay-Straight Alliance Conference: *StandOUT!*
- implementing the MYMB program which builds confidence and self-worth by encouraging young Manitobans from a variety of cultures to work together to break down ethnic barriers, eliminate stereotypes and develop respect for each other
- supporting and delivering the Youth Health Survey (for students in grades 7 to 12) in all Manitoba schools, in partnership with regional health authorities and school divisions, which provides information on a variety of physical and mental health behaviors at the school, divisional, regional and provincial levels to support policy and planning
- working with regional and community partners to prevent youth suicide and promote mental health in schools and alternative education settings throughout Manitoba, including the development of the *Best Practices in School-based Suicide Prevention* guide, a made-in-Manitoba education and awareness video for youth and a website with regional level supports for school administrators, staff, parents and students

## 2014 and beyond:

- continue to support recreational, art, sport, music and cultural programming for youth in high-needs communities
- continue to expand the After School Leaders program, providing more program options for a greater number of youth in high-needs communities
- launch a cross-departmental Children and Youth Mental Health Framework to optimize the mental health of Manitoba children and youth
- continue to collect Youth Health Survey data from Manitoba students (in grades 7 to 12) every four years (ex: next survey is planned for 2016) to provide valuable insight into health trends of children and youth over time and inform future policy and programming

**"I am currently working with youth, at-risk youth and teenage moms to educate and enable them to make positive decisions about their own health through nutrition, physical activity and positive attitude. But, I emphasize, a healthy family connection is most important as parents are our first teachers."**

- 2013 All Aboard Survey Respondent

## 2. Actions to get youth educated

The ability to provide for one's self grows with education. A strong academic foundation is fundamental to both the transition to post-secondary learning and the labour force. Employment in all sectors requires literacy and numeracy skills. We know that too many youth are being left behind. In 2013, Manitoba's high school graduation rate was 85.3 per cent, an increase of 14.2 per cent over the prior decade. In spite of this increase, there are still a number of students who are not getting a high school diploma which many consider a minimum in the job market.

The Manitoba Centre for Health Policy has found that students are much less likely to graduate if they were involved with Child and Family Services agencies, and/or were born to teen moms, and/or had families on income assistance.<sup>6</sup> The Manitoba government is taking action to improve high school and post-secondary graduation rates, particularly for at-risk youth, while also supporting students who want to transition directly from high school to employment. As a result, more youth are developing the skills and knowledge required to get good jobs and participate in society as informed citizens.

**"Education is one of the most powerful instruments of social change and we need to build on models that are working for those living in poverty."**

- 2013 All Aboard Survey Respondent

### Actions in progress:

- embedding the Community Schools Partnership Initiative in legislation and creating regional clusters to help schools in communities with low socio-economic outcomes to form community partnerships, mobilize resources and access training to provide students with the best possible chances to succeed

- investing in the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba to help support delivery of school nourishment programs (breakfast and snack), improving health and the learning potential of students which leads to greater academic success
- committing more than \$4 million annually to the Bright Futures Fund, enabling community organizations to work with partner schools to establish programs to improve high school graduation rates and increase access to, and retention in, post-secondary education for disadvantaged, under-represented and low-income students
- partnering to deliver the Shine On initiative, helping inner-city and high school students with Aboriginal ancestry that have barriers to education to access school-based, after-school, weekend and summer camp activities that build confidence and develop the skills needed to succeed in post-secondary education. The initiative aims to increase high-school graduation rates and college and university enrolment.
- funding the Intensive Newcomer Support Grant, which provides school divisions with financial resources for newcomer English as an Additional Language learners (in grades 6 to 12), who have disrupted education or low literacy due to lived experiences of conflict, situations of poverty or cultural factors and are at risk of educational failure or dropping out of school
- continuing to partner with the Paul Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative to implement its Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship Program which helps to strengthen students' business, mathematics, marketing and leadership skills

<sup>6</sup> Santos R, Brownell M, Ekuma O, Mayer T, Soodeen R. *The Early Development Instrument (EDI) in Manitoba: Linking Socioeconomic Adversity and Biological Vulnerability at Birth to Children's Outcomes at Age 5*. Manitoba Centre for Health Policy. 2012.

