

Establishing a New Normal in Alternative Education for At-Risk Youth

Introduction

The Dalhousie Youth Support Services is a non-profit organization that provides support to youth that have been in contact with the law in the Peterborough area. Alternative education can help deliver a more suitable education model to students who have difficulty within the traditional school model.

Purpose

The purpose of the study is to provide at-risk youth of Peterborough alternative education to mitigate their interactions with the Youth Criminal Justice System. Currently, the Dalhousie Youth Support services are only hosting students who have been involved with the Youth Criminal Justice System. The purpose of this project is to create a middle step that allows at-risk students alternative education without the need of being charged in the Youth Criminal Justice System.

“An at-risk youth is a child who is less likely to transition successfully into adulthood. Success can include academic success and job readiness, as well as the ability to be financially independent. It also can refer to the ability to become a positive member of society by avoiding a life of crime.”

(At Risk Youth Programs, 2023)

Research Question

- What are the costs and benefits to the organization associated with running alternative education for at-risk youth?
- How has alternative education currently been implemented in the Province?
- Identify the primary sources of funding for organizations with similar mandates to the Dalhousie Youth Support Services delivering alternative education in the Province.
- What is their source of funding?



Dalhousie
Youth Support Services

Methodology

1. The main methods of this project was to conduct literature review on different alternative education programs and charter schools that are found throughout the province and Canada
2. Interviews with alternative education professionals were also conducted

Preliminary Findings

1. Sources of funding for alternative education programs is a difficult process and very time consuming
2. There is a need for alternative education for at-risk youth in the Peterborough area
3. There are many different alternative education programs and schools across the Province
4. There are different ways that a program can find funding for alternative education

Conclusion

Through both literature review and conducting interviews with alternative education professionals, it was shown that the Dalhousie Youth Support Service can apply to create an alternative education program for at-risk youth in Peterborough and the surrounding area. This can be done by demonstrating need to the city councilors and the speaking with the Peterborough Trustee. Another process would be the Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP) which is a mix between alternative education and District school boards.