

YES' MISSION: YES works to reduce and prevent homelessness by providing shelter, education and transitional supports for youth and families in Peterborough and the Kawarthas.



ANNUAL REPORT 2014 – 2015

This Annual Report summarizes our activities and successes over the past 12 months. More detailed information can be found on our website www.yesshelter.ca.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year, YES updated its mission statement to include the word 'prevent' homelessness, recognizing that this is a critical part of the continuum of responses to addressing homelessness. In reality, YES has always stretched its resources to provide much more than just emergency shelter. Our services include an onsite high school classroom, a food cupboard, life skills programming, as well as transition supports and a transition facility. While at YES, residents receive guidance towards their goals including finding housing, obtaining identification, reconnecting with school, accessing health care, and gaining financial and other supports. Life skills instruction is also offered including cooking, health, hygiene, budgeting, and housing search and retention. Our aim is to equip residents as much as possible to prevent their need for emergency shelter in the future.

However, most youth and families experiencing homelessness are impacted by mental illness or addiction or have experienced

trauma in the form of family violence or the unanticipated destruction of their home through fire or flood. Their needs are complex and diverse. With a steady increase in occupancy – up 21% over last year, YES staff are increasingly stretched to meet the need. We are grateful to the United Way of Peterborough for increasing YES' funding allocation to allow us to augment the support we provide, particularly to our more vulnerable and complex clients. We also aim to increase staffing resources directed towards rapidly re-housing youth and families who are prepared to live independently.

Many youth require accommodation and supports before they are prepared to live well independently. The most powerful outcomes we witness are amongst youth participating in our transitional housing program at Abbott House, where they can live for up to a year with the support of a house mentor. YES' Strategic Plan commits us to exploring how we can expand on our provision of transitional housing.

With the expiration of mortgages, YES will be poised to re-invest in a more suitable transition facility. We are also exploring our capacity to offer longer term 'transitional' stays within the shelter for youth who need an intermediary step before living independently. As well, YES is spearheading a community exploration of how we can support families during the challenging adolescent years, to prevent a youth needing to leave their home.

In the coming years, YES aims to provide more prevention and transitional supports, ideally reducing the demand for our emergency services. We want youth and families to have the resources, skills, and access to safe accommodation to allow them to thrive. This will require an increased investment of volunteer time, research, and financial resources. We thank you for your ongoing support and look forward to partnering with you in new and innovative ways to reduce and prevent homelessness in Peterborough.

Respectfully,



Suzanne Galloway, BES, MA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Coming of Age: Reimagining the Response to Youth Homelessness in Canada by Stephen Gaetz*

“There are three key approaches to ending homelessness: prevention, emergency services, and housing. In Canada, we’ve invested heavily in the middle part.”

STEPHEN GAETZ
Director of the
Canadian Observatory
on Homelessness



YES' MISSION:

YES works to reduce and prevent homelessness by providing shelter, education and transitional supports for youth and families in Peterborough and the Kawarthas.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

It is a pleasure to be writing this message for the 2015 annual report for YES. Suzanne Galloway and her staff have been providing support for the many clients who have come through our doors. We are very proud of our strong and compassionate staff team. This year, we invested in additional staff training and ongoing supports, with the aim of improving the comfort and care provided at our three facilities.

As part of ongoing quality improvement, we ask for feedback from our clients regarding the services and food and lodging they receive while with us. Respondents to this year's survey unanimously agreed or strongly agreed that he or she 'found staff approachable, knowledgeable and capable';

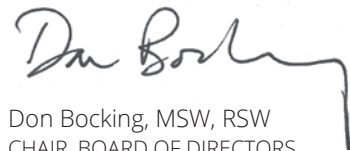
"was treated with respect and fairness by staff" and that "staff understood and responded to my needs and concerns". In fact, all measures were improved over last year's already favourable results – particularly YES' physical environment.

