

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

WHERE EDUCATION MEETS OPPORTUNITY



As a new school year begins, we're celebrating the young people in our Stay In School (SIS) program who are working hard toward their educational goals. Last year, 52 youth were supported through SIS, with 9 youth reaching the milestone of graduation.

SIS is a one-of-a-kind program offering 20 beds of long-term transitional housing for youth committed to completing their education in a safe, stable environment. But it's about much more than a place to live. Youth have access to case management, professional guidance, one-on-one tutoring, mentorship, transit fares, textbooks, school supplies, laptops, dedicated study space, and referrals to scholarships and bursaries. Together, these supports help remove barriers and give young people the stability they need to stay in school and work toward their future.

As our students head back to class, we're proud to be cheering them on every step of the way!



1 IN 3 YOUTH EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS GRADUATE
HIGH SCHOOL



VS. 9 IN 10 HOUSED YOUTH

GRADUATION RATES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH
IN CANADA ARE LESS THAN **30 %**

GRADUATION RATES FOR STUDENTS
WITHIN OUR STAY IN SCHOOL PROGRAM AT
YWS ARE OVER **80 %**



EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM



WHAT IF WE COULD PREVENT YOUTH HOMELESSNESS BY CHANGING THE WAY PEOPLE UNDERSTAND IT??

Our Educational Outreach Program takes a preventative approach by breaking down the stereotypes and misconceptions surrounding homelessness while building knowledge, empathy, and understanding within our community.

Through interactive workshops delivered at schools, colleges, community organizations, and corporate partners across the GTA, participants learn about the realities young people experiencing homelessness face and the many circumstances that can lead to housing instability. Workshops also explore local resources and ways communities can respond to and help prevent family and housing crises.

BOOKING NOW FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR!

With a new school year beginning, we're now booking Educational Outreach workshops! Bring the conversation into your classroom, workplace, or community group and help us *Change the Narrative* around youth homelessness.

Contact our Educational Outreach Manager, Anastasia:

416.748.0110 ext. 39 | education@yws.on.ca



A DECADE OF SUPPORT

CONCERT PROPERTIES GIVES BACK TO YWS

For a decade, **Concert Properties** has been showing up for the young people at Youth Without Shelter - and this year, they marked 10 years of partnership with an incredible contribution to our community.

As part of their annual Engagement Day, where the team joins us on-site to host a day of fun and games with our youth, the Concert Properties team collected an incredible **1,739 pounds of food** for the YWS Food Bank!

The donation will help support youth who have transitioned into independent housing but continue to access YWS's housing and after-care supports. For these young people, leaving YWS doesn't mean they stop needing support. Our team continues to walk alongside them as they build independence and navigate life on their own.

That's what makes partnerships like this so important. Concert Properties' commitment doesn't just provide support for youth while they are staying at YWS - it helps extend that support beyond our walls and into the next chapter of their lives.

Ten years of support is definitely something worth celebrating! We are incredibly grateful to the entire Concert Properties team for their continued generosity, partnership, and commitment to helping young people build stable, independent futures.

Thank you, Concert Properties, for 10 incredible years of supporting YWS youth!



A SEAT AT THE TABLE

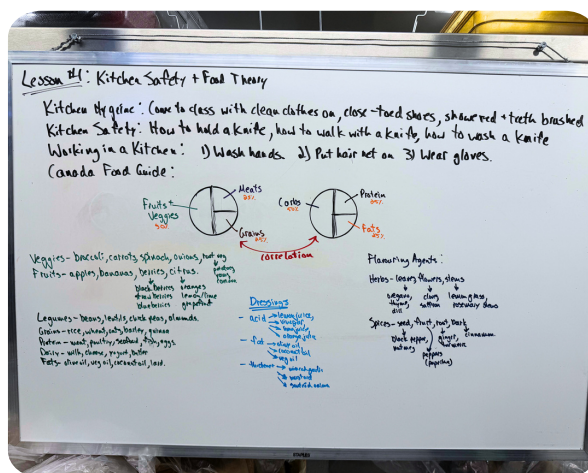
Stirring it up with Chef Richelle

What started off as an idea of creating a practical cooking program for youth preparing to move out from YWS into independent living has grown into something even more meaningful: an ongoing, on-site program, for resident youth where young people can learn cooking basics, get creative, and build confidence in the kitchen!

Led by Chef Richelle, YWS's new cooking program runs in two-month sessions, with youth meeting once a week for an hour class. While the program was originally designed specifically for youth preparing to move out, the reality of the shelter's high turnover meant many participants were moving on before completing the sessions. The program has since evolved into a flexible and accessible opportunity right here in our YWS kitchen for any YWS youth who wants to learn how to cook!

