

Continuous Learning for Individuals Mid-Career and Beyond (CLIMB) Project Brief

Introduction

CLIMB was a project delivered by [Northern Lights College](#) to support mid-career workers who might benefit from returning to training or education in order to make a transition, but are reluctant to do so. In the spring of 2019, Northern Lights College received a grant from the Future Skills Centre (FSC) to support the design and delivery of the project.

As a consortium partner of the Future Skills Centre, Blueprint works with partners and stakeholders to generate evidence to help solve pressing future skills challenges. We worked with Northern Lights College to collect data that helped us understand who the pilot reached and the outcomes achieved by participants. Northern Lights College also conducted their own research on the project.

CLIMB aimed to help participants shift their mental models from contemplation and preparation towards taking action and pursuing further education or training. Northern Lights College designed the program based on the Transtheoretical Model (or Stages of Change model). Participants first accessed assessments on an online CLIMB portal (Phase I) and then had the option to move into a College Success course (Phase II) and register for free amelioration courses including Trades Math offered by Northern Lights College (Phase III). CLIMB also provided participants with targeted support as needed throughout the project.

Program Start May 2020

Program End Oct 2021

Phase 1

CLIMB Portal

(required & self-directed)

- Complete six elements online
 - Future Proof survey
 - Your Career Skills Discovered
 - Career Track Fitting
 - Your Life Skills Discovered
 - Learning designed for Adults
 - Career Pathways Mapping

Phase 2

College Success

(optional & self-directed)

- Complete the course online
- Make a learning path

Phase 3

Amelioration Courses

(optional & classroom setting)

- Complete Trades Math online

CLIMB coordinators support participants in completing program and planning for formal education

Approach

Blueprint collected survey data from participants who consented to participate in our data collection activities. Specifically, this data helped us answer five sets of questions:

<p>1</p> <p>Who did the pilot reach, and did it reach participants that aligned with the pilot's target population?</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Were participants satisfied the pilot?</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Did participants successfully complete the program?</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Did participants move along the decision-making continuum about whether to return to school?</p>	<p>5</p> <p>What employment and educational outcomes did participants achieve?</p>
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Participants were invited to take part in Blueprint's data collection activities after they had consented to be included in the research led by Northern Lights College. Among the 215 participants invited to participate in Blueprint's data collection, 56 (26%) consented.

54 participants completed a baseline survey, seven completed a mid-program survey, and seven completed an exit survey. Northern Lights College also shared administrative data with Blueprint to measure program completion. Due to the low response rates of the mid-program and exit surveys, findings of participant program outcomes and experiences should be treated with caution.

Our data collection was guided by our **Common Outcomes Framework**, which is a set of outcomes and participant socio-demographics that we are using to generate consistent, comparable evidence across FSC-funded projects

Summary of Key Findings

Among participants who consented to data collection activities:

Program Reach and Completion

The average age was **41 years**

37% (19/51) were unemployed when starting the program

30% (9/30) were employed but worried about losing their jobs when starting the program

81% (43/53) had an education level below Bachelor's degree

Program Satisfaction

17% (1/6) were satisfied with the CLIMB portal overall and **86% (6/7)** found the CLIMB portal was useful for exploring in-demand jobs

14% (1/7) were satisfied with College Success and **43% (3/7)** felt College Success was useful in preparing to return to school

14% (1/7) were satisfied with the program overall

Returning to School

86% (6/7) reported they were likely to enrol in a training or college program in the near future

100% (6/6) believed they could overcome the challenges of going back to school

Education and Employment Outcomes

71% (5/7) were enrolled in education programs when CLIMB ended

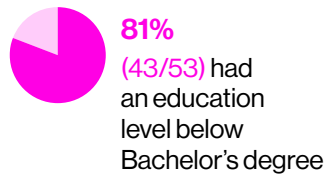
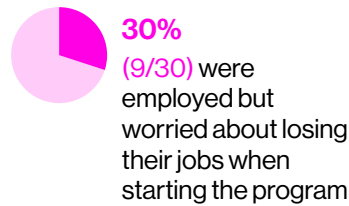
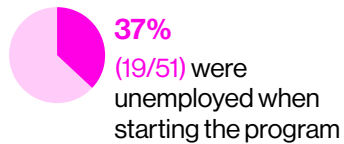
67% (4/6) of those who said they were likely to go back to school in the near future were enrolled in education programs when CLIMB ended

63% (32/51) were employed when starting the program, and **86% (6/7)** were employed when CLIMB ended

