

ANNUAL REPORT 2017–2018

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

It has been a very busy year at YES. I have finished my first year as Executive Director, and have spent this year consistently grateful for the staff, students, volunteers and supporters that make YES so dynamic. We have continued to respond this year to the high numbers of youth and families finding themselves homeless. We spent most of July, August and September 2017 at 104% capacity. While responding to our community's housing crisis, we have continued to stretch ourselves, asking how we can better serve youth and families, by preventing and reducing homelessness as much as possible.

We have spent a lot of this year building on YES' continuum of service, ensuring youth have what they need to succeed. An outreach team has been established, supporting youth via our Youth Outreach Worker, Youth in Transition Worker and Youth Housing Support Worker. We were successful in obtaining funding for an additional position from the Ministry of Child and Youth Services, supporting youth 16-18 years old who are newly involved in the Child Welfare System. This team has spent the last year supporting 228 youth in the community. This work is evidence based, and we are proud of the positive outcomes achieved by this type of work. This team supported 48 youth who would have otherwise needed the emergency shelter to resolve their situation without finding themselves homeless.

Despite all of the services provided at YES, it is not enough and does not match the need in our community. This year we will continue to work towards more.

The Canada Rental Housing Index rates the overall health of the rental market in Peterborough City and County as severe, and our core housing need is one of the highest in the country. This unhealthy rental market has a huge impact on the most marginalized, and our clients feel that every day.

In March 2018 the City of Peterborough and United Way of Peterborough completed a count of homelessness in the City and County of Peterborough. This valuable report shows the scope of the work we have to do. 259 people were identified as experiencing homelessness in Peterborough and 23% of them are youth or families who need YES' support. The study found that 58% of all people experiencing homelessness in Peterborough were homeless for the first time before the age of 25. YES' work is critical, and this reminds us that if we can end homelessness for the youth who come through YES' doors, we are truly supporting an end to the cycle of homelessness. What an opportunity we have to support youth and families to meet their goals!

Over 1/3 of the homeless youth surveyed in the A Roof Over My Head Report, are chronically homeless and 72% of them had a physical health issue. We know that the longer a youth spends homeless, the greater the chance that they will engage in high risk behaviours. We want to move people from shelter to housing quickly, but Peterborough's rental market makes this a challenge. YES' Transitional Housing program accomplishes this goal, and ensures youth have safety and stability for a year with support of positive role models and compassionate staff.

However, in this past fiscal year we served 145 youth in the emergency shelter, and were only able to accommodate 13 youth in our transitional housing program due to limited space. For the 2018/19 year, YES will be focusing on expanding this program, ensuring youth move from homelessness to possibility. We will need your help to make this dream a reality.

In YES' most recent strategic plan, we made a commitment to supporting staff to thrive in their work. We are happy to share that all YES staff now have access to an Employee Assistance Plan, providing 24/7 counselling whenever staff need it. The front line staff at YES, work hard every single day. When our community partners close at 5pm on Friday afternoons, YES staff are there. Our staff have the privilege of being there for birthday celebrations, or to hear about a youth's great day at school. But most of the time, they are there at 3am, when a young person has had a terrifying nightmare, or is contemplating suicide. I want to send my sincerest appreciation to each member of the YES team, you make a difference every single day. You have been compassionate and empathetic during a year of transition. I look forward to another year of this important work with each of you.

As the 2018/2019 year gets started, we have started the work to expand transitional housing. We call on you, and the entire community of Peterborough to help us make this dream a reality.

Sincerely,

Meagan La Plante



Meagan La Plante
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

This year YES is holding its 18th Annual General Meeting. We celebrated a milestone anniversary in March with an evening acknowledging so many amazing aspects of YES—youth sharing their own stories of impact YES had on their lives, welcoming back friends from over the years, and hearing from YES’s original Executive Director, David Haw, about how YES originated so many years ago. We learned, from its inception, YES has been a grass roots organization, developed from a need in our community. Sadly, that need remains and continues to grow today.

This past year the board and staff have worked, as outlined in the strategic plan, to enhance our homeless prevention efforts and housing support services. This has been made possible through the addition/expansion of programs that align with best practices supported through research in the field. New resources however are only possible through donations and new funding partners who also realize it is not enough to provide food and a safe place to sleep. Long-term solutions are imperative to break the cycle of homelessness.

Our volunteers at YES contribute to YES life in so many ways. From our volunteer board members, to those who ensure there is a nutritious lunch for Soupstock, providing a traditional dinner Christmas Day, sorting

donations, transporting clients, to beautifying our properties so that they feel like home—dedicated volunteers make that important difference at YES 365 days of the year. Everyone at YES is so grateful to these folks.

Every donation to YES makes a difference in the lives of our clients. Without the generous support from our community, YES would be unable to provide services and programs to youth and families struggling with homelessness. Without these donations YES would be unable to open our doors to assist the most vulnerable in our community.

