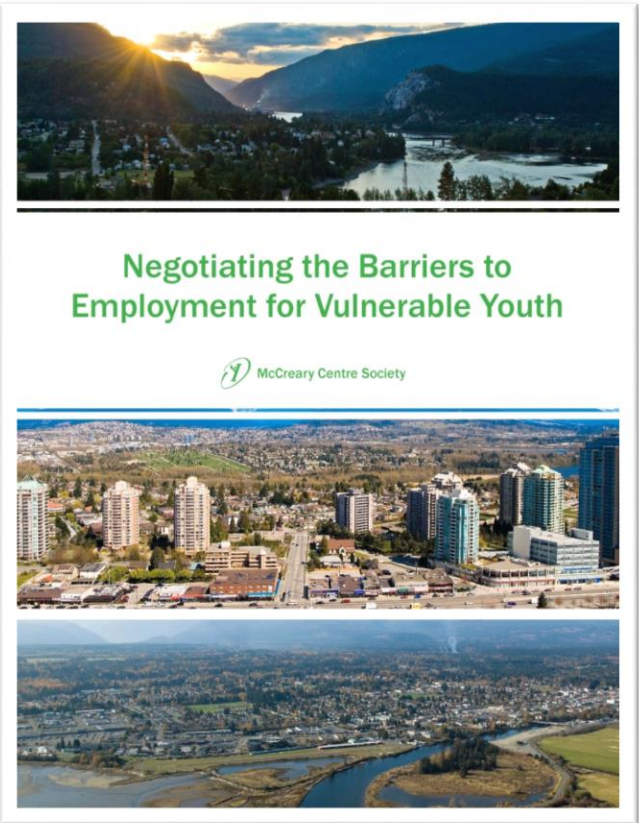




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Negotiating the barriers to employment for vulnerable youth

