

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016 - 2017

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 OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This was an exciting year, as the YES Shelter for Youth and Families developed a new strategic plan, launched new services, and fostered a community-wide effort to prevent and reduce youth homelessness, "A Way Home Peterborough". As we stretched ourselves to take on these strategic new initiatives, demand for YES' emergency shelter was the greatest ever this year.

In the past 5 years, youth occupancy has increased 48% and family occupancy has more than doubled. Most telling is that the number of different individuals using the shelter each year has not increased significantly overall. The consistently escalating demand on the shelter is driven by youth and families being forced to stay longer and sometimes return to the shelter because they cannot find or maintain housing.

YES is providing excellent emergency shelter care – and much more. We collaborate with the Four County Addiction Services Team on site to help clients navigate their mental health and substance use challenges. Our partnership with the VON 360° Clinic connects clients with health care. We operate a high school classroom and a food/clothing cupboard to support youth and past family residents when they are in the community. But this is not enough.

Peterborough's hot housing market is further exacerbating an already dreadful lack of affordable housing. At YES, we see first-hand how hard it is for a family to regroup after they have lost their home. Youth are challenged to find landlords who will rent to them. They sometimes struggle with independent living due to their lack of skills or maturity. Extensive research shows that

being stably housed increases the likelihood of success in most aspects of an individual's life. YES – and the entire community – needs to direct our efforts to preventing homelessness and supporting individuals to find housing and keep it.

Emergency shelter is a critical safety service in our community that will always be needed. But, we need to combat the misperception that an emergency shelter is a preferred destination – particularly for vulnerable youth and families. If we predict that a family or youth will become homeless and our only response is an emergency shelter, it's as risky and expensive as planning to go to the hospital emergency department. Short term emergency care – whether at a hospital or shelter – most often does not offer long term solutions. So the client will return, at great cost to them and the system. Similar to a hospital emergency department, a shelter cannot continuously operate at peak capacity, without a negative impact on client care and staff wellness.

YES' funding from the City mandates us to provide shelter to 15 youth and 15 family members at a time. However, 60% of this past year, we had more than 15 youth residing in our emergency shelter (up from 46% last year). This, combined with a 77% increase in family occupancy over last year, has put much stress on YES' staff and building. Despite the rise in occupancy, YES has invested in understanding and planning how to reorient our work towards preventing homelessness and rapidly rehousing individuals.

Not only does this approach better support individuals, but it also prevents them needing emergency shelter as adults. It is heartbreak-

ing that we lack the resources to make this wise investment that would both improve lives of youth and families in our community and reduce the grueling demand on our emergency services.

Going forward, YES' new strategic plan commits the agency to direct precious resources to best effect while taking care of our staff. We will reorient existing resources and seek additional funding to align our service delivery with evidence-based practice. YES' proven success in providing preventative and longer term supports to youth must be expanded. Adopting a prevention approach to family homelessness is the right thing to do. We know what to do, but need help to make it happen. We call on the entire community to consider how they can support youth and families to become stably housed.

This summer, I will be passing the leadership of YES to an energetic, new Executive Director. I'm pleased to be leaving YES with a strong staff team, committed volunteers, a smart and strategic board, and solid community support. I am grateful to YES volunteers, staff, clients, and community supporters for four years of work together and all you have taught me about compassion, resilience, and the precious privilege of my own home.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suzanne Galloway".

Suzanne Galloway  
Executive Director



## YES' 5 STRATEGIC DIRECTIVES 2017/18-2020/21

**Clarify YES'  
Role within the  
Continuum  
of Services**

**Sustainable  
Growth**

**Youth Support  
to Adulthood**

**Family  
Homelessness  
Prevention**

**Thriving  
Personally &  
Professionally**

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

For over 16 years, YES has provided support to some of the most vulnerable within our community. This past year was no exception and the need for support has grown substantially. With increased partnerships and programs, as identified within this report, YES remains a leader in the community for youth and families in a housing crisis.

This past year, the board and staff worked to create an updated strategic plan. With this plan, YES is better aligned to meet the needs of today and years to come. The core of this plan focuses the efforts of YES towards the enhancement of our homelessness prevention and transitional support services to further align with best practices and provide the best possible outcomes for the community members we support. It also reaffirms the need for community wide approach to youth and family homelessness.

Without the support of dedicated volunteers YES would not be able to complete the important work it does each and every day.

Volunteers show up to help in a variety of different roles and their dedication and willingness to help is something that we are extremely fortunate and thankful for.

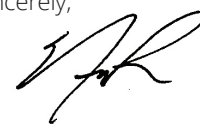
Every donor, with their generous support, makes a difference in the lives of youth and families within this community who are struggling with homelessness. We are eternally grateful to all of our donors that help us provide crisis services and invest in changing lives. Without these donations YES would be unable to open its doors to serve the most vulnerable in our community.

