



WINTER 2023

# OUR YOUTH OUR FUTURE

## Housing a homeless young person is THE way to stop the cycle of adult homelessness

A year ago, I wouldn't have been able to tell you what hope looked like. I'd just turned 17 years old. My dad was long gone. My mom was in the hospital because of a mental health crisis. She told me that when she got out, she wouldn't be coming home. Just like that, I was alone. And, the cold winter was just around the corner.

I remembered a school presentation we'd had from a Youth Services Bureau (YSB) counsellor, so I called their crisis line. The counsellor was so kind and we talked for a long time. He connected me with their Young Women's Emergency Shelter, where I was given a room of my own, mental health support, three good meals every day and so much more.

I just started college in September, and in January, I'll be moving out of the emergency shelter into one of YSB's long-term housing buildings. These are things I've only ever dreamed of! Things are really starting to happen for me – or as my case worker reminds me – things are happening because of me!

I'm grateful to YSB staff who believed in me from day one, and thank you for continuing to show you believe in me and the other young people YSB serves.

**Kelly\*, YSB Shelter Resident**

\*Kelly's name has been changed to protect her privacy

CONTACT US:

 613-729-1000

 FOUNDATION@YSB.CA

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**YOUTH  
SERVICES  
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## Staff Spotlight: Vanessa

### 1. What supports do you and your team bring to young people in YSB's Youth Justice Program?

The Community Youth Justice Team works with youth who are in detention or custody at YSB's William E Hay Centre. Each young person is unique and – along with helping them with essentials like housing, food and to obtain their identification – we support those who may also struggle with addiction, mental health or regulating their emotions. This is a voluntary program, and we work with youth while they are in the Youth Justice program, but also as they transition back into the community to ensure they have the tools they need to reintegrate successfully.

### 2. How has YSB's Youth Justice Program been shared with a broader justice support services audience?

In 2018, YSB's Youth Justice Program hosted visitors from the Department of Justice along with delegates from the

Federal Government of Mexico. I participated in this tour and spoke in Spanish - my first language - explaining my role as a transition worker. I later travelled to Mérida, Mexico to help implement some of the learnings from their visit and have travelled back several times to encourage other Mexican states to adopt the same youth justice reintegration model. It's been so rewarding for me personally, and also important for YSB to share our reintegration work with other countries.

### 3. Is there a specific story about a young person you've worked with that stands out in your mind?

I've been with YSB for 17 years and have had the opportunity to hear and witness so many young people's stories of resilience and overcoming barriers. One in particular is of a young man who was left on his own at a young age and was forced to grow up too fast. While in our Youth Justice Program, he was like a sponge. He earned his high school diploma, found meaningful employment, secured housing, obtained his necessary identification, opened a bank account, learned how to shop for groceries, meal plan, cook, budget and essentially live a new life! He continued accessing counselling and stayed connected with his Youth Justice team. To this day, he still stays in touch and updates us on how he's doing. His success was a team effort of the Youth Justice team, but most importantly this young man made it all happen for himself.

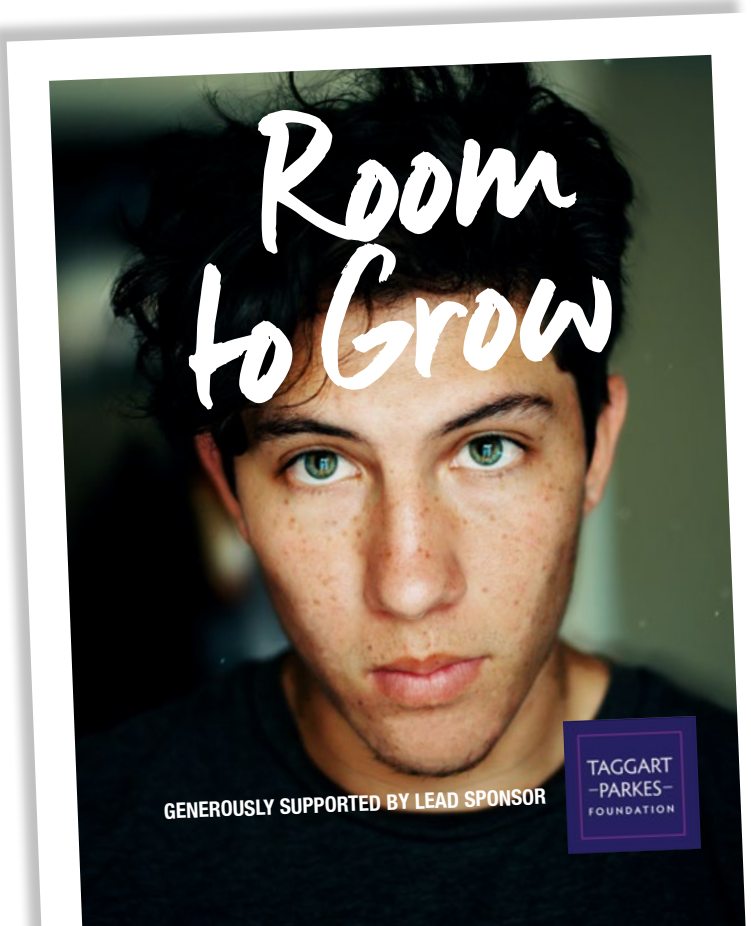
## YSB Housing initiatives

The YSB Foundation is proud to announce the results of two recent fundraising initiatives:

1. This fall, we launched our shelter room sponsorship campaign – Room to Grow - presented by lead sponsor the Taggart Parkes Foundation. This initiative has raised \$130,000 to-date, representing the sponsorship of 32 rooms in our two downtown youth shelters.

