

# SUMMER NEWSLETTER



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR YWS GRADS!

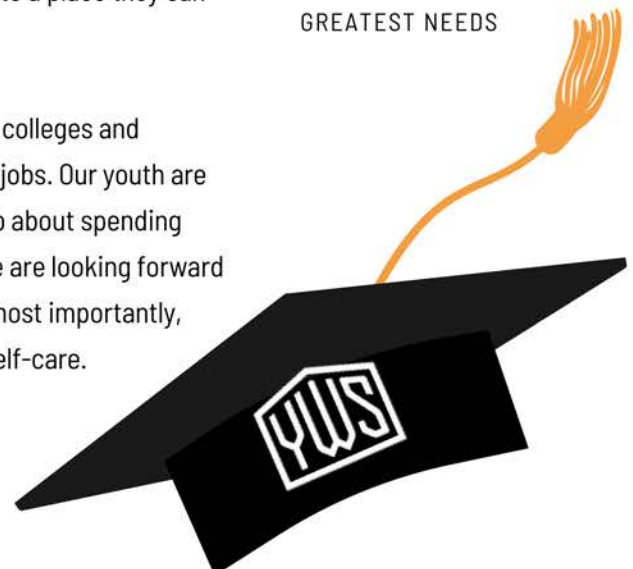
TONKA GRBAVAC - PRIMARY CASE MANAGER, STAY IN SCHOOL PROGRAM

It's been a busy few months over here in our Stay in School Program!

We have all been really busy lately studying and preparing for exams. We are thrilled to announce that because of our youth's hard work and dedication, we have four of our residents graduating this year! Congratulations!

One of our graduates recently moved out of our SIS Program into stable housing, and another grad isn't far behind! Thanks to our Housing and After-Care program youth are excited to take the next big step in their journeys into a place they can call their own. We are so proud.

We continue to assist our residents with their applications to colleges and universities, as well as supporting them with finding summer jobs. Our youth are very driven and focused on next steps, but the summer is also about spending time with friends, relaxing, and rejuvenating. This summer we are looking forward to summer camps, outings with our Life Skills program, and most importantly, spending some time exploring our hobbies and focusing on self-care.



## NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR  
YWS GRADS

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COVER ME URBAN -  
TKARONTO

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HOUSING FOR YOUTH IN  
TORONTO

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HELIX HOUSE UPDATE

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GREATEST NEEDS

# COVER ME URBAN - TKARONTO

BRITTANY BATEMAN - MARKETING AND  
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER



Cover Me Urban Tkaronto was an amazing night! The first of our Neighbourhood Series, we joined together to celebrate our roots as we learned about the history of this land and city, the Original Meeting Place. We sampled delicious foods from chefs across the city, participated in a silent auction, watched some amazing performances from local Indigenous artists, and explored YWS via a virtual tour. In total, between our sponsorships, ticket sales, silent auction funds, and donations, we were able to raise a total of \$142,378 to support our youth here at Youth Without Shelter! Thank you to everyone who came out to join us for such a special night, who participated in our silent auction, and who donated to the cause.

We would also like to say thank you to our performers, Cody Coyote and TheRa11n - you were remarkable! Thank you to Lewis the Artist for your emotional spoken word performance.

A shout-out to our delicious food vendor Dashmaawaan Bemaadzinjin for the incredible Indigenous menu you created and shared with our guests. We'd also like to thank The Rec Room, Chef Keith and the students from Thistleton Collegiate, Demetres, and our YWS chefs for the wonderful food and desserts.

Thank you to our knowledge keepers, carriers, and Indigenous consultants, Bill Wassengeso, Larry Page and Giselle Aiabens for guiding us through this journey to create an educational experience focused on appreciation and celebration, all the while bringing awareness to the youth homelessness crisis across our city and beyond.

To August Swinson, the artist who donated his artwork that inspired all our Cover Me Urban Tkaronto materials for this year's event - it was a pleasure to work with you! Thank you for everything.

Thank you to the Rec Room for your impeccable customer service and assistance throughout the evening. We are always so grateful for your support! Thank you to our amazing sponsors, and thank you to our volunteers who helped us throughout the day and evening with set up, check-in, and much more. And lastly, a big round of applause for Jakeb, our youth host for the evening! You did a fantastic job representing your peers and sharing their perspectives on what Toronto and Reconciliation mean to them.

## TOGETHER WE RAISED \$142,378

In total, between our sponsorships, ticket sales, silent auction funds, and donations, we were able to raise a total of \$142,378 to support our youth here at Youth Without Shelter!