YES received much needed financial support from both private and corporate donors this year. The Home Depot Canada Foundation has been a tremendous supporter. Once again this year, we were the beneficiaries of two of their programs. John Hoffman and his friends held the In From The Cold concerts and raised over \$8,000. Students and staff at Holy Cross and St. Peter's Secondary Schools held their Youth for Youth concert and raised over \$5,000. These events are a significant

support for YES. We are also thankful to our private donors who provide financial support as well as gifts of clothing and food for our clients.

We are grateful to YES' dedicated staff team, community partners, and donors for contributing to another year of growth and positive change at YES.

Thank you,



Don Bocking, MSW, RSW
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS
YES SHELTER FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES

YES' ONGOING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

EMERGENCY SHELTER

YES provided emergency shelter to 248 unique individuals who stayed a total of 7,662 bednights. This is a 21% increase in overall occupancy over last year.

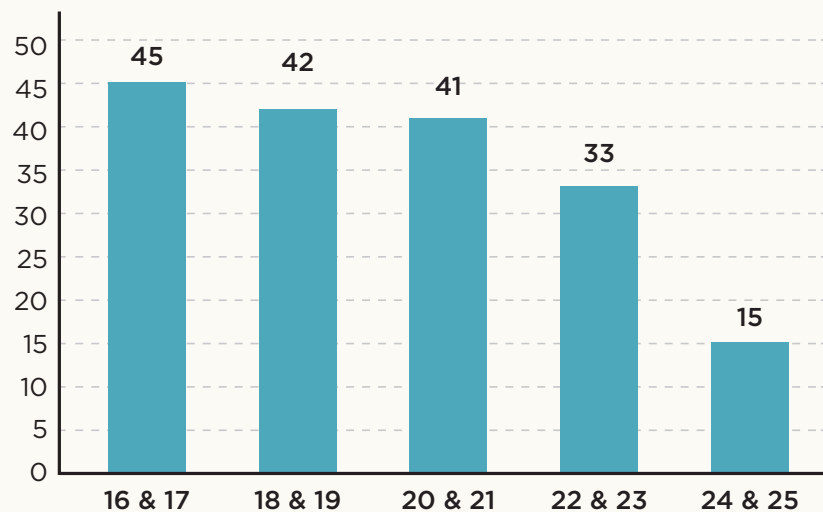
Our separate family section provided shelter for 28 different families, comprising 30 parents and 34 children, and 2 pregnant couples. Compared to last year, there were four more families, but they were smaller (2.6 vs. 3.8 family members). 65 % were single parent families. A quarter of the parents were below the age of 25.

176 different youth (age 16-24) resided at our emergency shelter. The proportion of younger youth (age 16 & 17) rose almost 5% this year. YES' emergency shelter also provided temporary housing to seven youth involved with the Children's Aid Society, through a separate funding contract. Some youth came more than once, given the challenges youth face in maintaining independent housing. The increased prevalence of bed bug infestation in rental units is a noticeable cause of repeat stays for both youth and families.

TRANSITIONAL FACILITY, ABBOTT HOUSE

In 2014/15, nine individuals lived at Abbott House, where youth can reside in safety and stability for up to a year with the support of a part time mentor. Weekly meetings include a shared meal and opportunities to learn

AGE OF YOUTH RESIDENTS 2014/15



about budgeting, cooking, and other life skills – or a fun outing. Two participants had significant savings to put towards their next steps when they moved out, thanks to

a partnership between YES and the City of Peterborough where funds are placed 'in trust' for each participant during the last 6 months of their stay.

"The environment was warm, welcoming and very positive. Staff made me feel like it was home.

I've only been here for less than a day, but I still feel so welcome. The staff has helped me in attempting for transportation home, let me cry, listened to me, and been there no matter what. It feels amazing to feel wanted and appreciated by someone other than my boyfriend for once :)."

CARRIAGE HOUSE SCHOOL

The Carriage House is a high school classroom YES operates in a building behind the shelter, in partnership with the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board. Students can continue to attend the school after they have left the shelter, allowing staff to continue to work with them on their goals. This year, 38 students attended, 28 for more than three months. They earned 33.5 credits and are progressing on an additional 21 credits. One student completed her diploma. She

was particularly proud as she was the first member of her family to receive this important credential. The Carriage House School is critically important as just 1 in 3 youth experiencing homelessness graduate high-school vs. 9 in 10 housed youth*.

