



YOUTH WITHOUT SHELTER

In Transition

March 2016



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A woman you know you can believe, and trust

You don't need to know her for long, to know her well. When you first meet her, she comes across as a person of integrity, compassion and justice – a woman you know you can believe, and trust. The woman I'm talking about is our own beloved WENDY HORTON.

They say that the best indication of the type of person you are is the company that you keep. Wendy is supported by a team of dedicated and passionate staff, some of whom have been at Youth Without Shelter for two decades – tenure almost unheard of in the social service sector! She is surrounded by a circle of generous and empathetic donors who always ensure there is food on the table and a roof over residents' heads. She is helped by an army of volunteers who are always available to pitch in in the kitchen, paint a room or build an entire backyard recreation area! And she is dearly loved by her family, friends and of course, her Board of Directors!

Wendy joined YWS 12 years ago as the Executive Director. Her impact on the organization, youth, and programs has been fundamental not only to the growth of the organization, but to the success of its residents. Under her leadership, YWS expanded operations to add the innovative 20-bed Stay in School Program residence. Wendy led the construction and saw it through to completion through all funding, grant, permit and construction challenges. YWS has become an established, well-recognized organization, winning awards and achieving designations from credible agencies throughout the city and country. It was selected by Charity Intelligence as one of 10 "diverse high-impact charities". In 2012, Wendy was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, which recognized her outstanding work to end youth homelessness.



Under Wendy's guidance, the organization has adopted a resiliency approach to youth counselling, which demonstrates a belief and respect in the youth – something which many of them have never experienced. Wendy immersed herself in the shelter, identifying need in programming in order to better support our youth, including a strong employment program, a successful housing program, and a self-funding development team that will lead the organization into the future.

The Board of Directors always had the greatest respect for Wendy as the Executive Director – for her perspectives, her recommendations and most importantly, her vision. We praise her contribution to the organization's culture through her mentorship, and her contribution to the youth through her passion for their well-being and their future.

We, the Board, commit to continuing Wendy's work, and would like to invite you to share as we extend our best wishes to her in her retirement. Thank you, Wendy, you will be missed!

-Talya Gaborieau and Tracey Irwin, YWS Board Directors and the 2015-16 YWS Board of Directors

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To receive this newsletter via email subscribe at:

www.yws.on.ca

Our Vision

To end homelessness,
one youth at a time,
one step at a time

Charitable Reg. No.
11930 7817 RR0001



YWS Spring Wish List

- Male flip-flops (sizes 9-13)
- Female flip-flops (sizes 7-10)
 - Belts
- Bras (including sports bras)
- Long distance calling cards
 - Kraft Dinner
 - Mr. Noodles
 - Frozen juice
 - Cereal



Tokens4Change 2016

500+ volunteers, 17 schools, 12 employee groups, 6 arts and 27 canvassing locations raised an incredible \$100,000 to support youth transit costs and essential empowering YWS programs.

Thank you to Tangerine, T4C presenting sponsor, who made an additional donation of \$7,756 to enable T4C to reach the \$100k goal! Remarkable.

Thank you to all of our T4C sponsors for your investment in youth: Mantella Corporation, Faren Agency, Pattison Outdoor Advertising, Bake Sale Toronto.

Thank you to the many hands that came together to create change. For T4C 2016 photos: visit the Youth Without Shelter Facebook page.

An Hour of Love and Hopelessness at T4C 2016

We claim that the one quality that prevents the feeling of utter hopelessness is dignity, but many are compelled into a state of being where that last resort is merely present. Why? I sat among the members of Hudson Heroes, staggered by the stats thrown at me. Toronto, a wonderful city with a warm, compassionate population still manages to keep its streets busy with more than 10,000 unprotected, homeless youth. When I was first told about Youth Without Shelter and their selfless vision, I was truly moved. As a 17-year-old who has had no experience with direct, humanitarian work, I yearned for a chance to help. But that was it. I had never imagined that the experience that accompanied it would open my eyes to the flaws and perfections of society.

With thousands of people walking by, we were told to keep our voices up: "Tokens for change! Please help stop youth homelessness!" It was interestingly exciting at first. But as time flew, I began to realize something. This is what it feels like. To be ignored and stared at, with pity. Though I was raising money to help those in need, I was starting to understand what it feels like to be desperate and helpless. While some had their earphones in and could not have heard my chant, others put on their earphones just as they walked by me. Even though I could not have been compared to a teen living on the streets, I was surely gaining the experience. But there was more reason to spike gratitude.



HUDSON COLLEGE STUDENTS DURING TOKENS4CHANGE 2016

Every time people stopped for a moment and listened to what we had to say, I figured there is hope. They left a greater memory through their smiles, donations, and generosity. Even the smallest contributions made T4C a success, as our school raised more than \$1400. Through this event, we were able to connect with the community in the name of youth homelessness. Along the way, a sense of empowerment and interconnection was created because numerous people were also deeply interested to know more about YWS and its purpose. I cannot be more thankful for such a wonderful opportunity to raise funds and more importantly, awareness, for the youth without shelter in Toronto.

- Grade 12 student: [Hudson Dasa, Hudson College Heroes](#)

Check out the Tokens4Change 2016 PSA created by Paul Davis and Hudson College students at: <https://youtu.be/yB4QbrWdng4>

Value of a transit pass

20 youth living in the YWS Stay in School (SIS) Program are provided with a monthly transit pass to help them get to and from school each day. These passes are made possible through funding from the Leslois Shaw Foundation and Tokens4Change. The impact of a single monthly pass is shared by one young man currently staying in the SIS program.