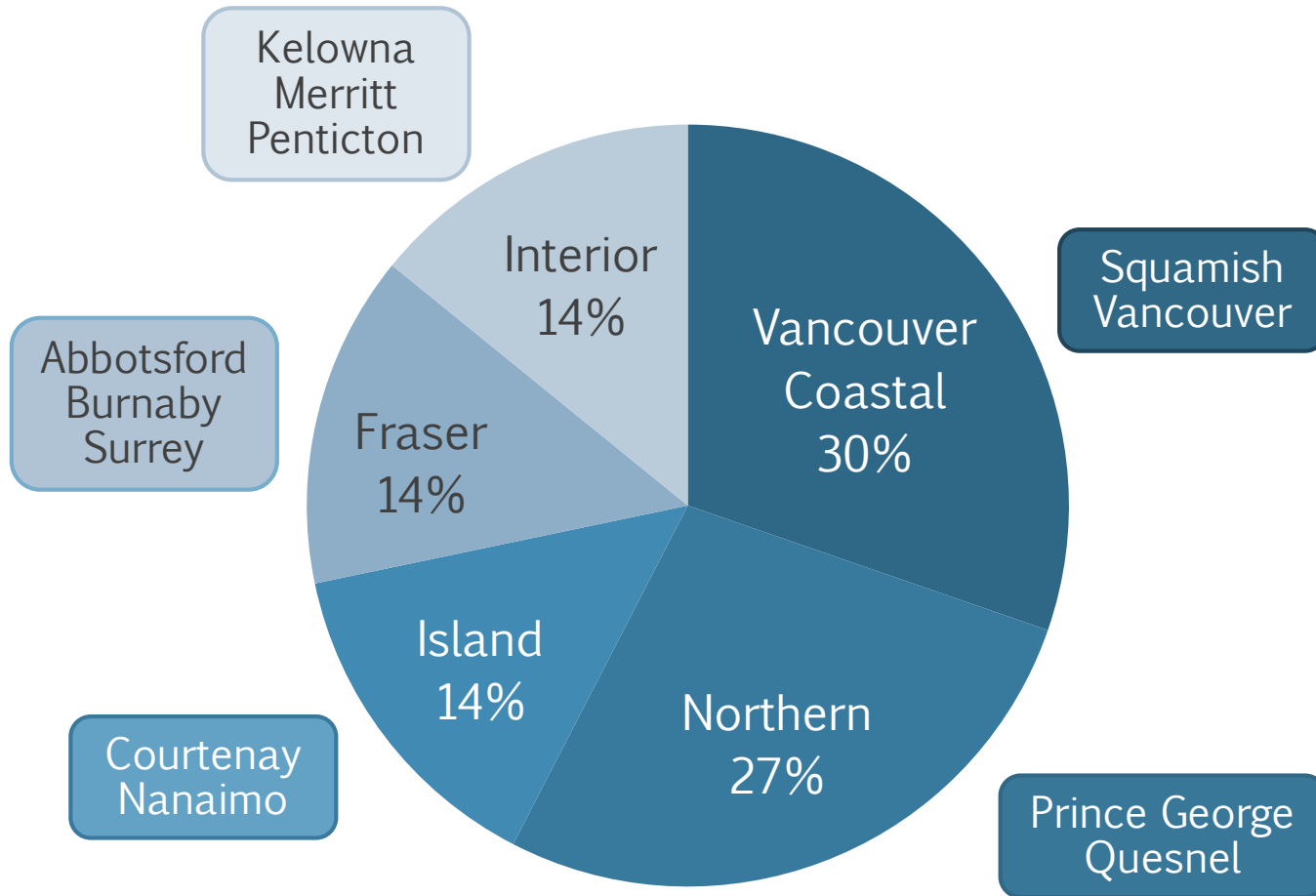
# Outline

- Background
- Barriers to finding and maintaining employment
- Supports to finding and maintaining employment
- Youth's suggestions

# Background

- 150 youth took part
- Between the ages of 15 and 29
- Focus groups, interviews, and survey