FOOD AND CLOTHING CUPBOARD

This past year, over 250 households used YES' food and clothing cupboard, comprising over 900 individuals. This service acts as a preventative measure in that it allows all youth (aged 16-24) and past family residents to check in regularly with YES staff to get ongoing support. As well, it enables tenants to put more funds towards rent and still have food. Recipients benefit from YES' partnership with Red Lobster that provides seafood to our cupboard.

TRANSITION WORKER PROGRAM

YES' Youth-In-Transition Worker engaged 44 youth involved with the Children's Aid Society (CAS) this year. With over 40% of youth in Canadian experiencing homelessness coming from foster care or group homes*, this program that guides CAS-involved youth in their transition into adulthood is an important asset in preventing homelessness. This program is funded by The Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

"If not for the Carriage House School, I would not have been able to finish high school as regular school never worked for me."

Carriage House Student,
FIRST IN HER FAMILY
TO GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL.

"Thank you for helping me with all the school stuff today and before. Moving, taking me places, etc. You have no idea how much I appreciate it all."

CLIENT SUPPORTED
BY YES' TRANSITION WORKER

NEW COLLABORATIONS IN 2014/15

WORKING WITH CLIENTS ON THEIR GOALS

YES was able to hire on a new full time case manager through increased funding from the United Way of Peterborough. Already she has had great successes in helping clients navigate the mental health system, gain access to supports around their addiction, find primary health care, or advocate for better service provision. The case manager's ability to go off site means she can accompany a client to a first appointment and can visit rental properties to both support the client in presenting well to landlords and to also assess the safety and suitability of the rental situation.

We are equally excited that the Four County Addiction Services Team will place an intensive case manager on-site at YES every afternoon, starting summer 2015. This individual can help YES staff navigate clinical systems, gain access to medical diagnoses and propose care plans for individuals with more complex presentations. The aim of this more robust case management team is to ensure that youth and families are as prepared as possible to attain and maintain housing, equating to better outcomes for clients and fewer repeat visits to the shelter.

RECONNECTING YOUTH WITH THEIR FAMILIES

Twenty four percent of individuals seeking shelter at YES identify "family/relationship breakdown" as the primary reason for their homelessness. To respond to this evident opportunity for prevention, YES has convened over a dozen community partners to explore how we can collaboratively support families of adolescents. The group started meeting in February 2015 to develop a plan for proactive programming to enhance family functioning with a crisis response to provide mediation/supports when a youth is at risk of leaving the family home. We are grateful to the United Way of Peterborough's Innovation Fund for providing funds to help move this collaboration forward.

INCREASING YOUTH VOICE

In December 2014, YES was one of four organizations across Canada to be awarded \$25,000 from The Home Depot Canada Foundation to increase the voice of youth. The grant supports YES to foster safe and creative spaces for youth to express themselves including arts programming and speakers development. Visual arts will be offered, but also writing and performance based arts to assist youth in developing long term and sustainable art practices that they do not need costly materials or space to do.

As well, YES is excited to expand our regular gathering of client feedback to include a more structured Youth Advisory Committee. Developing youth's voice will help them advocate for themselves as well as inform YES' service provision and increase awareness of the distinct nature of youth homelessness and how to address it.

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Youth experiencing homelessness are often lacking the education, skills and work habits to land a job. YES has formed a partnership with the Peterborough Housing Corporation to clean out their vacant units. YES staff will mentor clients in this work so they can gain concrete skills, a work reference, and earn some much-needed extra cash.

As well, volunteers are repairing screens in our woodshop, as a way to generate revenue for YES programs and to mentor youth in a productive task. We see this as a first step towards expanding skill building opportunities in our fully-outfitted woodshop, as more resources and volunteers become available. We are grateful to the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough for providing funds to develop a business plan around these and other ventures.

