

# ANNUAL REPORT 2015 – 2016

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](http://www.yesshelter.ca).



## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

YES continues to be a safe haven every day and night, meeting the often complex needs of youth and families in crisis. This past year, we have forged several exciting partnerships to prevent youth from becoming homeless. We have also strengthened our resources to support youth in the community so that they can find stable living arrangements and not return to homelessness.

Local research is driving home the importance of intervening to reduce youth homelessness. This past March, a “Point in Time (PiT) Count” was undertaken to create a snapshot of the number of people experiencing homelessness in one night. In Peterborough, 120 people were counted and 100 agreed to participate in a survey. Over two thirds of survey respondents first experienced homelessness as a young person (before age 26). 27 of the 100 people surveyed were youth (under 24 years old) and of these, 13 were chronically homeless, having spent 6 months or more homeless in the past year. Clearly, youth homelessness is more widespread and has more lasting impacts than we might imagine.

YES has always aimed to provide much more than just emergency shelter. As we try to stretch ourselves to focus on prevention work, our shelter remains busy. The number of families seeking emergency shelter this year was similar to last year and is a decrease from the two years prior (2014). In contrast, the demand from youth has climbed. In fact, on 167 nights of last year, we sheltered more youth than our funded mandate of 15. We also saw an increase in the proportion of youth who are 16 and 17 once again this year. These youth often require extra supports, given their limited maturity and life experience.

For all clients, our caring staff provide compassionate listening, connection to health care, support to obtain identification and referrals to get connected to financial and other supports. We provide cooking, budgeting, and housing search support. YES offers an alternative high school classroom,

a food and clothing cupboard, a transition house, and transitional supports. Most basically, our aim is to give residents the skills and resources that they need to live independently, to prevent their need for emergency shelter in the future.

This past spring, we began using a proven assessment tool to gauge vulnerability and help us to better direct our efforts to serve those facing the most challenges. The data we have collected so far indicates that most youth require housing supports beyond what YES can provide in the shelter setting. Just 14% of youth clients had scores indicating that they would be able to obtain and maintain housing independently. 45% of youth need support to find and maintain housing, and the remaining 41% of youth have complex challenges that require extensive transitional and possibly life-long supports to stay housed.

This data and research on youth and homelessness shows that most youth need transitional supports and intermediary steps before they are prepared to live well on their own. Our Youth-In-Transition Worker is able to provide this kind of support for some youth with involvement with the Children’s Aid Society. This spring, YES received provincial funding for a Youth Outreach Worker who will work with youth who are experiencing conflict and struggles in their families. YES is leading a ‘Family Reconnect’ initiative, and our new Youth Outreach

Worker will support youth to remain with their families, or to transition in a planned way to independent living.

Even with our support, many youth struggle to find housing that is safe, and affordable. We see that many of our young clients experience discrimination as landlords prefer to rent to students. Youth may be particularly vulnerable to unscrupulous landlords. Since 2012, YES has operated a transition house that serves about a dozen youth each year in a communal living situation. We see incredible outcomes when youth are offered this year of stability and mentorship. YES has committed to building more transitional and longer-term housing for youth by 2019. We also aim to increase our staffing resources so that we can more rapidly re-house youth and families who are better able to live independently. We welcome collaboration in these efforts to help youth and families permanently exit homelessness.

We want to see that youth and families have the resources and tools to move towards productive and positive futures. In 2015/16, we strengthened our efforts to prevent, as well as reduce homelessness. We truly appreciate your continued support in helping youth and families to build better lives.

Respectfully,

Suzanne Galloway, BES, MA  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*“While emergency supports will always be necessary and important, we need to shift our energy and focus to preventing youth from becoming homeless in the first place and support others to exit homelessness in a quick, safe and planned way”*

*Canadian Observatory on Homelessness & A Way Home (2016). Policy Brief: Towards and Ontario Youth Homelessness Strategy. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press.*

### 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

This has been an exciting year of growth and transition at YES. In line with our mission of “reducing and preventing homelessness”, YES has completed a number of initiatives to continuously move the markers forward for the homeless youth and families within our community.

The introduction of a new standardized evaluation mechanism for ensuring residents receive the most appropriate care; the hiring of a Youth Outreach Worker to help facilitate youth at risk of homelessness to reconnect with family or live independently; enhanced staff training related to LGBTQ+ positivity and cultural safety allowing staff to deliver services tailored to each individual's needs; these are just a sample of the growth undertaken over the past year.

In addition to these accomplishments, YES has grown its partnerships within the community with the understanding that homelessness cannot be resolved by a single agency but rather the entire community. As a result, the YES team has worked hard

over the past year to seek out community solutions to community problems. The Family Reconnect initiative is a perfect example of agencies working together to prevent future homelessness.