- providing the Learning to Age 18 Co-ordinator Grants to help school divisions with programming that encourages employment and the development of life skills for youth who are at-risk of dropping out of school; key to keeping students engaged is finding paths to success that work for them, either through the traditional classroom, alternative programming, apprenticeships or a technical-vocational setting
- continuing to support a Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre / Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning Transition Project designed to help students in First Nations schools transition successfully to public high schools
- supporting Educating for Action, a pilot project in Thompson that provides integrated programming for students (in grades 7 to 9) that aims to strengthen literacy and numeracy skills, incorporate a cultural development component, enhance student engagement, promote career planning and increase exposure to post-secondary education to improve high school graduation rates and post-secondary participation rates, particularly for students with Aboriginal ancestry
- investing in programs addressing summer learning loss, helping to narrow the opportunity gap for students living in low income, including:
  - Community Schools Investigators (CSI) Summer Learning Enrichment Program, providing youth with full-day academic and recreational programming throughout the summer
  - University College of the North's summer learning enrichment program (offered in The Pas and Flin Flon) to keep youth engaged in learning during the summer
  - Frontier College's Aboriginal Summer Literacy Camps, offered in First Nations communities
- implementing the Tell Them From Me survey across the province to students (grades 4 to 12) at 550 schools to learn more about factors related to student engagement including the prevalence of bullying, when and where bullying occurs, and the coping strategies used when bullying occurs. The online student survey provides valuable information for shaping effective learning strategies, reducing barriers to learning, and ensuring that schools offer the safest and most welcoming environment for all students
- enacted the *Public Schools Amendment Act (Safe and Inclusive Schools)* to protect all students from bullying and to create safer, more inclusive schools
- working with educational institutions and community partners to develop *Neighbourhoods Alive!* training initiatives in designated communities (Winnipeg, Thompson and Brandon) that are accredited by high school or post-secondary institutions and allow learners to work toward future diploma or degree programs
- supporting adult learning centres to help young adults complete high school education to access employment opportunities and post-secondary education

**“I think the Community Schools model should be expanded and incorporated into all schools across Manitoba. A more holistic approach with our youth and inclusion with their families is a key factor in building healthy communities.”**

- 2013 All Aboard Survey Respondent

- establishing a new off-campus education centre in Selkirk (formerly the Red River North Regional Library), a partnership between Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning and the Lord Selkirk School Division, which offers course credits to students (aged 14 to 18) who may be experiencing difficulty in a regular classroom setting or need extra supports
- continuing to improve the affordability of post-secondary education for low-income students through the BUILDING Foundations bursary fund. The fund provides nine \$1,000 bursaries to post-secondary students living in subsidized rental housing units in Manitoba or receiving a rental subsidy funded by Manitoba Housing
- supporting ACCESS programs, which provide academic, personal and financial supports to Manitobans who, due to geographic, financial or academic barriers, would be unable to easily access post-secondary education (ex: northerners, women, immigrants, refugees, persons with Aboriginal ancestry, single parents, people with disabilities and residents of Winnipeg's inner-city)
- introduce new initiatives to strengthen Aboriginal education at R.B. Russell School in Winnipeg's inner city, including support for fundamental skills development in reading, writing and math
- implement a new Quality Fund that will help school divisions improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for students
- build on lessons learned from the Student Success and School Matters projects to help more schools implement approaches and supports that address barriers to youth staying in school and increase student success
- continue to support schools and community-based organizations to help youth access and succeed in post-secondary education through initiatives like ACCESS programs
- support youth in care/formerly in care who are receiving tuition waivers at post-secondary institutions across Manitoba by providing them with financial assistance to purchase computers and/or books
- implement revised Guidelines for the Aboriginal Academic Achievement grant provided to school divisions focusing on improved literacy and numeracy outcomes for students with Aboriginal ancestry, as a foundation to improving student academic achievement