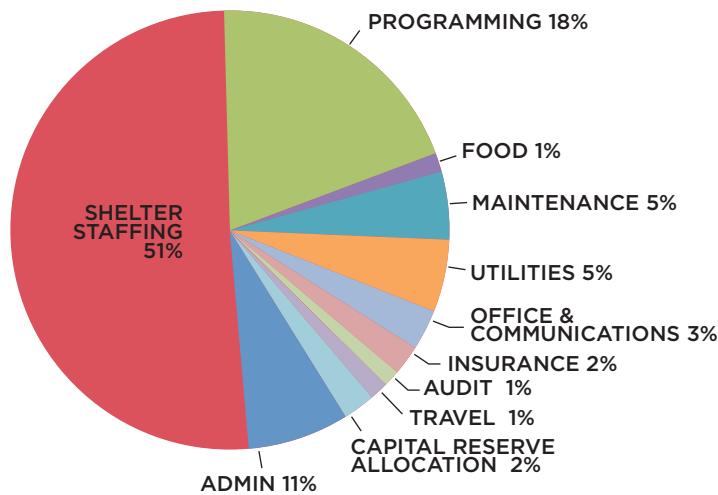
THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

YES could not offer the breadth of services we do without the help of volunteers and students. This year's recipient of the Don Lynch Memorial Volunteer of the Year award is Bill Shields. Bill joined us as a skilled driver and has quickly become indispensable, willingly collecting our food cupboard supplies, driving clients to outings such as our weekly YMCA trip or to the zoo, picking up supplies, and patiently helping clients move their belongings (sometimes more than once!). YES is also grateful to the over 115 volunteers who contributed hundreds of hours doing maintenance, cooking, pick-ups, sorting donations, staffing the food cupboard, and many other tasks that allow us to service our clients better.

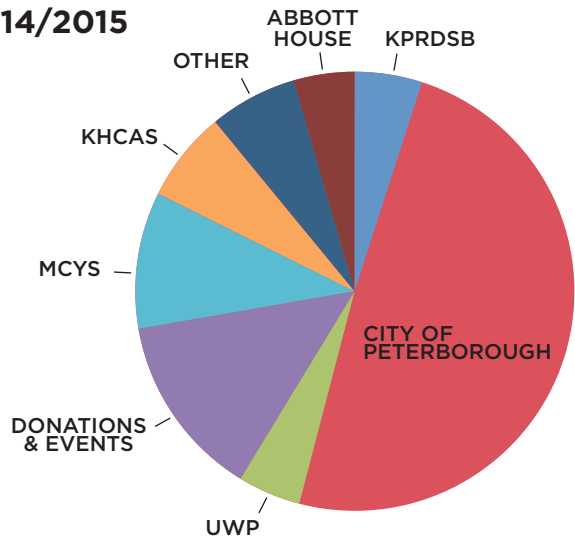
THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The funding YES receives from the City of Peterborough provides for just one worker to be on shift. YES must fundraise to have two staff on shift to provide appropriate service and safety for clients. YES also relies on fundraised dollars to support our food bank, classroom, and transitional supports. As well, your donations of items allow us to do those extra things such as celebrate a birthday or offer a homemade quilt for warmth. Your contributions provide services to those in crisis and are also investments in case management and transitional supports to reduce the need for services in the future. We are sincerely grateful for your generosity – you truly make a difference in the lives of youth and families.

EXPENSES 2014/2015



REVENUE 2014/2015



250 HOUSEHOLDS USED OUR FOOD CUPBOARD, FEEDING 900 INDIVIDUALS.



9 YOUTH RESIDED IN OUR TRANSITION HOUSE WITH THE SUPPORT OF A MENTOR.

177 DIFFERENT YOUTH STAYED IN OUR EMERGENCY SHELTER.

44 youth with involvement with the Children's Aid Society received dedicated support from our Youth-In-Transition Worker program.

115 VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED HUNDREDS OF UNPAID HOURS.

38 YOUTH ATTENDED OUR ON-SITE HIGH SCHOOL.

248 unique individuals stayed a total of 7662 bednights in our emergency shelter.

28 different families and 177 different youth stayed in our emergency shelter.



125 INDIVIDUALS USED OUR CLOTHING CUPBOARD.