The YES staff team has also undergone change this past year with the moving on of long term employees Wyatt Lamoureux and Ruby Lynch. Their contributions to YES and the homeless youth and families of this community cannot be understated. YES staff's dedication and commitment to improving the lives of youth and families within this community are the life blood of the agency and we are grateful for their contributions and effort.

This past year, we were able to strengthen our volunteer coordination and fundraising capacity with support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. YES relies on volunteers to complete its mission and everyday those volunteers show up in a variety of capacities to help us. From the Board room to the inventory sorting room, volunteers are

essential and we thank them for their ongoing support.

All of these accomplishments would not be possible without the support of our donors. Every individual donor, no matter the amount or type of support, makes a difference in our ability to achieve our mission and we are eternally grateful. We thank the many individuals and businesses who raise funds for YES through events and foundations that support our work.

Finally, on behalf of the Board, thank you to all of our supporters, volunteers and staff for a tremendous year. We look forward to continuing the mission of reducing and preventing homelessness within our community.

Sincerely, 

NICK POWERS  
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
YES SHELTER FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES

## YES' ONGOING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### EMERGENCY SHELTER

This past fiscal year, YES provided emergency shelter to 223 unique individuals who stayed a total of 7,220 bednights.

Twenty three families stayed at YES (a total of 68 individuals). Over 50% were lone parent families and 21% of the parents were under age 25.

YES' funding from the City mandates YES to provide shelter to 15 youth and 15 family members at a time. However, 46% of this past

year, we had more than 15 youth residing in our emergency shelter. 155 different youth (age 16-24) resided at our emergency shelter. While we served fewer youth overall this year, the proportion of younger youth (>18 yrs) has risen 5% in each of the last 2 years. YES also provided short term accommodation and supports to 11 youth involved with the Children's Aid Society, through a separate funding contract.

The majority of youth stay just once at the shelter, but some return given the challenges

they face in maintaining their housing independently. The increased prevalence of bed bug infestation in rental units has continued to be the cause for both youth and family residents to return to the shelter.

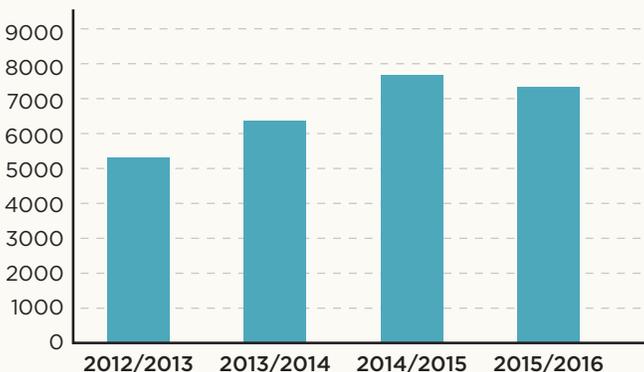
### TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM AT ABBOTT HOUSE

YES provides mentorship, plus safety and security for up to a year in our transitional housing program at Abbott House. Weekly meetings include a shared meal and opportunities to learn life skills – or a fun outing. In 2015/16, 14 different youth were supported to finish high school, find work placements, seek counselling, complete their probation requirements or community service hours, find primary health care, and navigate their social relationships. These are activities more advantaged youth rely on their parents to help them manage. The mentorship and stability at Abbott House helps once-homeless youth take advantage of opportunities and remove obstacles as they transition into adulthood.

### CARRIAGE HOUSE SCHOOL

YES' Carriage House high school program re-engages homeless youth with academic pursuits. Thirty seven students attended this year, with 18 studying 3+ months and earning 35.5 credits. The Kawartha Pineridge

### TOTAL BEDNIGHTS - ANNUAL COMPARISON



*I think Abbott House has shown me that it's a lot more difficult to live on your own... It gave me the opportunity to be an adult, but I didn't get thrown into it in a harsh way.*

ABBOTT HOUSE PARTICIPANT, NOW IN COLLEGE AND LIVING INDEPENDENTLY.

District School Board's (KPRDSB) goal is that students have 16 credits by age 16. Carriage House students' average age was 18, with an average of just 11.7 credits, indicating that we are engaging youth who have not been successful in mainstream schools. Students study at the school long after they have left the shelter, allowing staff to continue to work with them on their goals. This program is run in partnership with the KPRDSB.