We would also like to say a special thank you to our dedicated Development Committee who volunteered their time to create Cover Me Urban from the ground up. Although CMU is a YWS event, it is truly these incredible committee members who donate their time and expertise to create an opportunity for our community to come together to raise funds and awareness. Without this team of individuals, CMU would simply not exist. So, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you for your devotion, your commitment to the cause, and your support of our youth. Your dedication is truly inspirational.



2023 CMU Committee

Artwork: August Swinson

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# HOUSING FOR YOUTH IN TORONTO

ANASTASIA KEMP - COORDINATOR, ADVOCACY & PUBLIC RELATIONS, AND STEVE DOHERTY - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Our Housing and After-Care team's objective for our youth is to find safe and stable housing before they leave YWS. Over the years it has become increasingly difficult to obtain affordable housing in the city. There are many challenges our youth face when navigating the Toronto rental market. They face discrimination due to their age, in addition to facing discrimination if they are a recipient of social service supports such as Ontario Works (OW), Special Priority Program funding (SPP) or Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB). COHB was a great resource for our youth as it covered the cost of rent that their salaries or other government subsidies could not cover. When we were informed that COHB was ending, the youth were devastated and concerned for their future. Without COHB many were forced to turn to OW to obtain any type of housing subsidy. The removal of COHB created another barrier for youth by punishing those who have entered the workforce by leaving them at a disadvantage due to market inflation. All youth deserve to find affordable and safe housing in order to exit homelessness. As it stands, SPP remains one of the largest areas of funding that we navigate with our youth due to the circumstances that have led many of them to homelessness. SPP funding is available to those fleeing situations of physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse. The greatest barrier to obtaining SPP funding is the time restriction on applications: applications need to be submitted within 3 months from the date of separation from their abuser or within 1 year with an explanation. Due to their history of mistrust of those around them, building a rapport with our youth can take time, as can determining if abuse is a factor that contributed to their homelessness. We are actively working with all levels of government and partner organizations to break down these barriers to ensure all youth have an equitable opportunity to obtain safe and affordable housing.



The average rent for a condominium unit in Toronto is **\$2,559**  
as reported by the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board in their 2022 Q4 Rental Market Report

To rent, a household would need to earn over **\$102,300**.

The average salary of dental assistants, grocery store workers, and early childhood educators in Toronto is between **\$33,000 and \$47,000** a year.



From 2013 to 2022, the average market rent of a one-bedroom private apartment unit in Toronto increased by 46%

At the end of 2022, there were

**84,593**

applicants waiting for subsidized housing,  
**a 7% increase from 2021**



Renters looking for a vacant one-bedroom rental home in the Toronto can expect to pay 18% more than what current renters living in one-bedroom homes pay.

# HELIX HOUSE UPDATE

KIM EVANS - HELIX HOUSE MANAGER

Our youth here at Helix House settled into a rhythm just as finals approached in April. Lately we have been focusing on school, employment, and our general life skills such as shopping, garbage and recycling, laundry, and group cooking.

Over the past few months, we have had four YWS youth move into Helix House. We prepared the rooms for incoming YWS youth with a fresh coat of paint, upgraded lighting and plumbing, and performed a deep clean for each room. Zefanie, our Helix House Case Manager, managed to build a great partnership with Sleep Country to provide new mattresses and sleeping accessories to our new tenants.

With this new location comes many new possibilities. Youth have been exploring the neighbourhood and its many community activities, such as escape rooms, air soft tag, and a games night. Helix youth have taken advantage of YWS outings like Raptors games and going to Kooza, Cirque du Soleil's latest show. Kooza was a nice break during Ramadan, and when youth broke fast they enjoyed talking about their Kooza experience. We also hosted our first Helix BBQ in May! We look forward to more BBQs and community events to come as we settle into our new home in Toronto.



 **HELIXHOUSE**



*Thank you Sleep Country!*



GREATEST NEEDS FOR SUMMER



# DONATIONS NEEDED

- Feminine Products
- Shorts
- Water Bottles
- Razors
- Sunscreen



Due to limited storage space and cleaning facilities, we are not able to accept used or gently used clothing or lightly used towels or bedsheets

## CALL US FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Food Donations:**  
Mike 416-748-0110 EXT.62 or  
mburnett@yws.on.ca

**Financial Donations:**  
Lisa 416-748-0110 EXT. 36 or  
lhayman@yws.on.ca

## GET IN TOUCH!

### Financial donations, media and sponsorship:

416-748-0110 ext. 26  
communications@yws.on.ca

### Volunteer opportunities and donation

**scheduling:**  
416-748-0110 ext. 39  
akemp@yws.on.ca

### Educational outreach program and Youth and Philanthropy projects:

416-748-0110 ext. 62  
education@yws.on.ca

### Marketing and Communications:

416-748-0110 ext. 35  
bbateman@yws.on.ca