57% (17/30) made more than \$40K when starting the program, and **83% (5/6)** made more than \$40K when CLIMB ended

Program Reach & Completion

Among respondents to the socio-demographic survey questions:



41 years
The average age

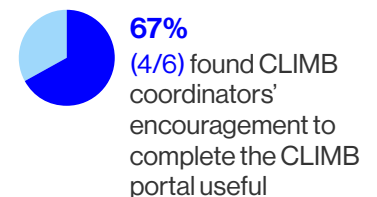
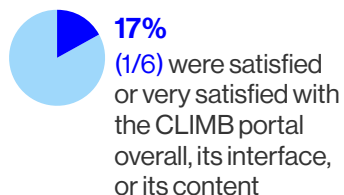
As of October 4, 2021 when the program ended, **21% (12/56)** of the evaluation-consenting participants completed the CLIMB portal, of whom **42% (5/12)** completed it within one day

Evaluation-consenting participants' completion status for Phase II (College Success Course) and Phase III (Amelioration Courses) of the project are unknown. Participants' completion status for Phase II and Phase III is unknown as this data was not shared with Blueprint.

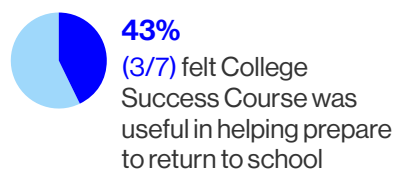
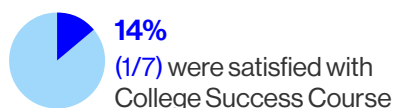
Program Satisfaction

While overall satisfaction was low, respondents reported satisfaction with the usefulness of some program components.

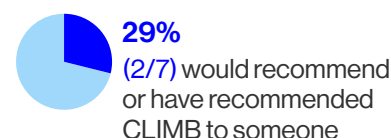
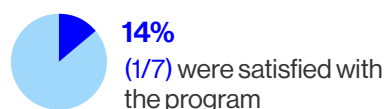
Phase I (CLIMB portal)



Phase II (College Success Course)

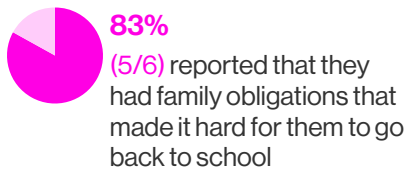
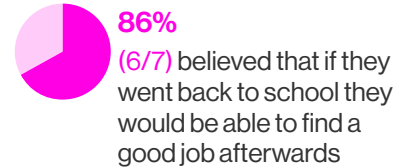
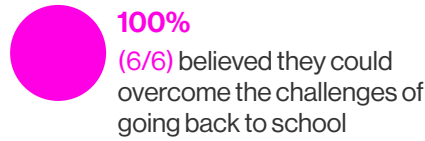
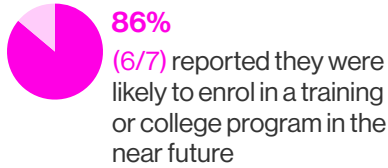


Overall program satisfaction



Returning to School

When the program ended, respondents had positive beliefs and attitudes about going back to school, but also felt they would face some barriers.



Education and Employment Outcomes

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57% (17/30) made more than \$40K when starting the program, and **83%** (5/6) made more than \$40K when CLIMB ended

About Blueprint

[Blueprint](#) was founded based on the simple idea that evidence is a powerful tool for change. We work with policymakers and practitioners to create and use evidence to solve complex policy and program challenges. Our vision is a social policy ecosystem where evidence is used to improve lives, build better systems and policies and drive social change.

Our team brings together a multidisciplinary group of professionals with diverse capabilities in policy research, data analysis, design, evaluation, implementation and knowledge mobilization.

As a consortium partner of the Future Skills Centre, Blueprint works with partners and stakeholders to generate evidence to help solve pressing future skills challenges.

About the Future Skills Centre

[FSC](#) is a forward-thinking centre for research and collaboration dedicated to preparing Canadians for employment success. We believe Canadians should feel confident about the skills they have to succeed in a changing workforce.

As a pan-Canadian community, we are collaborating to rigorously identify, test, measure, and share innovative approaches to assessing and developing the skills Canadians need to thrive in the days and years ahead.

FSC was founded by a consortium whose members are Ryerson University, Blueprint and The Conference Board of Canada, and is funded by the [Government of Canada's Future Skills Program](#).