

BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES

YEAR 2024-25

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS 2024-25

PREPARED FOR:
THE HURON-PERTH
CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL
BOARD (HPCDSB)



**UNLOCKING
STUDENT
FUTURES**

PREPARED BY:

facile
Independent Facilitation



BACKGROUND

It has been another incredible year of partnership for Facile Perth and the HPCDSB. We are delighted to report that our third year has been our most productive year yet!

As collaborative partners, we are working together to grow a stronger, more coordinated model for supporting students with disabilities as they transition to adult life. This partnership has been rooted in shared values, open communication, and a deep commitment to helping young people and their families prepare for the future with confidence and clarity.

Together, we've been working to create a transition model that is proactive, person-directed, and grounded in real-world opportunities. By bringing families, educators, and community partners together, we've helped ensure that planning for life after high school starts early and includes a focus on employment, community involvement, lifelong learning, and independent living. Our collaboration has led to more consistent information-sharing, greater alignment between schools and community services, and stronger support for families navigating this important life stage.

We are proud of the progress we've made alongside our education partners and we are excited about the potential this model has to positively shape the future for youth across our region. With continued collaboration and shared commitment, we are building a foundation that empowers young people to envision—and achieve—good lives beyond school.



THE IMPACT

This project was funded by a one-year grant offered by the Ministry of Education. Facile Perth was engaged to deliver transition planning supports, workshops and professional development opportunities.

After one year of effective collaboration, there is a mutual recognition of how this partnership has positively impacted both organizations and their staff, as well as families and, most importantly, the students themselves.

- 22 students
- 2 schools
- 34 community connections made
- 5 students received pre-employment training
- 7 jobs or volunteer placements attained
- 3 students planned for college

WHAT FAMILIES SAID

In addition to expanding outcomes for young people in Huron-Perth, this collaborative effort has impacted families and caregivers. With a long-term, proactive mindset, we have supported families to tackle critical planning priorities that will set up their child for success now, and down the road.

More than that, families can feel pride and a sense of security when they look to the future.



- 5 housing-focused plans
- 15 DSO/ODSP applications
- 5 families supported with financial planning resources and education
- 4 families identified long-term planning objectives (e.g. Microboards)

“They [the facilitator] not only help our child, and meet them on their level, they also support us as caregivers. It can be overwhelming and they help by breaking things down; by helping with what can be done now and work towards the latter so we, as caregivers, and our child aren’t overwhelmed with everything.”

“Our Facilitator played a key role in securing a brighter future for our loved ones, as they work very closely with our family and also the organizations that provide all the support.”

“As a parent of a child with special needs, there are so many aspects of their life that we are responsible for: medical, social, financial, etc. I cannot explain the value that my facilitator had in helping me ensure I was doing the best job possible for my child and still keeping my head above water.”

WHAT YOUTH SAID

We asked youth...

Should all youth have a facilitator to help them think about their future?

Has having the one-on-one support of a facilitator helped you feel more positive about the future?

“Facilitation helped me think about my future differently.”



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“I learned what I want to do. I feel better about myself.”



YOUTH SAID...
“YES! 100%”



BRIGHT FUTURES AHEAD

ERICA'S FEELING CONFIDENT ABOUT HER FUTURE

For St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School student Erica, the biggest change since taking part in the Building Bright Futures initiative is knowing what she wants for her future.



Since she began working with her facilitator, Erica has gained a clearer picture of what she wants her future to look like. The support of her facilitator has also helped her take steps to make sure she can reach those goals.

“Before, I didn't know what my future would be, or if I even wanted to go to college. But, now, I know that I want to go to college and start working,” Erica says.

Erica wants to study Early Childhood Education so she can have a career working with children. Together with her facilitator, Erica has identified the college program she wants to take through REACH Huron, and has worked with her school's guidance counsellor to make sure she takes all of the courses necessary for that program.

Taking a tour of the college, and getting a chance to speak to staff and ask questions has also helped Erica feel more prepared for the future she's planning.