And they're starting from the basics. Youth learn everything from grocery shopping on a budget - including price matching, clearance shopping, and making the most of older produce - to proper knife skills and kitchen safety. They also explore the food available through YWS's food bank so they can understand what ingredients may be available to them when they move into independent living.

From there, it's time to stir things up! The early lessons cover foundational skills like boiling and frying eggs, cooking potatoes, and blanching vegetables before moving into complete meals. Youth have made everything from scratch-made spaghetti Bolognese and one-pot roasted chicken and vegetables to homemade burgers and fries.



The homemade burgers were a standout in the first session, with youth making their own patties and using a deep fryer to make fries. So far in our second session, shrimp Alfredo has been a fan fav!

For the final class of the July-Aug session, the game plan was for our resident chefs to prepare and serve lunch to the entire YWS house! And what was on the menu, you ask? Loaded baked potatoes with all the works, including pulled pork, bacon bits, sautéed onions, broccoli, asparagus, and more!

Each session typically sees two to five youth participating throughout the two-month program, and all of the food used in the classes comes from donated products and leftover lunch ingredients, showing youth how much can be created with what is already available. While we encourage youth to participate in all 8 classes, Chef Richelle also works one-on-one with youth who need additional support preparing for independent living. At the end of each session, participating youth receive a YWS certificate recognizing their completion - something they have told staff they really appreciate.

Ultimately, the goal is to grow the program even further, with the hope of eventually offering Food Handler certification on-site. This would have such a positive impact, breaking barriers to help our youth gain the experience and certifications needed to find great jobs in the community where they can continue to thrive.

But the program isn't just about experimenting and following recipes - It's about giving youth the opportunity to gain confidence knowing they'll be able to create healthy nutrition meals once they move out from YWS into independent living. Residents will know how to shop, budget, plan, create, problem-solve, and care for themselves in the heart of their new homes.

Building skills, confidence, and community - **one meal at a time!**



WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

We're excited to welcome two new members to the YWS team: Selena, our Registered Psychotherapist, and Danyel, our Youth Engagement Specialist.

Selena joined our Mental Health Program earlier this year, bringing experience in mental health and community-based settings. She provides youth with compassionate, trauma-informed support and helps them build tools for their mental health and overall well-being.

Danyel joins us as our Youth Engagement Specialist, bringing 12 years of experience working with youth in group care, foster care, day treatment programs, and summer camps. In her new role, she'll create opportunities for youth to explore their interests, get creative, build connections, and experience new adventures both at YWS and throughout the community.

Both Selena and Danyel bring a strong belief in the importance of connection and relationships in helping young people thrive. We're thrilled to have them on the team and look forward to seeing the positive impact they'll have on the youth we serve.

Welcome to YWS, Selena and Danyel!



*"Hey! I'm Selena, the Psychotherapist at Youth Without Shelter, and I joined the YWS team earlier this year. Before coming to YWS, I worked in mental health and community-based settings, and I was drawn to YWS because of the opportunity to support youth during such an important time in their lives. I've really enjoyed getting to know the residents and staff and being part of a team that takes a holistic approach to supporting young people. So far, my experience at YWS has been incredibly rewarding, and I'm excited to continue growing in my role and contributing to the mental health and well-being of the youth we serve." - **Selena***



*"Hi, I'm Danyel, and I've just started with YWS as the Youth Engagement Specialist. I was with the same company for 10 years prior to coming to YWS. I come from a 12-year CYW background working within group care and foster care settings. I have run day treatment programs working within the DDSB as well as summer camps for youth of all ages with exceptionalities. I have also been a foster parent for the past 8 years; this has given me and the youth living with me some of the most irreplaceable memories. I believe making connections and building relationships play a huge part in helping youth become successful long-term, which makes me very excited to get started in this role. I am very much looking forward to this new chapter with YWS!" - **Danyel***

DONATIONS NEEDED

- FALL CLOTHING
- COSMETICS AND PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS



CALL US FOR MORE INFORMATION

Gifts in Kind Donations & Volunteering:
416-748-0110 EXT. 62 or
varagi@yws.on.ca

Financial Donations:
416-748-0110 EXT. 26 or
communications@yws.on.ca



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- CHEF FOR A DAY
- MEAL DROP-OFFS

YOUR IMPACT

\$50

SHELTER AND FOOD
FOR ONE YOUTH
FOR ONE NIGHT

\$100

NEW BEDDING
AND PILLOWS
FOR ONE YOUTH

\$245

ONE WEEK
OF SAFE SHELTER

\$1,000

HELP SUPPORT
YWS YOUTH
ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL
JOURNEYS TO
GREATNESS

**ADOPT-A-BED
MONTHLY GIVING**

