



2024 Impact Report



The year in review

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support. Your generosity has profoundly transformed the lives of the vulnerable youth we serve. As the saying goes, youth don't care how much you know until they know how much you care and your commitment to our mission shows these young individuals that they are valued and believed in, and it makes a significant difference in their lives. Thank you for being a vital part of our journey and for helping us create lasting, positive change in our community.

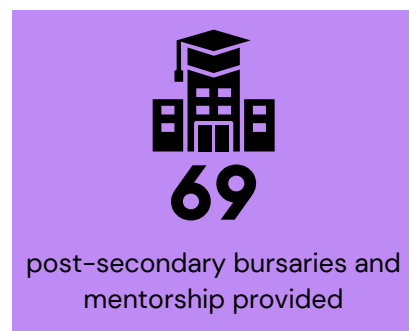
Mel Millward, President

Key accomplishments in 2024 included:

- Welcoming 44 new Year 1 participants this summer
- A successful AIM group mentorship pilot, engaging 41 Grade 11 students
- Welcoming Chef Robb to our staff team: this summer, he prepared over 5,000 meals with the assistance of Donavin, a Trails alum
- Employing 43 Trails Alumni as Program Facilitators, Facilitators-in-Training, Facilities Assistant, Kitchen Assistant, and three full-time staff
- Another successful year of Boost Camp, our staff training initiative that saw 57 certifications earned, including Hiking & Paddling Field Leaders, Bronze Cross, Wilderness Advanced First Aid, Non-Violent Communication, and Low Ropes training
- 10 Impact Groups with 158 Volunteers assisting with the maintenance of our 143-acre site
- 10 Events and Campaigns supported by donors like you to raise much-needed funds for Trails



Impact & Outcomes





Resilience in Action: Growth shines through adversity

Written by: Alex Zovic, Program Director

This summer, I co-led the 2024 LIT trip in Chiniguchi, where I experienced firsthand that true strength emerges not from everything running smoothly, but from overcoming challenges and showing resilience. Our canoe trips are a unique time to see how participants have grown over their time at Trails. Particularly this year, when we decided to remove interventions for Aaron and Odessa, two of our participants who had exhibited significant improvements in their behaviour and attitudes.

I was preparing for storms, waist-deep mud, and long portages. However, the trip took an unexpected turn on the first full day. I was struck by over 100 mosquito bites, which impaired my sight and breathing, requiring an emergency helicopter evacuation. Despite the high-stress situation, Aaron and Odessa calmly took charge. They paddled me to the evacuation spot and reassured the group that my health was the priority.

Both Aaron and Odessa individually checked in on me—one guided me through a mindfulness exercise while the other asked supportive questions. These were skills I had taught them over the past four years, and seeing them apply these techniques with such confidence was deeply rewarding. They also helped my co-leader ensure the rest of the group was settled before the helicopter arrived.

This experience was a testament to the Four Seasons, Four Years, For Life program's success in challenging and equipping young leaders that contribute to their personal and group well-being.



What happens when a trip needs to be evacuated?

Depending on the location of the group, Trails looks at all feasible options, including getting another leader to the site, or bringing everyone home. In this case, the rest of the group began a slow evacuation; meaning, they weren't taken by helicopter, but instead canoed and portaged a direct route to the nearest possible pick up location. While disappointed that the trip came to an abrupt end, their Trails session was not over! Instead, our participants camped on-site at Trails, volunteered at a nearby pig sanctuary and explored the community around Trails Lakeside.

Empower & Inspire:

Creating impact together



"Thanks to Trails, I have become the best version of myself, and know that I can achieve anything I want in life."

Jainy, Year 4 Participant

"The bursary has allowed me to focus more on my future, my career, my lifelong ambitions, and be forward-thinking"

Andy, Trails Bursary Recipient

"I've seen my daughter and son grow out of their shell and become more confident and have goals that at first they thought were not possible. Trails is a place where they don't only take care of the children in the program, but also their families. Words of 'Thank You' will never be enough to express the gratitude I feel for the support that was given to my kids. The experiences and memories and skills learned at Trails will live with them forever."

Sabrina, Parent of 2 Trails Graduates



92%

of participants report that Trails has developed their self-confidence



85%

of participants report improved communication and conflict resolution skills



99%

of participants graduate from high school, compared to 55% of their peers



92%

of Trails alumni enrol in post-secondary school, compared to 45% of their peers