ERICA'S STORY CONTINUED

Facilitation has also helped Erica to make connections to her community through volunteer roles. Erica has been volunteering at the local EarlyON Child and Family Centre, where she does activities with children and their families, cleans up, and helps support staff. She has also volunteered with Community Living – Central Huron, helping with its youth-focused Teen Talk and Food Lab events.

These roles have helped Erica build confidence, build her resume, and make connections within the field she wants to pursue.



When talking about how volunteering has made a difference in her life, Erica is enthusiastic. **“It makes me feel good – especially working with EarlyON,”** she says. **“I think I’m going to work with kids later in life.”**

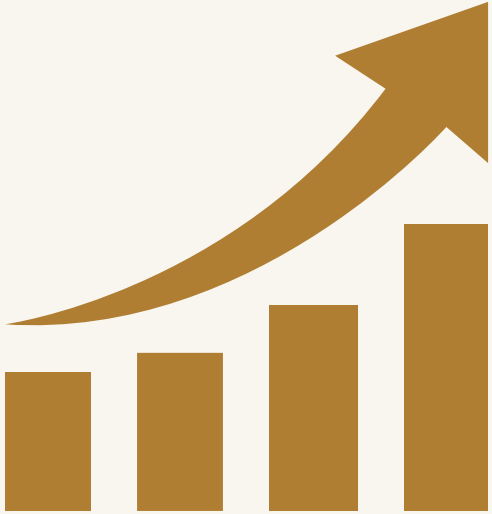
Janice, Erica’s caregiver, says she’s noticed a big shift in Erica since taking part in the Building Bright Futures initiative. **“I’ve noticed quite a difference in the self confidence that Erica has gained since we’ve had a facilitator,”** Janice shares. **“Her positivity towards her current wellbeing has been wonderful. She’s even getting excited and hopeful about her future as she makes plans and goals, and explores options to reach them.”**

Janice feels that the support from Erica’s facilitator has been very valuable for both of them. She has provided knowledge, understanding and support that has allowed them to take steps for Erica’s future. **“It’s made an amazing difference just to know I don’t have to do this alone,”** Janice says. **“I had no idea so many services and supports were available.”**

Going forward, Erica and her facilitator will continue to work toward reaching her goals, now that she and her family have a clearer vision of what is possible for her future.

ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

2024-25 Strategic Priorities



- Collaborative Transition Planning Approaches and Activities
- Family Information Nights
- Staff Training and Capacity Building
- Intentional Community Connections
- Focused Evaluation

Family Engagement

Facile hosted a one hour webinar for families on the transition from school to adult life. It included a panel of speakers, including family and youth voices, as well as professionals supporting youth transitions.

Additionally, Facile supported HPCDSB and AMDSB to host 2 transition fairs for families in transition.

These events supported the board to reach over 73 families to learn about community resources, adult developmental services, and post-secondary options, helping to demystify the transition process.

Outreach and Training

Over the 2024-25 school year, Facile Perth worked in partnership to support several school board activities, in addition to offering one-on-one facilitation support. These included supporting conversations at multiple professional development days, presentations to school and board staff, as well as presentations alongside the Board at several education conferences.

School to Community Collaboration

In collaboration with HPCDSB, Facile co-hosted a one-day community conference focused on youth employment, which included *JobPath* training. This curriculum is a proven pre-employment training program for youth with developmental disabilities. This event and others have resulted in the development of a Huron-Perth Youth Employment Network. This network aims to offer schools and families greater access to partnerships with local employers and community mentors who are inclusive and welcoming to youth.

*Approx. 850+ people reached
41 ongoing youth-focused partnerships and
connections were made this year!*

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead, Facile Perth and HPCDSB are exploring plans to continue to support youth transitions from school to adult life, and at the same time, increase access to these supports earlier on. We aim to engage families with proactive strategies that streamline the ways we provide information to families to increase ease of access to information and increase timely responses. We also intend to create more resources for families that support transitions at various stages of life. The Building Bright Futures initiative is rooted in the values of collective impact (Tamarack Institute, 2023) and we are eager to collaborate with HPCDSB, and other community partners, on an ongoing basis to enhance the ways that we support families and young people to build good lives, firmly rooted in their community.

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