## 2014 and beyond:

- increase support for child nutrition programming for students in low-income schools, delivered in partnership with the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba
- continue to support schools and community-based organizations that are working to ensure that vulnerable youth stay-in-school, thereby improving graduation rates and post-secondary enrolment for low-income, disadvantaged and under-represented students

## Youth Living in Rural and Northern Communities

Young Manitobans in rural and remote areas benefit from Manitoba's natural splendor. Many live in dynamic communities with stronger family and community bonds than may be found in large urban centres. In fact, rural Manitobans regularly report a stronger sense of local community belonging than other Manitobans. Youth outside of Winnipeg, generally, report a strong/very strong sense of local community belonging more often than Winnipeg youth.<sup>7</sup>

Yet, young Manitobans in remote areas face unique barriers to education, enrichment activities and meaningful employment. Geography is a significant barrier to accessing services and supports, leaving some young people to enter adulthood without the skills that lead to rich and rewarding lives. The most direct route to prosperity for remote youth is through the school system. Many Aboriginal youth reside within First Nations communities, on-reserve, where education funding is the responsibility of the federal government. On a per-pupil basis, these schools are asked to deliver more with less. Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning estimates that the average amount spent per student on-reserve is approximately \$2,000 to \$3,000 per pupil less than provincial per-pupil expenditure.<sup>8</sup> On-reserve schools should be funded equitably relative to those in other Manitoba communities. A focused approach to supporting students with Aboriginal ancestry, helping them to become successful learners (both in high school and in post-secondary education) requires no less.

Sparse population distribution, vast distances and inclement weather conspire against organized sports, after-school programming, the arts and entry-level employment. Parents and young Manitobans are trying to overcome these barriers. The Manitoba government appreciates that it must meet these efforts with targeted actions that get rural and northern youth active, engaged, educated and employed. Examples of these actions (described further elsewhere in this action plan) include:

- supporting the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sports Achievement Centre North program, providing youth (aged 14 to 20) from Pauingassi, Shamattawa, Lac Brochet, Pine Creek, Camperville and Duck Bay with training opportunities so they can lead after-school sport and recreational programming for other youth
- delivering the Northern Youth Empowerment Initiative, supporting opportunities for youth that build self-esteem and empowerment, personal growth and development
- supporting Klinik's Teen Talk North program, providing youth in rural and northern Manitoba (including First Nations communities) with workshops about sexuality, communication, mental health, substance use, body image and teen dating violence; program training is also available so local service providers can deliver this service
- encouraging summer learning retention through Frontier College's Aboriginal Summer Literacy Camps in First Nation communities and University College of the North's summer learning enrichment program
- piloting Education for Action in Thompson to improve graduation and post-secondary participation rates
- emphasizing the participation of northerners and persons with Aboriginal ancestry in ACCESS programming, supporting those that would be unable to easily access post-secondary education due to geographic, financial or academic barriers
- partnering to deliver the Northern Aboriginal Youth Internship Program, providing students in The Pas and Moose Lake with monitored work internships, cultural and leisure activities leading to summer job opportunities
- helping at-risk youth return to school and/or looking for jobs through integrated service programs operating in Dauphin, Selkirk, Stonewall and Northern Manitoba
- offering Work2It in The Pas, providing high-risk youth with multiple barriers with employment opportunities to gain pre-employment and job maintenance skills, while developing healthy lifestyles, leading to employment opportunities or further training
- supporting Partners With Youth (rural), helping young Manitobans (aged 18 to 29) on income assistance and/or facing multiple barriers to employment, gain access to project-based training and employment initiatives

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada. *Canadian Community Health Survey*. CANSIM Table 105-0501. Available at: [www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/](http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/)

<sup>8</sup> Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning.