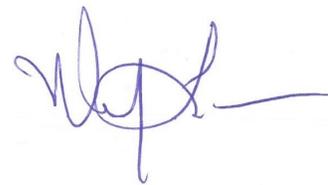
This year we welcomed Meagan La Plante as our new Executive Director and Jeremy Robinson as Shelter Manager. It has been a pleasure working with Meagan and Jeremy and watching them address the many challenges of this year with grace and professionalism. I am confident YES is in extremely good hands.

At YES, dedicated staff report for work 24/7 committed to making a difference in clients’ lives. Daily they are faced with difficult situations that they confront in a professional, empathetic manner. It is evident that the staff at YES are passionate about their work and care deeply about the welfare of every individual that walks through the door. Thank you for all you do.

Relationships and community partnerships further developed and initiated over the past year have demonstrated the role YES plays in leading the way towards reducing and preventing youth and family homelessness. We are proud of the leadership role YES has played in the community for these two populations.

Lastly, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to again acknowledge our donors, volunteers and staff for their contribution to making this past year at YES truly remarkable. I look forward to the year ahead with optimism knowing the positive difference YES is making in this community.

Sincerely,



Wendy Love
Chair, Board of Directors

YES’ PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

EMERGENCY SHELTER

The numbers in the emergency shelter remained high again this year, similar to what we experienced in 2016/17. In 2017/18, YES provided safety, a warm bed, three daily meals, laundry, and care to 224 unique individuals who stayed a total of 8,485 bednights.

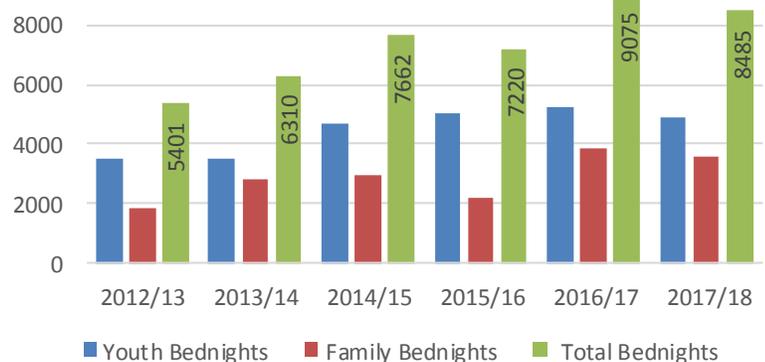
YES’ emergency shelter has a separate family section where we provide emergency shelter to anyone with custody of a child. YES provided emergency shelter to 36 different families, comprising 42 parents and 38 children. Similar to previous years, 36% of the parents served in the family emergency shelter, were between 16-24 years old.

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 opportunities to learn life skills. A Senior Resident makes Abbott House special, ensures there’s someone there during the night, that the house is warm and welcoming and celebrates each young person’s achievements. In 2017/18, 13 youth were supported to reach their goals including finishing high school, applying to college, securing employment, learning to budget, and participating in diversion from the youth criminal justice system. The diversity of these accomplishments also indicates the myriad and complexity of obstacles that youth face as they transition into adulthood.

For most youth, these supports are provided by parents, but the youth YES serves do not often have this. The current building limits occupancy to seven youth at a time, not enough given the number of youth YES sees. YES will be would like to investing in these services, to ensure more youth are supported into their adulthood by acquiring a new transitional housing facility. We will need your help to make this a reality.

YES Shelter Occupancy 2012-2018



CARRIAGE HOUSE SCHOOL

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 rises in their lives. This year, 33 students attended, collectively earning 20 credits and 3 students graduated with their high school diploma. Carriage House ensures youth do not experience a significant disruption to their studies due to homelessness.

YOUTH OUTREACH WORKER

YES' Youth Outreach Worker has supported 18 families and 68 youth over this year. Often acting 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. The YOW further supports youth who are unconnected to services, ideally trying to meet youth before they become homeless, and supporting them to find independent housing or housing with a natural support system in their community.

FOOD AND CLOTHING CUPBOARD

YES' food cupboard fed 375 households, comprising over 475 individuals, and 395 people used our clothing cupboard. Many low-income households must choose between paying the rent and buying food or clothing. YES aims to help with our food and clothing cupboard that is open to any youth aged 16-24 and to families that have resided at YES. This service also provides an opportunity to check in with past clients and provide ongoing housing supports or referrals.

A WAY HOME PETERBOROUGH

This year, A Way Home Peterborough continued its systems work to prevent and reduce youth homelessness. AWHP is a collaborative initiative with over 30 organizations in Peterborough working together to improve the system that homeless youth use in our community. 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 currently hosts the project, and is excited to see the potential of this initiative to grow and continue. We are grateful to Innoweave for making this important work possible. Please visit www.awayhomeptbo.ca for more information or to get involved.



YOUTH IN TRANSITION WORKER

This year, 69 youth were supported. The Transition Worker serves youth (aged 16-24) who have involvement in the Children's Aid Society (CAS) to move forward on their goals as diverse as find housing, researching college bursaries, navigating the justice system, or finding health care. YES has appreciated the strengthening of our partnership with Kawartha Haliburton CAS as we continue to work together to serve youth in our community.

