



**YOUTH
WITHOUT
SHELTER**

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IN TRANSITION

Ending homelessness, one youth at a time, one step at a time.

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United Way
Greater Toronto



Sharing passions and strengths in the SIS Program.

I REALIZED MY PASSION IS TO HELP OTHERS

Recently we asked youth to share their experience of living in YWS's Stay in School Program. Here's what they had to say.

Words from a current SIS Program resident:

"It's been a long journey since intake into the Stay in School Program. When I first came I was hesitant to trust anyone. Throughout the day to day interactions with the staff and other residents I slowly began to heal. I began to believe in myself. I began to see a light at the end of the tunnel. Some of the supports I receive here have been counselling and case management supports. My strengths were highlighted and brought to my attention.

I realized that my passion is to help others. I am proud to say that I will be successfully graduating from high school and have been accepted into college. Starting in September, I will be attending a college Child and Youth Care Worker Program."

A former SIS Program resident now living independently expresses:

"There was a point when my life was thrown into chaos. Since I had no way of paying

rent and no job I was trying to decide whether to continue with school or drop-out and get a full-time job. And that's when I went to the Stay in School Program. They could see my plan, gave me advice and supported me with what I wanted to do.

Not only did I successfully finish two years of nursing out of the four-year degree program, they've helped me with coping skills and taught me how to have healthy relationships. Staff counselled me through regular life drama, stressful school break-downs and have helped me manage my anxiety.

The SIS Program has not only clothed, sheltered and fed me but has led to holistic healing to help me be a productive member of society. As an aspiring nurse I'd like to make the comparison of the SIS Program being like a hospital and all the workers there being like the neonatal nurse I aspire to be.

For all the people who have contributed to this program or have worked in the program I am forever grateful. Your contributions have made it possible for the vulnerable population of homeless youth, who are at a statistically terrible disadvantage, to thrive!"



OPP volunteering at T4C 2019, Queen's Park Station.

WE WILL DEFINITELY CONTINUE HELPING YWS WITH TIME4CHANGE

"My name is Christine Wendelgass. I am a Special Constable with the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP). I volunteer my time because I care. I first became involved with Youth Without Shelter (YWS) in 2016 through the Push for Change Campaign as Joe Roberts pushed a shopping cart across Canada to bring awareness to youth homelessness. Joe credited the OPP with saving his life when he was a teen. When Joe made his Toronto appearance I was asked to find a local youth shelter to pair up with our detachment's toiletry drive. That is how the connection to YWS was made.

That first year YWS contacted me about Time4Change (at that time Tokens4Change) and of course we were in. I gathered a group of OPP officers from my detachment

and we volunteered at Osgoode Station. We quickly learned how generous people are in Toronto. We as a team felt a great pride canvassing for transit fare and change that year; and decided right there that this would be an annual event for us.

The following year I requested Queen's Park Station for our T4C volunteering as I would encounter many government workers we know. We had an excellent time. That is the year a special T4C volunteer assisted our team (and has continued to do so each year), her determination is inspiring.

T4C 2019 was just as exciting and fulfilling as previous years. We will definitely continue helping YWS with Time4Change. Such a worthy cause for a very worthy or-

ganization. We had people stop and really engage with the volunteers. I enjoyed when someone asked me about YWS and took in the information I provided. It is wonderful to see that people do care.

I know with the busy hustle and bustle of morning commutes many people just need to get where they are going so when someone takes the time to stop and learn it is heartwarming. The kids today are our future. I will continue to do whatever I can do to help give these kids get a future. I want to thank YWS for allowing me to be a very small part of their wonderful organization."

Christine Wendelgass,
Special Constable, OPP

Thank you from all of us at Youth Without Shelter (YWS) to all the T4C'ers for creating critical awareness about youth homelessness in our city through your involvement with Time4Change 2019, presented by Tangerine.

Together you raised \$88,000 to enable youth experiencing homelessness to transition to stable, independent living. This transit fare will support youth as they strive for their educational goals, search for employment and find a home to call their own.

February 2020: T4C turns 10, details coming soon.



Annual holiday season turkey feast served up by the Pinball Clemons Foundation, family and friends at our "house".

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE MAINSTREAM, TURNING THE INVISIBLE, VISIBLE..POWERFUL, INDEPENDENT, AND STRONG.

This year our partnership with Youth Without Shelter (YWS) celebrates its 6-year anniversary. When we set out on our journey to find the perfect partners to support our goal of empowering youth through education, YWS stood out from all the rest.

As a [Foundation](#) we firmly believe in the incredible potential of every youth that calls YWS home. Through both inspiring on-site volunteer engagement and significant financial investment, our Foundation proudly considers YWS its' second home, specifically its kitchen and dining table. Together we have ensured that healthy food is accessible to each youth to nourish their mind, body and spirit, as they strive for independent living through education and employment.

Every month we look forward to trading in our dress clothes for aprons and pens for spatulas. It is around the dining room table where we come together to trade stories and dreams. It allows our staff to not only bond with the youth but better understand their goals for the future, all while enjoying a wonderful home cooked meal.

Recently, we've taken our partnership to new heights as we have adopted YWS into

our new [Margins to Mainstream](#) model. Through the support of our partners, we're focused on helping the most marginalized youth, from community to career by investing in the best programs that help empower them and create self-sustainability.