### 3. Actions to get youth employed

Youth need access to jobs, training and apprenticeship experiences that provide enough income to meet basic needs and to help them participate fully in community life. Young Manitobans who want to work face higher rates of unemployment than older Manitobans. In 2013, the unemployment rate for young Manitobans aged 15 to 19 years was nearly three times greater than for youth aged 20 to 24 years and much higher than the Manitoba average for all persons aged 15 years and over.

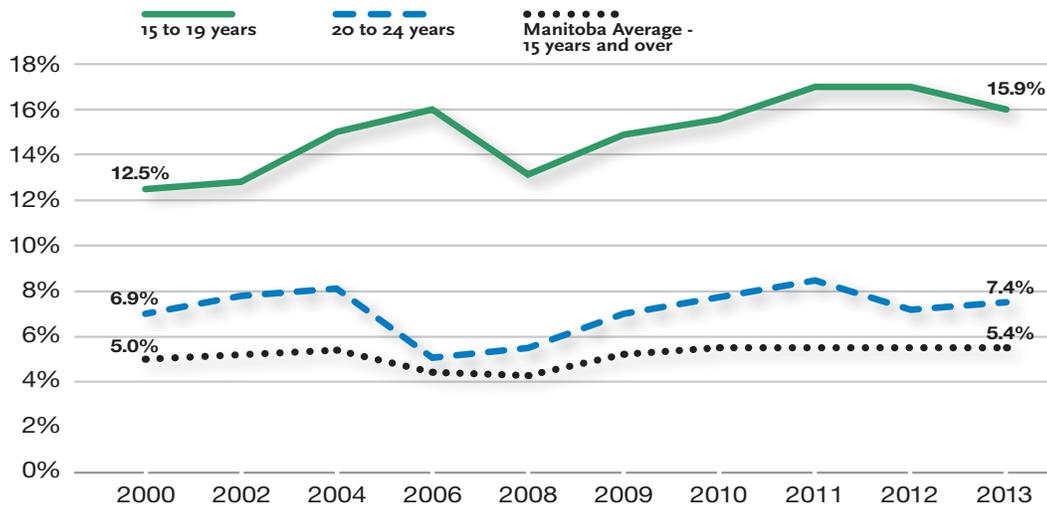
This action plan includes measures to equip young people with the tools they need to participate in training and employment opportunities so that they can become self-sufficient and active contributors to the Manitoba labour force. Many of these measures complement the actions laid out in the *All Aboard Action Plan on Sustainable Employment and a Stronger Labour Market*. Some of the following actions specifically target youth with multiple barriers to employment. They aim to provide a comprehensive package of employment development resources and supports that provide the hard and soft life skills that enable vulnerable youth to address barriers and become economically productive people, employees and entrepreneurs.

**“I will know that my community is healthy, that poverty has been reduced, and people feel socially included when I see:**

- **more high-risk kids finishing school and graduating**
- **more jobs made available to youth**
- **more young people are graduating from high school and heading to post-secondary education**
- **more young people are working in skilled trades and professions”**

- 2013 All Aboard Survey Respondent

**Unemployment Rate (%), Manitoba, Age Group, 2000 to 2013 (select years)**



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey. Government of Canada. 2014.