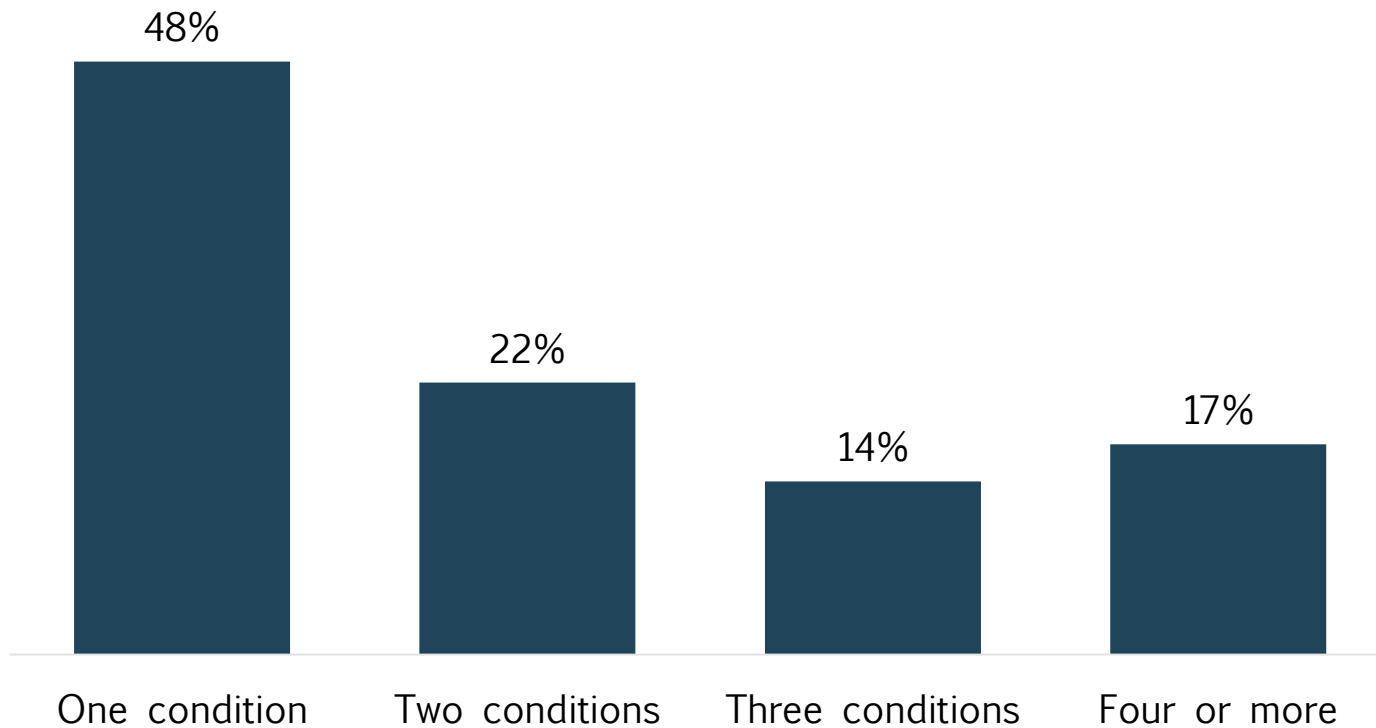
# Participants



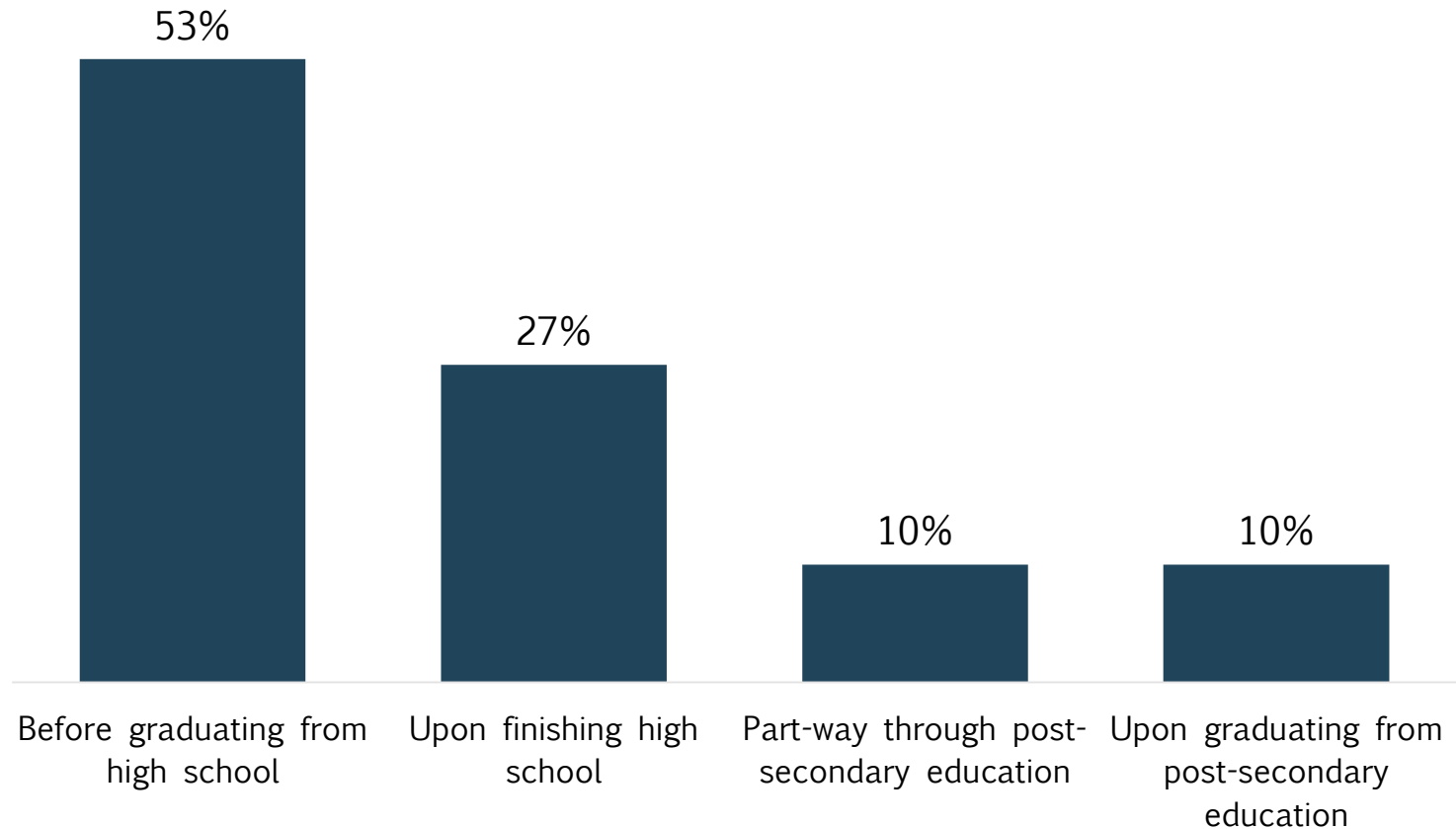
# Background and experiences

19%	Lesbian, gay, or bisexual
50%	Aboriginal
55%	Experience of homelessness
46% 34% 32%	Foster home Group home Youth Agreement
23%	Ever held in youth custody centre
64%	Health condition or disability

