



# Strategic Plan

**New Leaf Foundation  
2023-2025**

# Who We Are

New Leaf Foundation's mission is to support the mental, emotional, and physical health of young people in equity-deserving communities. We offer mindfulness-based programming, resources and training that cultivate resilience, self-awareness, emotional governance and a sense of personal empowerment.

Our aim is to address the causes and impacts of chronic stress on young people, while also confronting systemic barriers that many face in accessing wellness-based resources. This means that we primarily serve youth residing in low-income communities, many of whom face various forms of oppression based on race, class, exposure to community violence, and stigmatization.

Working within long-term established partnerships with schools, youth justice facilities and other youth-serving organizations, we strive to create a strong web of support by providing a range of programming that supports young people directly, as well as indirectly through learning opportunities for the adults they are surrounded by, including educators, youth-service providers and parents.

# Values

- Solidarity over charity
- Multi-directional learning
- Strengths-based
- Meet people where they're at
- Centre strong relationships

# Challenges & Opportunities

While the world in many ways has returned to its pre-pandemic ways, individuals and groups continue to navigate the ripple effects of a tumultuous few years. Nonprofits and charitable organizations—particularly grassroots and smaller-sized organizations—are feeling the effects; New Leaf’s on-going focus is on recovery, reconnecting and rebuilding in this new landscape that involves challenges but also new opportunities.

## Financial

In the changed post-pandemic landscape, New Leaf faces the following challenges:

- Individual donorship to smaller organizations is down\*
- Connection with our audience of supporters was weakened
- Some long-time funders did not renew their commitments

Opportunities to explore include:

- Investing in new revenue streams and internally-controlled funding through social enterprise and adapting ways for businesses to support
- Rebuilding connections with community through hosting and attending community events, building partnerships with third-party events
- Growing our Better Together fundraising campaign

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\*Toronto Foundation’s recent social impact report shows 300,000 fewer individual donors since pandemic, resulting in 1.8 million dollar loss in the sector (Source: [torontofoundation.ca/socialcapital](https://torontofoundation.ca/socialcapital)).

## Youth-Serving Sector

### Challenges:

- Youth mental health needs at a high
- Other community organizations are similarly facing financial challenges

### Opportunities:

- Collaborate with other youth-serving organizations/partners on grant-writing and funding pitches
- Invest in additional ways to support youth beyond sessional programs (eg. fee-for-service workshops, Mindfulness Toolkit, our other mindfulness resources)

## Organizational

### Challenges:

- Staff turnover, including transition of long-time executive director and facilitators who transitioned over the pandemic and in recent months
- Pandemic-related pivot and unanticipated disruptions distracted from addressing some identified needs, such as governance updates
- Staff wellness and capacity has been difficult to maintain during the post-pandemic rebuild and transitions at hand

### Opportunities:

- Invest in new leadership as well as build the leadership of current team to foster new ideas and energy
- Ensure staff wellness and capacity is a priority
- Continue to work towards being more accurate and transparent about the operations/overhead costs needed to carry out our work



# Summary of Strategic Focus

<b>Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to rebuild in-person and hybrid programming post-pandemic</li> <li>• Increase reach by forging partnerships with additional school boards</li> <li>• Continue to strengthen and streamline program facilitation framework across programming sectors</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebuild social enterprise aspect of trainings and workshops</li> <li>• Increase capacity to lead additional workshops</li> </ul>
<b>Youth Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review, revise and revamp youth internships, advisory and mentoring opportunities</li> <li>• Develop training opportunities for youth</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build new and existing fundraising initiatives</li> <li>• Implement additional fundraising supports that support sustainable growth</li> <li>• Invest in social enterprise opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase public relations opportunities and communications initiatives</li> <li>• Increase opportunities to participate in community events and spaces</li> </ul>
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase engagement between board and staff</li> <li>• Strengthen governance model</li> </ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to build staff engagement and supports including for health/wellbeing</li> <li>• Increase staffing hours/roles where possible to better reflect output needed to meet goals</li> </ul>

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