## Actions in progress:

- providing support for the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sports Achievement Centre North program, providing youth (aged 14 to 20) from Pauingassi, Shamattawa, Lac Brochet, Pine Creek, Camperville and Duck Bay with training opportunities that enable them to lead after-school sport and recreational programming for other youth in their communities
- supporting the Careers in the Arts Mentorship program that provides opportunities for youth (aged 16 to 24) to be mentored by representatives of arts-related careers
- providing curriculum and resources for schools to offer career development courses for students (in grades 9 to 12)
- partnering to deliver the Northern Aboriginal Youth Internship Program that provides high school students (in grades 11 and 12) in The Pas and Moose Lake with access to cultural and leisure activities alongside internship experiences, leading to summer jobs
- providing summer jobs for youth (aged 15 to 29) through the Green Team Program, including a variety of community development projects that employ youth while improving neighbourhoods, promoting community involvement and developing young leaders
- supporting the High School Apprenticeship Program (HSAP), which allows youth (ages 16 and older) to start their apprenticeship training while still in high school, by combining regular high school instruction with paid, part-time and on-the-job training; participants may also be eligible for the HSAP Financial Incentive that provides a tuition exemption when the students is transitioning into full-time, post-secondary apprenticeship training
- offering the Student Apprentice Work Experience Program to provide high school students that have participated in the High School Apprenticeship Program with work experience through public works contracts undertaken by the Province of Manitoba
- delivering the Career Options for Students with Disabilities program, providing high school and post-secondary students with disabilities full and part-time employment with Manitoba government departments, and piloting a program to extend employment (short-term and entry-level) and transition participants from student-specific positions to regular civil service jobs
- helping Winnipeg-based, at-risk immigrant youth (in grades 10 to 12; priority is given to grade 12 students) to find career-oriented employment through the Youth Employment for Newcomers program that provides job skills, training, mentorship and work experience placements
- working with the Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres and the federal government to support Partners for Careers that provides free job placement services and help with resumé writing, interview and job search skills for thousands of job-seekers with Aboriginal ancestry coming out of high school, college or university
- supporting Partners With Youth (urban and rural) that helps Manitoba youth (aged 18 to 29) that are on income assistance and/or face multiple barriers to employment by providing opportunities to participate in project-based training and employment initiatives. Participants benefit from vocational counselling, improved employability, direct employment placements or preparation for further training or job search.
- helping at-risk youth (aged 16 to 29) through Youth Build, providing life-skills training as well as job training and pre-apprenticeship opportunities in home renovation. The program includes both paid vocational and unpaid academic components where participants can earn credits toward high school graduation or move into other vocational training programs
- supporting Work2It, which provides high-risk youth in Winnipeg and The Pas, who have multiple barriers to employment, with opportunities to gain life skills, pre-employment training, labour market knowledge, positive leisure activities, monitored work experience and employment support. The program targets youth that have had contact with a Child and Family Services agency and/or the justice system.