Marginalized youth, such as those from the shelter, often feel alienated and excluded from the access and opportunities their peers readily experience. As our partnership evolves and strengthens, we will continue to take more youth from the margins to the mainstream, and turn the invisible, visible...powerful, independent and strong!

The highlight of this new model most certainly has been seeing the youth take an active role in furthering their education.

This past year, youth who have received bursaries from the Pinball Clemons Foundation have participated in monthly mentorship sessions and are given the opportunity to share their ongoing experiences and struggles of post-secondary education with the group.

These sessions include not only financial literacy learnings but also personal growth tactics that help these youth navigate the often-turbulent waters that come with early adulthood. Our team is so excited to see these youth blossom into the adults they are meant to become and these monthly mentorship sessions are a highlight for our team to see their amazing progress.

"We are particularly impressed with the YWS team as they consistently help, heal and inspire youth to aspire. They successfully coach youth to not just deal with their challenges, but to move pass them and focus on education, graduation, employment and independence"

-Michael "Pinball" Clemons

LAUNCHING A 5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

TO BE THERE FOR THE YOUTH WHO NEED US



"Innovation is a team sport." YWS Staff Team and Board of Directors Strategic Planning Nov. 2018.

About a year ago, in March 2018, the YWS Board was excited to learn that YWS had been approved for an [Innoweave](#) grant to guide our strategic planning process. Little did we know what this actually meant and how significant and important the outcome would be for the organization, the board, the staff, the youth and for all those connected to YWS.

Innoweave is an initiative funded by the McConnell Foundation that works with not for profit organizations to assist them in clarifying their mission and strategies in order to maximize impact. A trained facilitator guides the process – and we were lucky enough to have Lynn Ferguson of [Social Impact Advisors](#) who was an incredible guide, mentor, sounding board and driver. A committee was formed consisting of board members, staff members at both leadership and departmental levels and most importantly for all a lived voice in one of our former residents.

This committee met weekly for months – mainly via tele meeting – where we set about on the task of creating a new Theory of Change for YWS. This one page document sets out the long and short-term outcomes that YWS is striving for, the strategies and activities that will get us there and the principles that guide us in taking these actions.

Sounds simple right? A one-page document? With a lot of committed people around the table – how hard could it be? While I am overstating

some of the ease with which we went into the process I'm not sure that any of us anticipated how hard this work would be. Nor how rewarding. How enlightening, how frustrating. How sobering, how exhilarating. We learned from each other in a cooperative effort that drew from the insights of the YWS staff, the youth as well as enthusiasm from the board. We learned from primary quantitative and qualitative research that we did with present and former residents that truly impacted the way we thought and our directions moving forward. We fought over single words and agreed vehemently on the impact we wanted to have. The process brought the whole organization together to focus on what YWS is achieving day in and day out and what we want to strive for in the future.

As a professional who has worked on many team projects I can frankly admit that I have never worked on one where the outcome mattered so much and therefore drove all of us to work so hard. Saying it was important sounds somewhat trite but we all felt it in our guts. The plan we were working on would guide an incredibly important and successful organization forward for the next five years. We knew we needed to find ways to grow but to do so carefully always with a mind to our client's best outcomes.

The result of this work – the new YWS Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024 will be launched on Wednesday, June 5, 2019. It is an exciting and ambitious plan that we believe balances the need

to grow with the needs of our clients. It is optimistic and innovative and we believe it reflects the spirit of the organization and all those involved with it – never straying far from what we know is our fundamental mission – to be there for youth who need us. I am grateful and humbled to have been a part of it.

Sarah Robertson,
Director, YWS Board of Directors
Chair YWS Strategic Planning
Committee



**YOUTH
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Strategic Plan 2019-2024

Join us at YWS on

Wed. June 5, 2019
at
8:00 am

for the launch of the YWS
Strategic Plan 2019-2024.

For details and to RSVP
please contact:
communications@yws.on.ca
416.748.0110 ext. 26



SPRING WISH LIST

Male Athletic Shorts

Sweatpants

Male/Female; all sizes

Food Drives

Non-perishable for Housing After-Care Program

Gift Cards

Walmart, Shoppers Drug Mart, Subway, Rexall Drugs, Dollarama

Please Note: At this time we are only accepting NEW items. Due to limited storage space we are not accepting donations of gently used clothing. Thank you for your understanding. To co-ordinate a food drive contact: volunteer@yws.on.ca



Wednesday, July 10th

A charity golf tournament in support of YWS organized by students in the George Brown Sport and Event Marketing Graduate Program.

Contact

info.swingforchange@gmail.com



Youth Without Shelter is very proud to be recognized as the #1 Canadian charity in the youth category in the 2019 list by Money Sense for financial and social results



Charities in MoneySense Canada 2019

YES!



I/we would like to provide a safe haven for a youth at Youth Without Shelter

- \$25 Provides one youth with one night of shelter at Youth Without Shelter
- \$117 One monthly transit pass for a youth at YWS to strive for educational goals
- \$127 Milk with each meal for one week for 53 youth at YWS
- \$350 Fresh fruit for one month for 53 youth residing at YWS
- I would like to Adopt-A-Bed by contributing this monthly amount
- I would prefer to contribute this amount

Name: _____ Credit Card Number: _____
 Phone Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____ CVC# _____
 Email Address: _____ Signature: _____
 Address: _____

Please return 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 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 or email: communications@yws.on.ca.