With 64 shelter rooms in total, additional rooms are still available for sponsorship. If you, your organization, family or group of friends is interested in sponsoring a room (\$4,000 for one year) please connect with Oliver Saner, Fundraising Coordinator at 613-600-6426 or osaner@ysb.ca

2. On November 25th, we hosted our 10th annual Stay Up Ottawa virtual event. From schools to family and workplace teams, Stay Up rallied over 180 community fundraisers who solicited over 740 donations while raising over \$118,000 to-date.



# coldest \*night OF THE YEAR



## Join us February 25<sup>th</sup> as we walk to end youth homelessness!

For its 3<sup>rd</sup> year YSB will participate in the national Coldest Night of the Year event to raise awareness and funds for our shelters and housing programs. This will be YSB's first time holding the event in-person with a 5km walk through downtown Ottawa on February 25<sup>th</sup>!

- To register visit [cnoy.org](http://cnoy.org) and select Ottawa Centretown as your walk location.
- Registration is free and walkers who raise over \$150 from their networks receive a CNOY 2023 toque and participant kit
- All funds raised will go towards supporting YSB's two downtown shelters and four long-term housing buildings.

## Most needed items:

Please consider donating the following items to support youth living in YSB's two shelters and four long-term housing buildings.

1. **Gift cards**  
(Giant Tiger, WalMart, Metro, Subway, Esso/any gas station)
2. **Laundry detergent**
3. **Shampoo, conditioner**
4. **Plain chocolate bars**

To arrange a drop off contact Rachel Lessard at [rlessard@ysb.ca](mailto:rlessard@ysb.ca)



Please join Team YSB



### HOW YOUR GIFTS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

**\$45** provides one counselling and support session to a struggling youth

**\$65** provides a youth in our shelters with meals for one week

**\$100** provides one start-up kit for a once-homeless youth leaving our shelter

**\$500** provides a vulnerable youth with one week of shelter, counselling and healthy meals



## Corporate Partner Spotlight:

The Ottawa community, including YSB, has long been supported by the CLV Group. For more than 50 years, CLV Group has been helping renters and home owners find a place to call home, with services including residential rentals, rest estate brokerage, property management , financial services and construction and development.

YSB has benefitted greatly from its long-time partnership with CLV, and is proud to have been a recipient of their charitable giving over that past 10 years. Not only has YSB been a proud recipient of CLV's annual golf tournament over the years, we also benefitted from emergency pandemic funding from the McGahan Family to provide meals to young people living in YSB's shelters and long-term housing buildings.

CLV's investment in YSB's youth housing programs has totalled an incredibly generous \$165K over the past 10 years. YSB and the YSB Foundation are honoured to have the CLV Group as partners in supporting vulnerable young people in Ottawa.

## CRISIS CHAT AND PHONE SERVICE YSB IS HERE FOR YOU

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by phone or online chat, YSB services are here to support young people in crisis as well as their families. Please share the following contact info far and wide. It just might save the life of a young person in our community.

[chat.yzb.ca](https://chat.yzb.ca)

613-260-2360 (Ottawa) 1 877-377-7775 (toll-free)

## Home Depot volunteers transform YSB's LGBTQ2S+ youth housing building backyard

This past summer, YSB welcomed a group of Home Depot local store managers and associates who – together with residents – completed a complete backyard makeover at our dedicated housing building for youth who identify as part of the LGBTQ2S+ community!

The Home Depot team made quick work of a number of projects, including reinforcing and expanding an existing fruit and vegetable garden, cleaning the building exterior, trimming trees, building stairs, planting fruit trees, and creating a seating area. This reimagined backyard – planned by the youth tenants and supported by YSB staff – now provides a welcoming outdoor space and further supports the sense of community the youth have created.

The Home Depot Canada Foundation and local Home Depot stores have been long-time supporters of YSB. Since 2011, they and their customers have provided YSB with more than \$1.5M in critical support that has changed the lives of countless vulnerable young people in Ottawa. To-date, their national commitment to preventing and ending youth homelessness has resulted in an investment of \$50M with partners across Canada who are housing and supporting homeless youth. Our sincere thanks to The Home Depot Canada Foundation, local store managers and associates, and customers for working alongside us as champions for vulnerable youth in our community. Together, you're helping us show young people they deserve to be seen, heard, housed and supported.

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