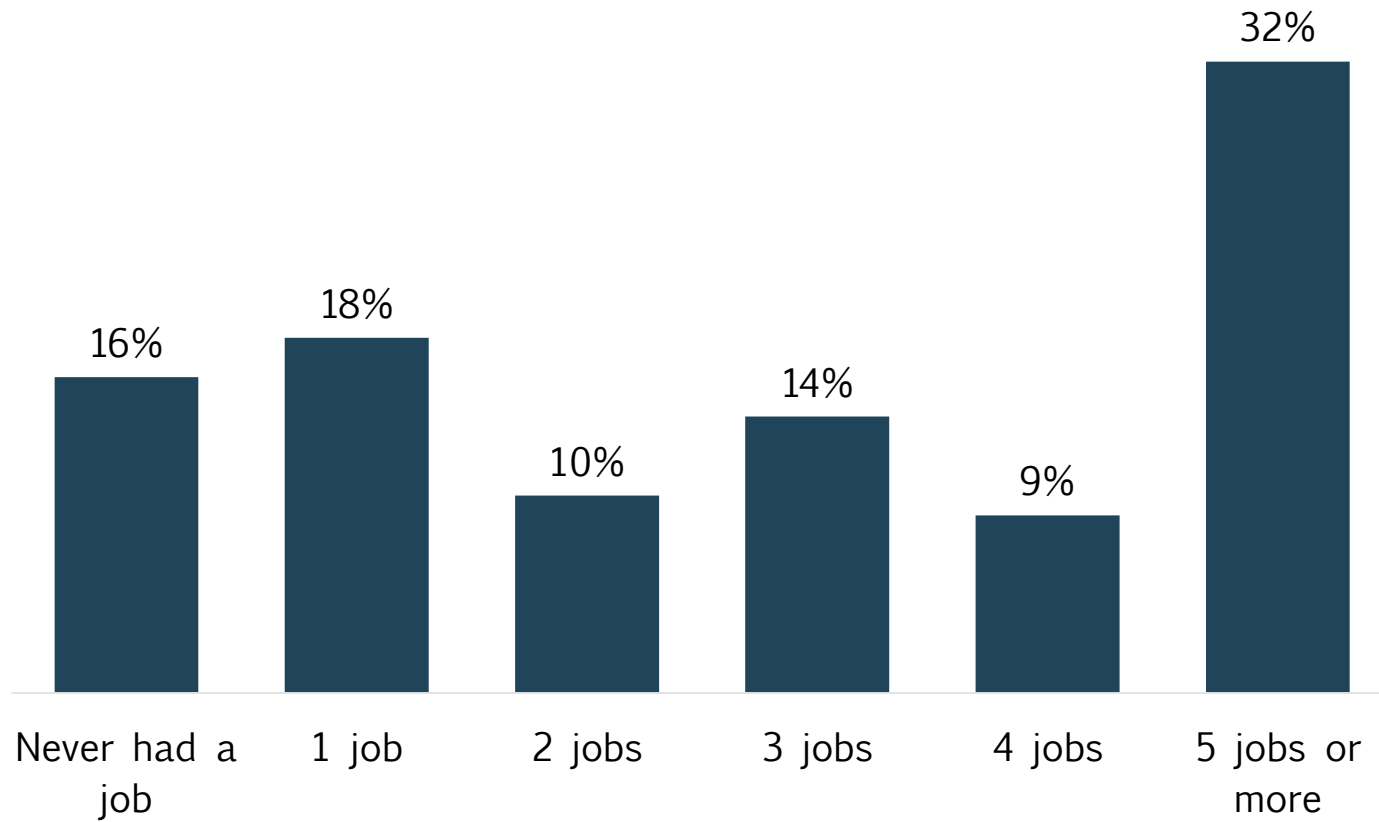
## Number of health conditions (among youth with at least one)