The backbone of this organization is the dedicated staff that go above and beyond to provide the best possible care to the community members we support. I want to personally thank all of the staff for their dedication and compassion over the past year. With your commitment, we are making a difference in this community and for each individual we help.

Suzanne Galloway, YES' current Executive Director, will be stepping down from her role with YES in July. Her dedication, empathy, and advocacy has helped to significantly grow YES' services and reputation. She has provided a steady, strong, and compassionate voice for the youth and families within our community for over four years and has made a difference in the lives of countless individuals. We wish Suzanne all the best in her future endeavors

Finally, on behalf of the entire board, I would again like to thank our donors, volunteers and staff for another fantastic year. We look forward to continuing the mission of reducing and preventing youth and family homelessness within our community.

Sincerely,



Nick Powers  
Chair, board of Directors

## YES' ONGOING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### EMERGENCY SHELTER

**Occupancy in YES' emergency shelter 2016/17 was the highest ever, largely due to a 77% increase in family occupancy over the last year.** In 2015/16, YES provided safety, a warm bed, meals, laundry, and care to 273 different individuals who stayed a total of 9,075 bednights.

YES provided emergency shelter to 34 different families, comprising 46 parents and 50 children. 65% were single parent families.

35% of the parents were below the age of 25, (up 10% over previous years). The average stay for a family is double that for individuals.

177 different youth (age 16-24) resided at our emergency shelter. YES provides shelter to some youth more than once, given the challenges young people face in maintaining their housing independently. One in five of these youth are 16 or 17 years of age. YES' emergency shelter also provided temporary housing to several youth involved with the Children's Aid Society through a separate funding contract.

victimization if living without supports. Six youth were diverted from ever being in the shelter and instead moved directly into Abbott House.

### CARRIAGE HOUSE SCHOOL

**Over half of youth experiencing homelessness drop out of school. Three quarters want to return to school\*. YES' alternative classroom provides a smooth path for homeless youth to reengage with their education.**

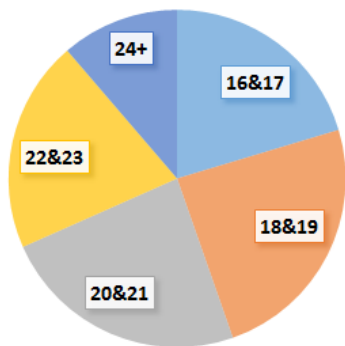
The classroom is an intimate, comfortable loft space in the old carriage house behind the shelter. The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School board provides a teacher and the classroom support worker is a YES staff, who encourages attendance with reminders, food, and helping youth manage any crises in their lives.

This year, 23 students attended, 12 for more than three months. They earned 22.5 credits and made progress on 17 credits. The average age of students was 18, with an average of 11 credits earned. The school board's goal is 16 years old with 16 credits, indicating that the Carriage House is engaging students who have not been successful in mainstream, schools.

### TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM AT ABBOTT HOUSE

**YES' transitional housing program sees incredible outcomes from providing youth with safety and stability for up to one year.** A coordinator hosts weekly meetings with a shared meal and opportunities to learn life skills or a fun outing. In 2016/17, 12 different participants were supported to reach their goals including finishing high school, applying to college, securing employment, learning to budget and cook, participating in diversion from the youth criminal justice system, and dealing with chronic illness. Seven of 12 Abbott House participants this year were age 16 or 17 who would face even more challenge and likelihood of

AGE OF YOUTH IN YES SHELTER 2016/17



## FOOD AND CLOTHING CUPBOARD Less than half of homeless youth can get quality food each week\*.

**YES' food cupboard fed 160 households, comprising over 350 individuals.** Many low-income households must choose between paying the rent and buying food or clothing. This service also provides an opportunity to check in monthly with past clients and provide ongoing supports.