"It's not easy being a student. With tuition, textbooks and transportation, it requires a lot of money monthly especially for full-time students. Having Metro Passes changes the ball game immensely. It creates a certain freedom of travel that's often underappreciated and saves a lot of money. Not only does the Metro Pass allow me to get to school but it also enables me to get to my part time job and visit friends. It's also extremely budget-friendly because it allows me to save for college and for when I eventually move out."

- Andrew, Stay in School Program resident

For some youth it was their first dental visit

The entire team at Muntwyler Dentistry are fully committed to giving back within our local community. Our initial involvement with Youth Without Shelter (YWS) began years ago with our office Christmas endeavor to collect needed items for the residents. Through this project we got to learn how vital the shelter is in providing a much needed safe place for youth to get a new start. We were very impressed with the work YWS does to support youth in their pursuit of education and skills that will help them live productive, independent, healthy lives.

Our team had discussions around how we could use our skills as dental health care providers to perhaps better assist the youth at the shelter. We decided to have a pro bono dental day dedicated exclusively to YWS residents who wished to participate. We had 14 residents sign up which made for an extremely satisfying, busy day providing dental care including examinations, cleanings and fillings. For some of the youth it had been their first dental visit.



DR. MONICA MUNTWYLER, YWS PLANNING & EVALUATION MANAGER ART TSANG, AND DR. TREVOR MUNTWYLER

All of the young people we met were lovely to speak with and we appreciated getting to know about their school programs and future goals. We are also happy to have had some of the youth back to our office since that day to complete their treatment. It is our hope that we can continue to provide dental care to these great young adults while they are residents at YWS.

-Drs. Trevor and Monica Muntwyler and the Team at Muntwyler Dentistry

Did you know YWS has an Employment Program?

An estimated 1 in 6 young people in Toronto cannot find work. Now imagine you have no fixed address and in many cases limited education, these are some of the challenges YWS youth residents face. The on-site YWS Employment Program is personalized employment counseling that aims to overcome the barriers homeless youth face in the employment market. Support to both current and former residents includes: assessments, job searching assistance, resume writing and interview skill development along with employment appropriate clothing. Connections to training programs, career shadowing and volunteer opportunities are also made. Over the last 10 months 63 youth have been employed through YWS's Employment Program. Here's what youth have to say about the program:

"Through out my time working with the Employment Facilitator it has truly been a pleasure having one on one sessions with her. She has gone out of her way to make sure that I have reached my goal. She has made me feel important." (Former resident participating in After-Care Program)

"It's not that I didn't know how to look for a job, but the Employment Facilitator showed me a lot of do's and don'ts that were really helpful in my understanding the big picture. She helped me develop skills that I can always use now." (Sarah, YWS resident).



"I did not have a resume, I did not know where to even begin. Meeting with the Employment Facilitator I now have Canadian work experience, a great resume and am ready for my first paying job." (Solomon, YWS resident).

"I learned about all these training sessions that are available to me at no cost. The Employment Facilitator listened to me and then together we created the road map to get there." (Keisha, YWS resident)

How can you help? Currently the Employment Program is in need of new steel toed work boots, both male and female sizes.

Notes from the kids you've helped



"I haven't been here long at Youth Without Shelter and I am already baffled at the amount of devotion the staff partake to ensure each youth is well assisted in all aspects of life."

"When my sister and I got to YWS, we were welcomed and made to feel at home. I used to call it shelter but after sometime I called it home."

"Thank you for giving youth a chance to fight for their dreams...I know I'm going to get to my dream but I wouldn't get there without your help."

"I want to thank YWS for everything you have and are still doing for me. I appreciate everything. Thank you for keeping me focused and helping me stay positive."

Thanks for all the love you show us and the caring. Even though we don't have a family, you make us feel as if we have one. Thank you."

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yws.akaraisin.com/covermeurban

ENJOY
TORONTO'S
CULTURE OF
NEIGHBOURHOODS
UNDER ONE ROOF.

PRESENTED BY:



Yes! I/We would like to provide a safe haven for a youth tonight at Youth Without Shelter.

- \$25 will provide a youth with a safe place to sleep for one night at YWS.
- \$75 will provide a Stay in School Starter Package including a blanket, pillow, sheets, towel, alarm clock, hygiene kit.
- \$127 will provide milk with each meal for one week for all 53 youth.
- \$160 will an "Equipped for Employment" Package including safety shoes, transit fare and any required work clothing.
- \$206 will provide juice for one week for Youth Without Shelter's 53 youth.
- I prefer to contribute \$ _____
- I would like to Adopt-A-Bed by contributing monthly \$ _____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Credit card: circle MasterCard/VISA no. _____ Expiration date: _____

Signature: _____ E-mail: _____ Phone number: _____

You can make a difference in a youth's life by returning this form with cheque (**payable to Youth Without Shelter**) or credit card information to: **Youth Without Shelter, 6 Warrendale Court, Etobicoke, ON M9V 1P9** or donate online at: www.yws.on.ca

YWS respects your privacy and adheres to all legislative requirements with respect to privacy. We protect your personal information and do not rent, sell or trade our mailing lists. From time to time **YWS** will send you updates on our solutions to homelessness and other opportunities for your involvement. If at any time you would like to be removed from our list, please call **416.748.0110 ext. 26**.

Thank you for "ending homelessness, *one youth at a time, one step at a time.*"