# When youth stopped attending school (among those not currently in school)



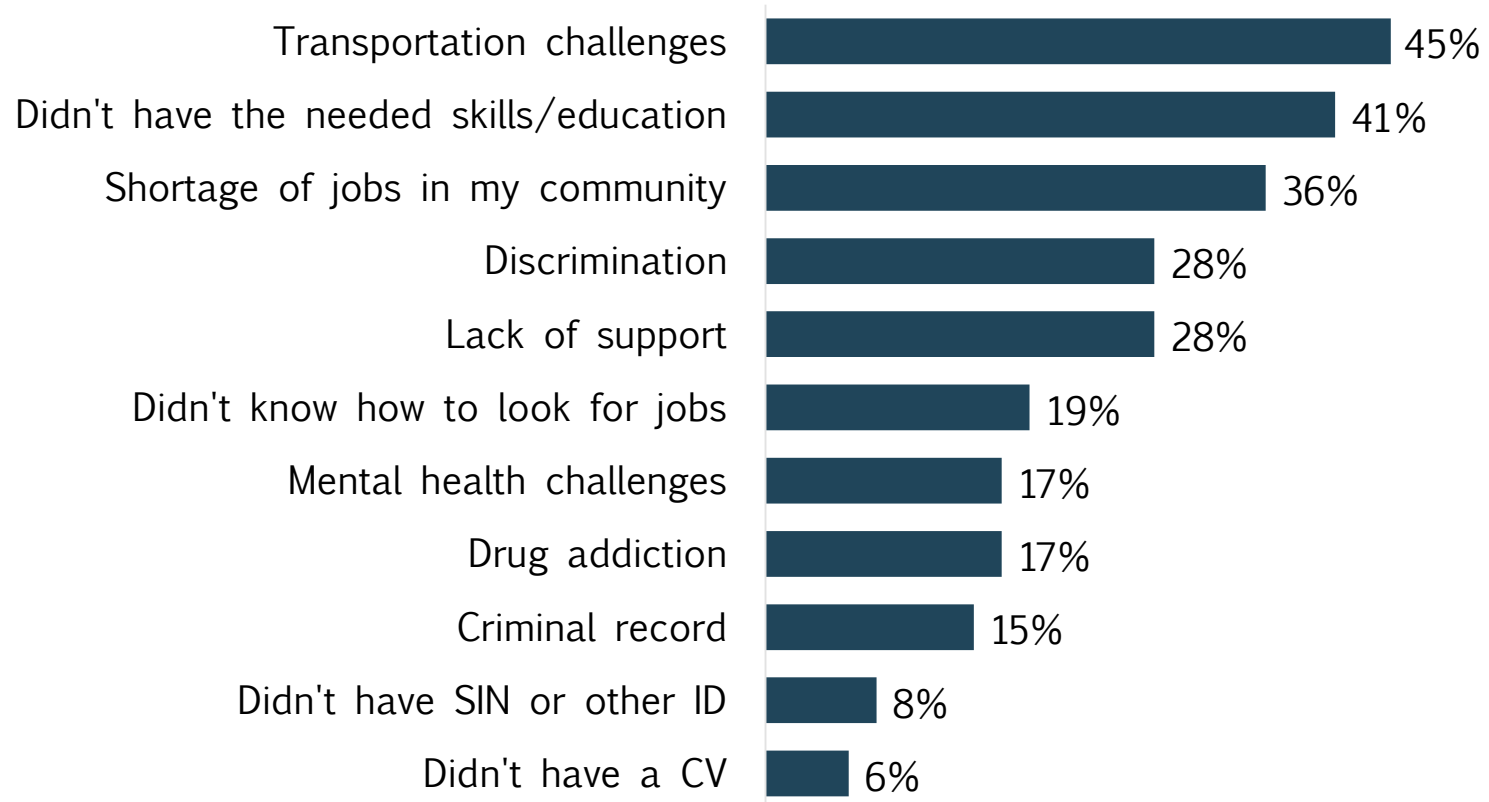
## Number of jobs ever held





# Challenges finding a job

(YOUTH COULD MARK ALL THAT APPLY)



# Barriers to accessing employment

- Transportation
- Needing skills, qualifications and experience
- Interpersonal skills
- Discrimination
- Needing identification, phone and address
- Access to job postings
- Lack of accessible employment programs

# Additional barriers

- Child care responsibilities
- Government care experience
- Poverty
- Health conditions and disabilities
- Peer group
- Illegal employment/a criminal record
- Rural challenges