## TRANSITION WORKER PROGRAM

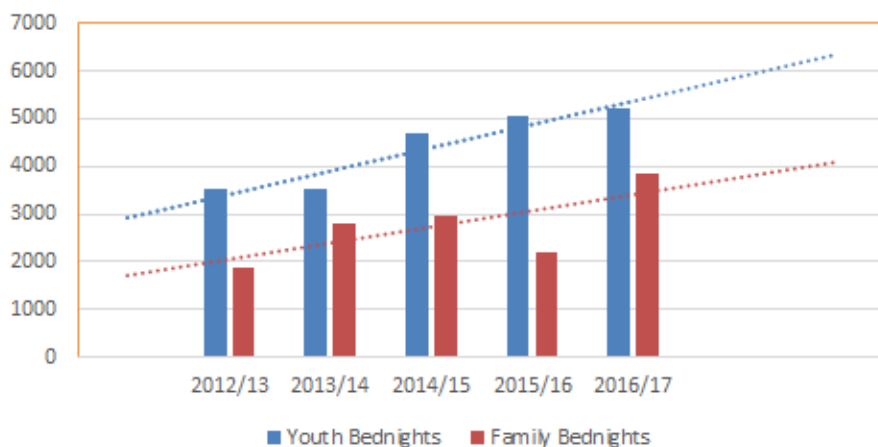
**48% of Peterborough's homeless youth have been in a foster care or group home\*\* YES' Transition Worker supports them to transition more successfully into adulthood.** Of 53 youth served by this program, 16 were diverted from using/returning to the shelter. Youth (aged 16-24) with involvement in the Children's Aid Society are supported to move forward on their goals as diverse as housing, researching college bursaries, navigating the justice system, or finding health care. This year, a monthly group was started to provide support to youth in a peer-led environment. This program is important in Peterborough City & County which has a particularly high number of private foster and group homes serving Ontario youth.

## YOUTH VOICE

The experts in our work are youth experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity. YES incorporates the voice of youth in many ways. We conduct an annual client survey and host focus groups to seek feedback on YES' services and community programs. This spring, YES engaged youth in taking photos for the Shot! Youth Lens on Homelessness exhibit hosted as part of the

2017 Spark Photo Festival. Ongoing, YES offers youth who have been involved in our services an opportunity for creative expression at a weekly drop in where they are engaged in a variety of arts. A highlight this year was collaborating with Public Energy to bring the authentic street dance troupe Bboyizm to share some moves with the youth we serve.

## YES SHELTER OCCUPANCY 2012-2017



## NEW INITIATIVES IN 2016/17

### A WAY HOME PETERBOROUGH

A Way Home Peterborough originated in February 2015 when YES drew partners together to foster supports for youth who were homeless/at imminent risk of becoming homeless within their family context. This year, the group engaged with A Way Home Canada to broaden their initial ambitions into a broad strategy that calls upon systems and citizens to work together to prevent and reduce youth homelessness in Peterborough. We are exploring change to systems and services to ensure that youth (and their families) receive the support they need to be stably housed and move forward in their lives.

YES is thrilled with the potential of this initiative to create fundamental change to how we address youth homelessness. We are grateful to Innoweave and the Homelessness Partnering Strategy for their support of this work. Please visit [www.awayhomeptbo.ca](http://www.awayhomeptbo.ca) for more information or to get involved.



### YOUTH OUTREACH WORKER

In spring 2016, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services provided funding for a Youth Outreach Worker (YOW) at YES and a more clinical 'Enhanced' Youth Outreach Worker at Peterborough Youth Services. The application cited the need to collaboratively support youth within their family context, since 45% of youth cite 'family breakdown' as the reason they are at the shelter.

Since July of this year, the YOW has intervened with 13 families and 35 youth, and 216 individuals were engaged in groups. He has often acted as a mediator between caregivers and youth, fostering this key natural support regardless of whether the decision is for the youth to stay/return home. With his presence in the community, he has diverted 12 youth from coming to the shelter, and supported 4 to stay with their family. As part of this work, YES fostered collaboration amongst many agency resources to offer a pilot 9 week skills-building program for youth aged 11-16 and their families.

### HOUSING SUPPORT WORKER

For a few months in 2016/17, YES was able to direct a small amount of one time funding

towards a worker who was intensely helping YES shelter residents find and maintain their housing. The success was tremendous! The shelter was the most empty it had been in months.

A dedicated staff cheerleader residents to find a suitable place, coached them in relating well with landlords and took them to housing viewings – inspecting for herself the suitability/safety of the dwelling. Following best-practice, she made sure they had everything they needed to settle in and checked in regularly to encourage a successful tenancy. She kept some out of the shelter altogether, meaning that children weren't exposed to homelessness and youth avoided becoming street-entrenched.

Analysis of YES' intake tool shows that 85% of youth need help to secure and maintain housing. This is best for the homeless person and cost-effective in the long run. Few existing community supports are dedicated or even inquire about housing stability, despite extensive research that shows it underpins a client's ability to succeed. *continued on page 4*

YES is determined to find sustainable funding to continue this proven service that not only improves client outcomes but also reduces the burden on shelter capacity.

### CAPITAL REPLACEMENT PLANNING

As a residential service, YES' most important asset is the safety and comfort of a well maintained building. Since the shelter was built 15

years ago, all our fixtures are reaching the end of their life. With the help of Landry Construction, YES has developed a capital replacement budget that identifies over \$275,000 of needed repairs/replacements in the next three years. We have been judiciously allocating any funds we can to a capital replacement reserve, but will need to fundraise additional dollars to meet the need.

## THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

YES is also grateful to the over 120 volunteers who contributed hundreds of hours painting, landscaping, sorting donations, driving, staffing the food cupboard, doing data entry or analysis, and many other tasks that increase the breadth of services we are able to offer.

This year's recipient of the Don Lynch Memorial Volunteer of the Year award is Megan Hennessy. Megan has been volunteering at YES since 2015. Her friendly and open nature is an asset to those she serves at YES food cupboard and her exceptional data analysis skills have created many helpful reports. She also helps with fundraising events and sorting in our donations room. It is truly remarkable to have a volunteer so willing to help out wherever she is needed – always with reliability, solid follow through and a smile.

We were thrilled to receive a \$50,000 donation from Les Cassidy to install a new metal roof. Thanks to the generosity of Les, Havelock Metal (who donated \$10,000 of metal), and others, we will also be able to replace our eaves troughs and remove unused chimneys as part of the project.

We thank the following organizations who offered significant financial support the past year: the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough, Galerie Q, The Home Depot Canada Foundation, the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, Innoweave, the Kawartha Credit Union, the Lloyd-Carr Harris Foundation, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Parkview Homes, the Professional Alumni Hockey Association, the Tippet Foundation, and the United Way of Peterborough.

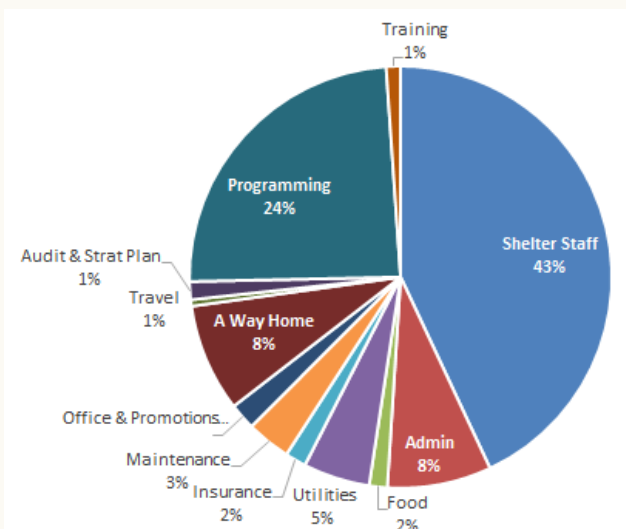
## THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

As illustrated below, YES fundraises 15% of our budget through foundation grants and individual/corporate donations. The City of Peterborough provides YES with less than 85% of the funding required to operate just the shelter. To offer this critical emergency service, YES must fundraise the difference. YES also relies on fundraised dollars to support our food bank, classroom, and transitional house. At a time when we want to invest in prevention, the demands on our crisis services are consuming ever more resources. Your donations not only help us provide crisis services, but also to invest in supports to reduce the need for services in the future.

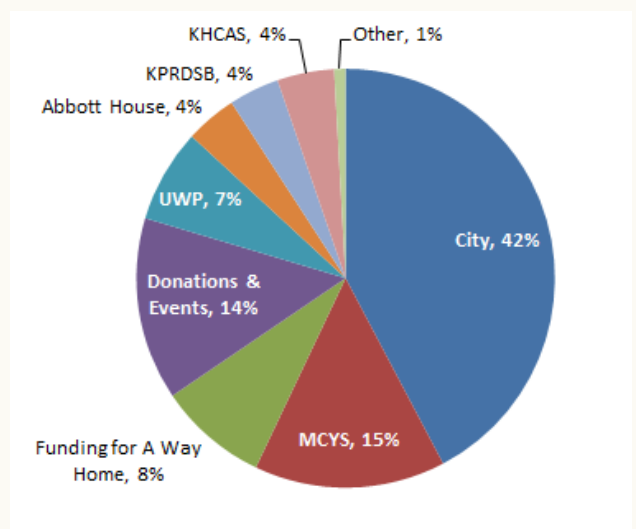
We are grateful to those who fundraise on our behalf including: Galerie Q, Home Depot (Peterborough Store), the annual In From the Cold concert hosted by John Hoffman and friends, Kettle Drums Restaurant and Bar, Northminster United Church, the Peterborough Lion's Club, RE/MAX Eastern Realty Inc., St. Peters and Holy Cross secondary schools, and the Trent Fashion Show. Local companies support YES through sponsorships and days where staff volunteer at YES including: General Electric and TD bank. Weekly, the Peterborough Navy Club donates food and Red Lobster provides seafood to our food cupboard.

So many of you support YES in small and large ways. We are sincerely grateful for your generosity – you truly make a difference in the lives of youth and families.

### EXPENSES 2016/2017



### REVENUE 2016/2017



\* Stephen Gaetz, et al. (2016). *Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.  
 \*\*United Way of Peterborough and District (2016). *Giving Voice...Peterborough's 2016 Point-in-Time Count of Homelessness*