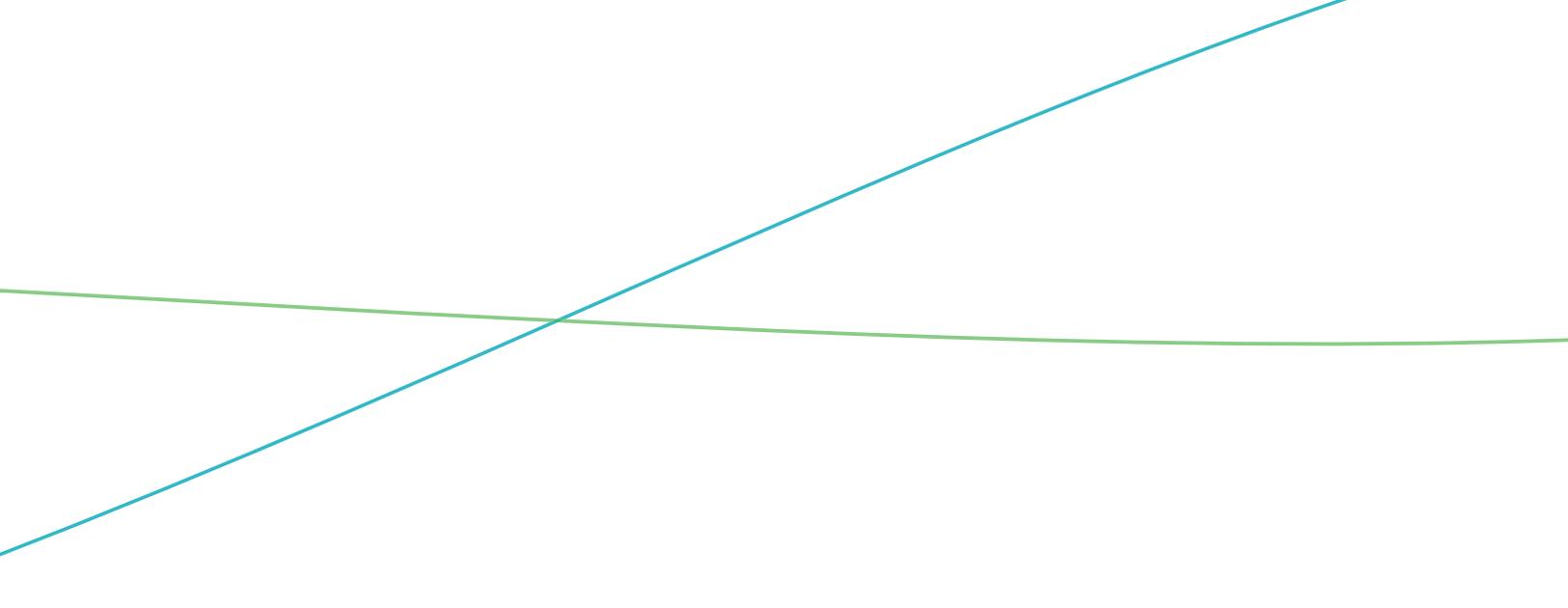
- delivering integrated service programs that bring community and family resources together to help at-risk youth return to school and/or find jobs; teams currently operating in Selkirk, Dauphin, Stonewall and Northern Manitoba
- supporting the TRY Project VIP Program, which provides young offenders (ages 16 to 19) with paid opportunities to develop life, employment and job search skills leading to employment, further training or a return to school
- offering Help Eliminate Auto Theft, providing youth (aged 15 to 21) who have been involved with auto theft, access to recreation and cultural activities, as well as employment preparation activities, such as skill development and work experience
- creating 100 new apprenticeship training seats for skilled trades, which give Manitoba youth access to more training and employment opportunities, as part of the Manitoba Government's commitment to grow the workforce by 75,000 by 2020
- supporting the development of youth co-ops across Manitoba through the Co-operative Development Assistance Program and *Neighbourhoods Alive!*
- helping Manitobans access identification – an important tool for getting a job – through the Employment and Income Assistance program and in partnership with Citizens Bridge and Manitoba Public Insurance
- continue to support initiatives that provide training and employment opportunities for at-risk immigrant youth, youth with multiple barriers, youth with Aboriginal ancestry and youth that have had contact with Child and Family Services and/or the justice system
- introduce the Gateway to Apprenticeship program, which will include new pilot initiatives in partnership with industry and labour organizations, including targeted programs to develop trades skills for youth
- implement a new Career Development Fund that will help school divisions address the need for more responsive career planning and skills training in schools, including options for students to gain credits related to career development and to explore career development as part of their regular classroom studies
- implement a new Skill Build Equipment Fund, along with a new Skill Build Shops Fund (capital), to help schools provide technical vocational education for high school students
- launch the Transforming Futures pilot program in fall 2014 at Red River College (RRC), providing 20 individuals with intellectual disabilities with hands-on learning in career exploration, essential employability skills and the choice of full integration into RRC programming

## 2014 and beyond:

- introduce the Morningstar Program (formerly known as the North Stars Program) at R.B. Russell School to provide students (in grades 9 to 12) with access to integrated academic and social service delivery supports, including more intensive interventions (ex: housing, justice, medical support) for students that are particularly vulnerable

## Moving Forward

The Manitoba government believes that ongoing community consultation will be critical to ensuring that we create the right opportunities for Manitoba youth so that they can successfully transition to adulthood. A community advisory committee will monitor the implementation of this action plan and advise the Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities on existing and future actions.



## **ALL**Aboard:

**Manitoba's Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy**

**Available in alternate formats upon request.**