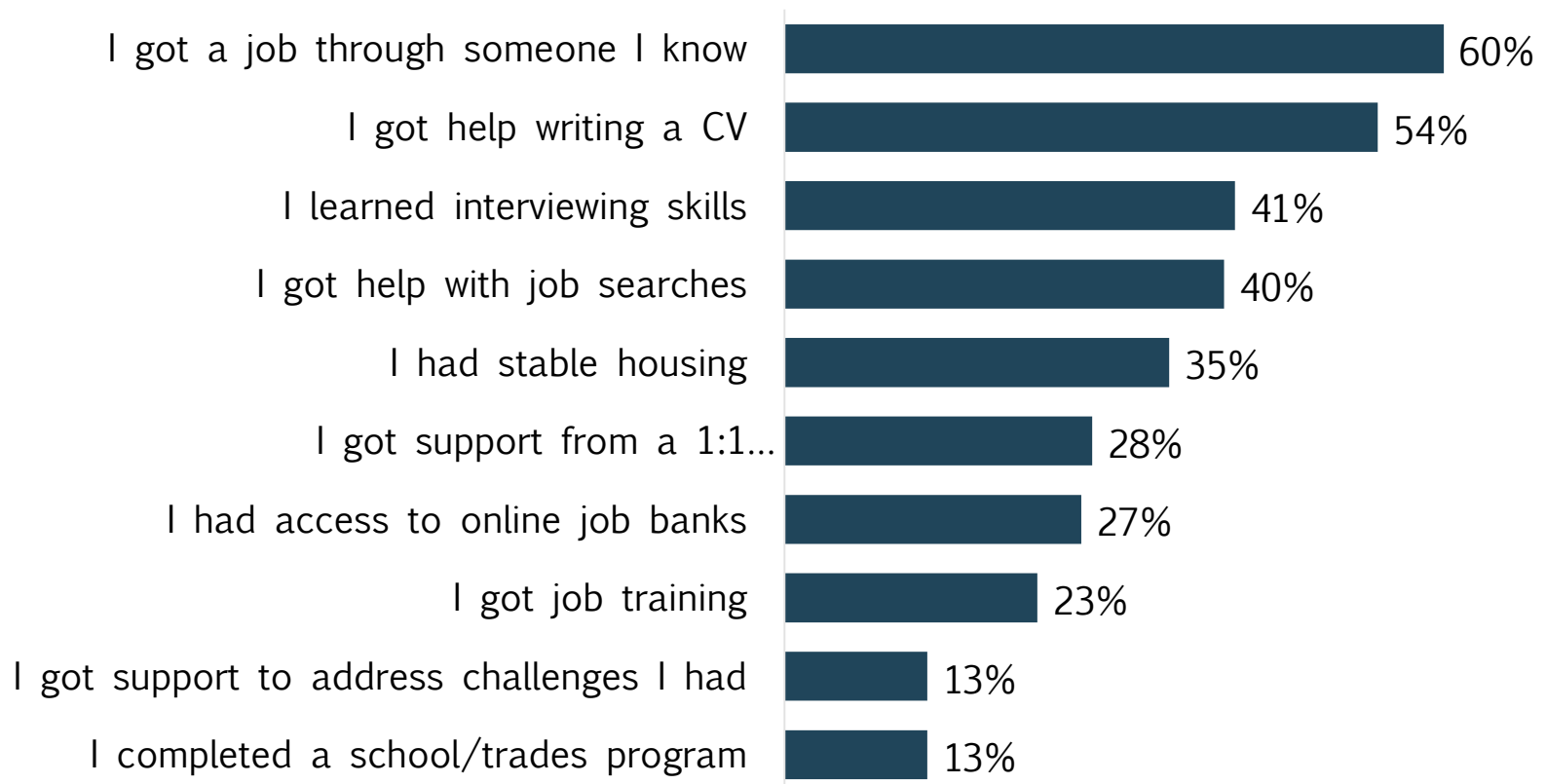
# Barriers to maintaining employment

- Staying motivated
- Working conditions
- Transportation
- Relationships with co-workers
- Hostile work environment
- Safety concerns
- Seasonal/short term employment