### FOOD AND CLOTHING CUPBOARD

YES' food and clothing cupboard is open to any youth aged 16-24 and to families that have resided at YES. This past year, over 233 households used this service, comprising 895 individuals. Recipients benefit from YES' partnership with Red Lobster that provides seafood to our cupboard. This service enables low income households to reserve more income towards rent and allows YES staff to provide ongoing support to past clients.

### TRANSITION WORKER PROGRAM

The Youth-In-Transition Worker program supports youth (16-24) with involvement in the Children's Aid Society to transition to independence. Fifty seven youth were served this past year by this dedicated worker who acts as a mentor and advocate to help them move forward on their goals as diverse as settling into college residence, finding housing, researching college bursaries, navigating the justice system, or seeking counselling or recreational activities. This program is funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

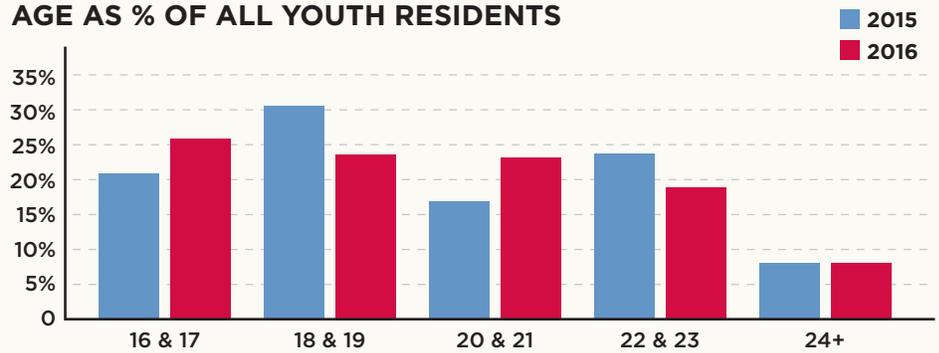
### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

YES cleans out units to offer employment training and income to youth clients. The enterprise also makes use of our cube van while generating small revenues for YES. Cleaning or clearing out vacant units is an excellent entry-level work environment for our clients! After successfully clearing out a packed apartment, two youth were overheard saying "We should go into business together!" This is precisely the kind of task satisfaction and work ethic we hope to instill. YES aims to expand to offering other services to increase training opportunities.

*All in all, I wouldn't be making the good changes I'm making without [the YTTW's] support. I believe that in the future I will be doing better as a result of her picking me up when I was down.*

CLIENT SUPPORTED BY YES' YOUTH IN TRANSITION WORKER

## AGE AS % OF ALL YOUTH RESIDENTS



## NEW INITIATIVES IN 2015/16

### IMPROVING ACCESS TO PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Research shows that the stress and isolation stress and isolation of poverty and homelessness has a significant impact on health.

This past year we enhanced our partnership with the VON 360 Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic. YES is now able to connect our clients quickly to primary health care at the clinic where they can also access a social worker or dietitian. This partnership connects individuals to health care that is accessible in terms of timing, location, and approach. It has undoubtedly reduced use of emergency health services.

### SUPPORTING CLIENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE CHALLENGES

Since June 2015, an intensive case manager from the Four County Addiction Services Team has been on site at YES every afternoon. This skilled individual provides direct service to more complex clients, particularly those with mental illness or problematic substance use. As well, she helps YES staff navigate clinical systems, gaining access to medical diagnoses and collaborating on care plans for clients.

YES continues to participate with the Homelessness Coordinated Response Team, a collaboration of agencies who meet every other week to collaboratively remove barriers to housing for clients whose complex challenges cannot be resolved by a single agency.

### FAMILY RECONNECT

With the aim of preventing youth homelessness, YES has convened community partners and citizens to explore how we can collaboratively support youth within their family context. Successful outcomes would

be the youth reuniting with family, moving out in a planned way with supports, or opting to move on independently after becoming clear that their family is a negative influence in their life.

With support from Innoweave's Youth Collective Impact funding, we have developed a robust Theory of Change to intervene if a youth is at risk of leaving their home or has become homeless. Strategies include early identification and intervention with families, as well as wrap-around transitional supports, suitable housing, and employment/training opportunities so youth can successfully transition into independence if family is not a viable option.

The proportion of youth aged 16 and 17 using YES' emergency shelter has increased 10% in the past two years. Analysis of YES' data from the past 5 years shows that youth who enter the shelter younger have longer stays and more repeat stays at the shelter. Thus, intervening with this age group is critical to preventing future homelessness.