NEW INITIATIVES IN 2017/18

YOUTH TRUSTEE WORKER

This year, the City of Peterborough received funding from the province to ensure those who require the highest level of support, have what they need to succeed and exit homelessness. Partnering with Fourcast, and the 360 Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic, a program has been developed for youth who need intensive case management and supports. YES is providing trustee services for these youth. The Trustee program is critical to teaching youth vital life-skills around budgeting, and ensuring their success with their finances.

EMERGENCY SHELTER PREVENTION

Workers at YES have been working hard to meet with youth before they enter the emergency shelter whenever possible. This year, 48 youth were able to resolve their housing crisis without accessing the emergency shelter. Each of these youth were connected to a YES Outreach Worker, who supported them in moving forward on their goals, ensuring stability, and safety.

YOUTH HOUSING SUPPORT WORKER

YES' strategic plan commits us to preventing, and reducing youth homelessness as much as possible. This year, through funding from the United Way of Peterborough, we were able to ensure youth have the support they need to move on from the emergency shelter, and develop a home for themselves in the community.

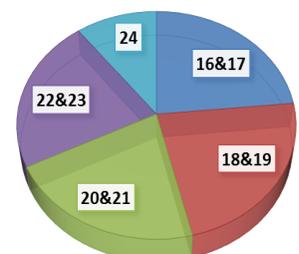
A dedicated youth housing support worker supported 45 youth residents to find housing in the community. She regularly took youth to viewings, checking for the suitability and safety of the housing. Using best practice in housing homeless youth, she supported youth to complete their applications, and acquire their new housing.

This support has proven to be extremely effective for youth in our community. The program continues to struggle with finding willing landlords, but we remain committed to doing so. The Youth Housing Support Worker has been able to develop strong connections with some landlords, who appreciate having an adult staff member to call if their new youth tenant needs support.

CAPITAL REPLACEMENT PLANNING

As a residential service, YES' most important asset is the safety and comfort of a well maintained building. The shelter was built more than 15 years ago, and our building needs significant maintenance to ensure we operate well. We have developed a capital replacement budget, and this year were able to replace all of our furnaces and air conditioners. We have found several of our bathrooms regularly flooding due to the volume of people we now serve. We have been carefully allocating funds to the capital reserve, but anticipate needing to replace all emergency shelter bathrooms over the next year.

Age of Youth in Shelter 2017/18



THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

YES is also grateful to the volunteers who contributed so many hours to YES' success this year. Volunteers regularly support YES to ensure we look our best, and are comfortable for clients— painting, patching dry wall, re-doing our parking lot, landscaping our gardens, driving youth to housing viewings, organizing our food and clothing cupboard and much more.

This year's recipient of the Don Lynch Memorial Volunteer of the Year award is Brian Landry. Brian started as a Board Member, and is now an exuberant member of our Fundraising Committee. This year, Brian dedicated his time to coordinating YES' 15th Anniversary Celebration. He convened a group of volunteers, and ensured every detail was taken care of— from the invitations and speeches to special guests and food. His positive, outgoing attitude is infectious, and his passion for YES shines through everything he does. We are grateful for his energy, support and enthusiasm for YES.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

YES would not be here without you. As you can see below, YES fundraises over 15% of our operating budget each year. The City of Peterborough provides YES with 85% of what it costs to run the life-saving emergency shelter. YES also relies on fundraised dollars to operate our food bank, clothing cupboard, classroom and transitional housing program. A number of community members donate to YES monthly—we are particularly grateful for this consistent, predictable support—thank you to everyone who chooses to support us this way. This year, fundraised dollars contributed to replacing our furnaces that were over 15 years old. Each time you donate, you ensure the crisis shelter service is available all year round, and are investing in the supports youth and families need to prevent and reduce the need for services in the future.

This year, we were so grateful to be chosen by Wildrock, to receive proceeds from their 25th Anniversary Celebrations, and their annual Banff International Film Festival. Wildrock's commitment to supporting vulnerable youth and families is admirable. 100 Men of Peterborough graciously supported YES with over \$10,000 that was used to replace the old windows and flooring in our family shelter rooms.

We thank the following organizations who offered significant financial support the past year: The Peterborough Foundation, Part Time CFO Services, The Home Depot Canada Foundation, The Homelessness Partnering Strategy, Innoweave, Ontario Realtor's Care Foundation, Riley's Pub, Kawartha Youth Unlimited, Kawartha Credit Union, The Lloyd-Carr-Harris Foundation, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, the Professional Alumni Hockey Association, the Tippet Foundation, and the United Way of Peterborough. The Peterborough Navy Club, Black Honey, Joanne's Place and the BEL Rotary Club's regular deliveries of food helps reduce our grocery budget, and ensures clients have access to healthy food.

We are grateful to those who fundraise on our behalf including: Home Depot (Peterborough Store), the annual In From the Cold concert hosted by John Hoffman and friends, the TASS Interact Group who organized a hugely successful coin drive, the Peterborough Lion's Club, Peterborough Cares, Parkview Homes, James Strath Public School, the Ministry of Natural Resources Staff, and the Trent Fashion Show.