*“Getting a job in this economy isn’t the hardest part, it’s keeping a job.”*

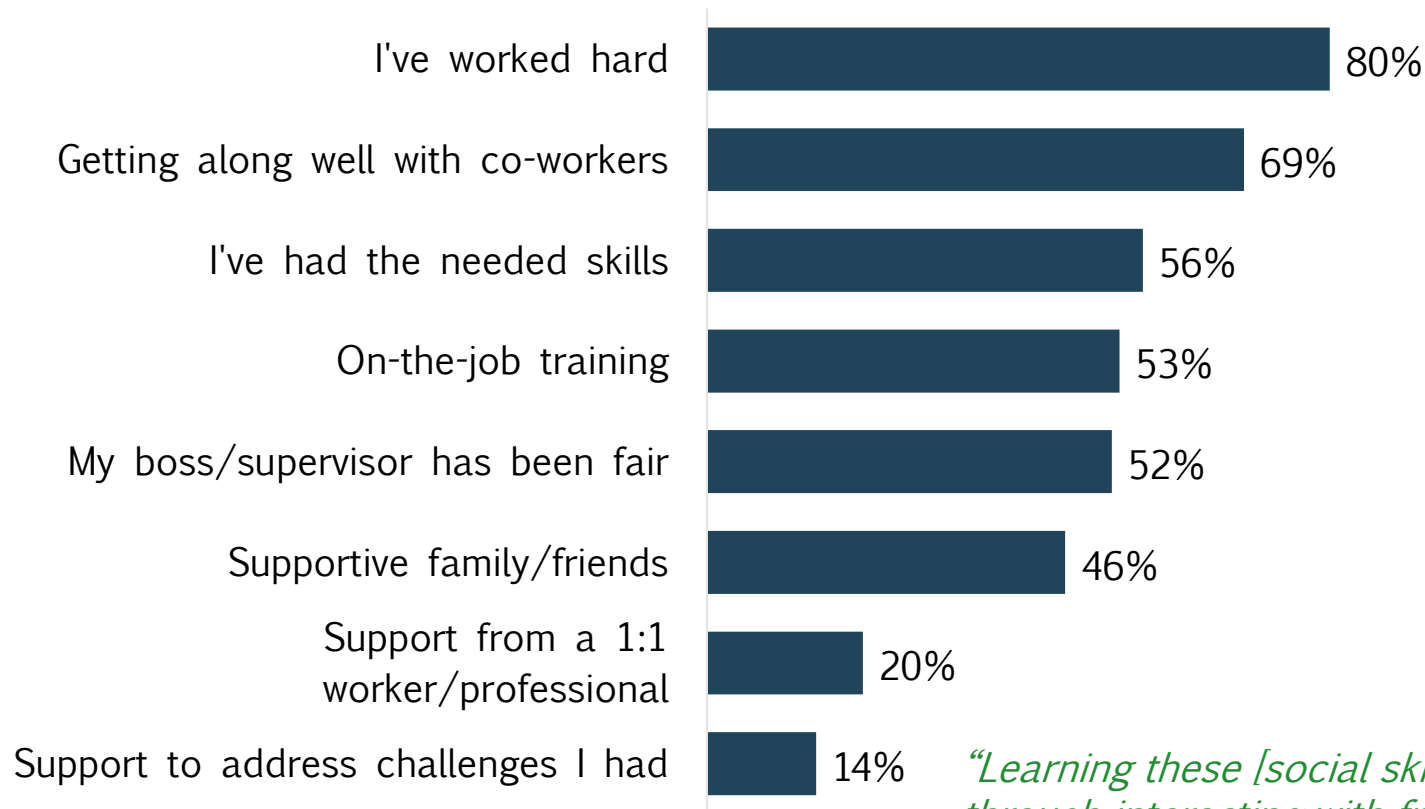
# What has helped you to get a job (among those who ever worked)

YOUTH COULD MARK ALL THAT APPLY



# What has helped youth to keep a job (among those who ever worked)

Youth could MARK ALL THAT APPLY



*“Learning these [social skills] through school, through interacting with friends or being in the community and talking to people.”*

# Youth's suggestions to increase access to employment

- Individualized and youth-focused support
- Flexible employment programs
- Financial support
- Teach interpersonal skills
- Teach employment skills
- Target youth for employment opportunities
- Have agencies work collaboratively