In March, YES and Peterborough Youth Services received funding for a Youth Outreach Worker at each organization to support struggling youth, with a particular focus on those experiencing/at risk of family breakdown. Skills-building programs for youth and their parents will begin in fall 2016. Many more resources and much collaboration will need to be developed to do the complex work of supporting youth in their family context or providing wrap-around support for youth to transition successfully to independent living. We welcome volunteer involvement, in-kind and financial supports, and partnerships to support this innovative and fulsome response to youth homelessness. *continued on page 4*

## BECOMING AN LGBTQ+ POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

This past year, YES continued on our path to make YES a welcoming space and to also foster welcoming practice in other organizations. YES had its first-ever presence in the Peterborough Pride parade, complete with a banner and t-shirts created by youth clients. Also in fall 2015, YES collaborated with PARN and a Point In Time to offer two day-long trainings with over 100 service providers attending.

Internally at YES, we continue to amend our policies and practices to be more inclusive. This work is ever evolving and takes years to complete. YES is pleased with our accomplishments thus far and grateful to the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough for their support of this important work.

*I've got many great things to say about YES! They've shaped me into the man I am today. I was blessed to have the moral, emotional, financial support from them. The staff I had actually gave me respect and never once talked down or made me feel less of a person for needing to stay there. They were always there when I needed advice or just an ear to listen to me in my times of need. I give mad love and respect from the bottom of my heart for that organization.*

*I plan on giving back this year to them around Christmas time when I can afford to.*

PAST YES CLIENT, NOW 32 YEARS OLD

## THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

YES has always stretched our resources to provide flexible and responsive service to homeless youth and families. This would not be possible without the help of volunteers and students. We sincerely thank 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 Shaun Pearce. Shaun originally volunteered to spend time with our clients and became a popular adult mentor on the basketball court during YES' weekly trips to the gym. Shaun joined our Board and became chair of our fundraising committee. This past year, Shaun

volunteered on an ambitious workplan to increase YES' fundraising relationships and volunteer capacity (funded by the Ontario Trillium, Foundation). Shaun's energy and ideas were boundless, and his sense of humour made the work a pleasure. We are grateful for the many hours he gave tirelessly to YES and his cheerful motivation of others. YES is richer for his continued presence and positivity.

## THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

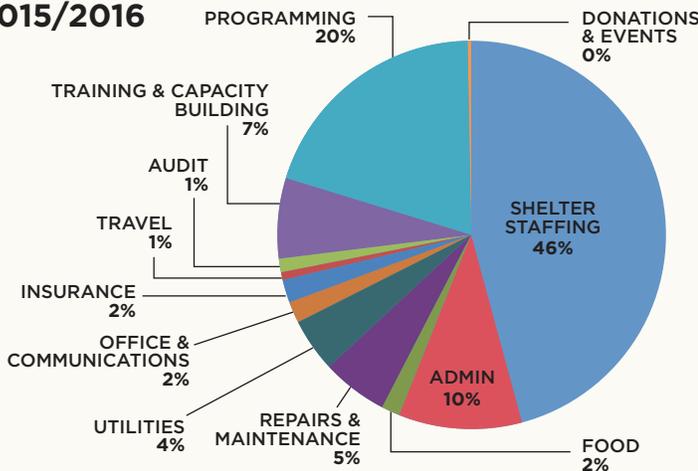
YES fundraises 15% of our budget through foundation grants and donations. Our core funding from the City provides for just single staffing of our 24/7 emergency shelter. We rely on the generosity of the community to have two staff on shift to provide appropriate service and safety for clients in our shelter, and to provide our food bank, classroom, and transitional house. Your donations 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.

The following organizations supported YES over the past year: the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough, The Home Depot Canada Foundation, Innoweave, the Kawartha Credit Union, the Lloyd-Carr Harris Foundation, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, the Ontario Realtor's Care Foundation, in association with the Peterborough and Kawartha Association of Realtors, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Peterborough Foundation, the Peterborough Professional Alumni Hockey Association, and the United Way of Peterborough.

We are grateful for the many groups who fundraise on our behalf, including the 'Youth for Youth' efforts by Holy Cross and St Peter's Secondary Schools, the In From the Cold concert spearheaded by John Hoffman, and the Trent Fashion Show. Local companies support YES through sponsorships and donations. This year, Carlson Wagonlit Travel creatively fundraised amongst their staff team.

The Peterborough Navy Club drops off delicious food at least weekly. These deliveries and other donated meals helps reduce our grocery budget. Your donations of items allow us to provide our clients with small gifts during the holidays, or even something as simple as providing them with a winter jacket or necessities such as toilet paper or deodorant. Your kindness helps create meaningful change in the lives of families and youth in crisis, and we are sincerely grateful for your continued generosity.

### EXPENSES 2015/2016



### REVENUE 2015/2016

