



# The Identity Project

Can a program focused on identity (self-concept) improve the socioeconomic inclusion of young people who have experienced homelessness?

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[homelesshub.ca/researchmatters/the-identity-project](http://homelesshub.ca/researchmatters/the-identity-project)  
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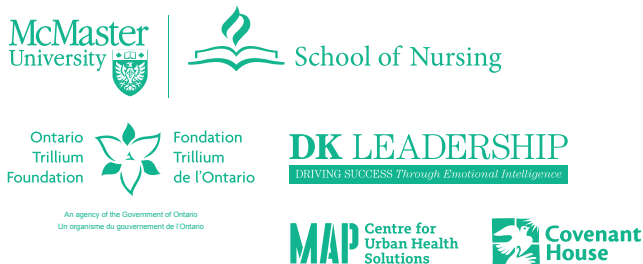
## Background

Current supports for young people transitioning away from homelessness can be well-meaning but stigmatizing in terms of location (e.g., homeless shelters) and emphasis (e.g., housing-focused), with limited attention paid to the relationship between identity and meaningful socioeconomic inclusion.

## The Study

Nineteen young people (aged 18 – 26) who had transitioned out of homelessness within the past three years participated in a **six-week program** focused on building **identity capital** (self-concept as “currency”) and providing career direction.

The program was designed and carried out by DK Leadership – an established leadership and executive coaching centre in Toronto, Canada.



## Quantitative Findings

- Statistically significant improvements and large effect size improvements in **self-esteem** and **physical community integration** in Group One (completed program) compared to Group Two (had not begun program)
- Statistically significant improvements and moderate effect size improvements in **self-esteem** and **hopelessness** six and nine months post-program (combined group scores)
- Small to moderate effect size improvements in **self-esteem**, **physical community integration**, and **hopelessness** at all time points (combined group scores)

## Qualitative Findings

- **Theme One: Vision for Life**
  - Reaffirming potential
  - (Re)gaining control
- **Theme Two: Reconstructing Identity**
  - Past as an asset (vs. liability)
  - Internal (vs. external) control

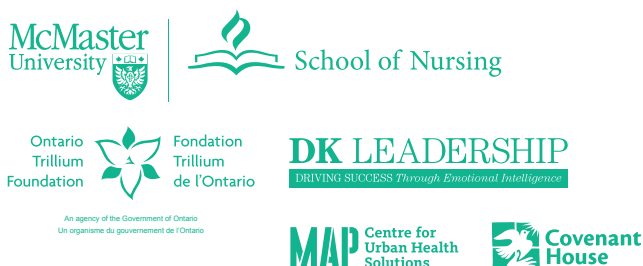
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