# Youth's suggestions for maintaining employment

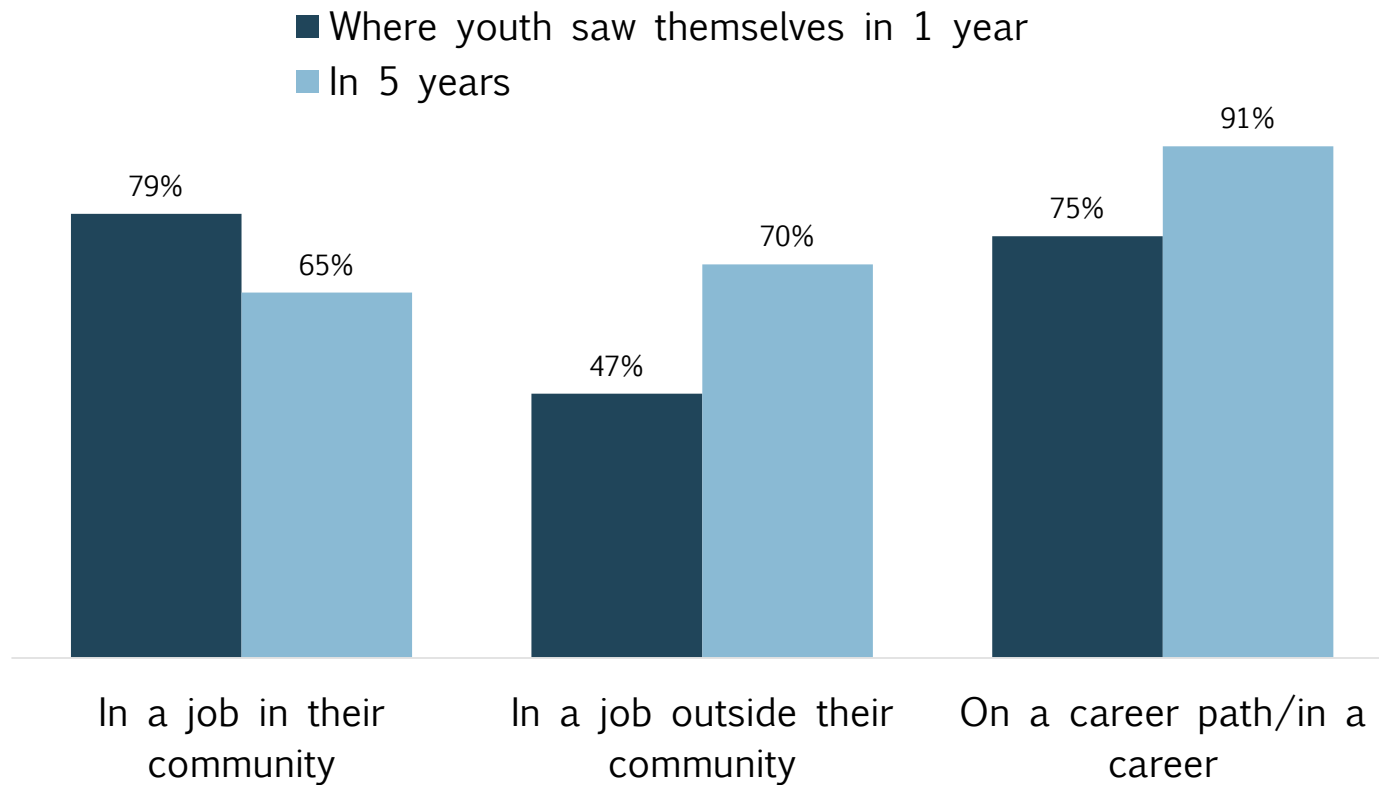
- Transition services
- Teach interpersonal skills
- Teach life skills
- Assist youth with practicalities
- Offer funding to upgrade skills
- Train employers about the challenges youth face



# Evaluated case studies

- Financial and transportation support
- Mentor support
- Focused on specific group of youth
- Addresses substance use and other issues
- Work placements to match interests
- Teach life and interpersonal skills

# Looking forward: Participants' expectations



# Suggested program to be developed

- 6–12 months in duration
- Served youth aged 15–24
- Training wage/travel/equipment/clothing
- A mentor to work on youth's goals
- Provided additional support such as child care, learning modifications
- Offered concrete relevant employment skills
- Offered assessment of available jobs locally

# Suggested program to be developed

- Offered interpersonal skills training
- Varied work placements and hands-on experience
- Opportunity to gain relevant qualifications
- Taught résumé writing, interview skills, how to apply skills
- Minimal entrance requirements

# Staffing at the program

- Understand and enjoy working with youth
- Spend time getting to know youth
- Are honest with youth
- Have contacts
- Are skilled and non-judgmental
- Assist youth prepare for interviews
- Accompany youth to interviews

# Conclusion

- With support, youth are able to overcome the barriers they face, maintain employment and have career plans
- Based on their experiences of employment support programs, participants have concrete suggestions for how programs can meet the needs of vulnerable youth



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## Negotiating the Barriers to Employment for Vulnerable Youth



THANK YOU [annie@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:annie@mcs.bc.ca) [stephanie@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:stephanie@mcs.bc.ca)