

WINTER NEWSLETTER

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

At YWS, our mission is to provide a safe shelter and wrap-around supports and services for Toronto's homeless and at-risk youth. We receive an average of 80 calls per week from youth in desperate need of shelter. We rely heavily on the holiday season to provide us with the financial and in-kind donations required to carry us as an organization throughout the year. Typically, 80% of our donated goods and approximately one-quarter of our financial donations are received during this time. Our need for support over the holidays has never been greater. Until December 31, you can double your impact by donating to the Home for the Holidays Campaign, where donations will be matched up to \$200,000 thanks to a group of generous benefactors.

Thank you for helping us provide a home for the holidays and beyond.



photo created by resident youth

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

MESSAGE FROM HELIX HOUSE

WINTER WONDERLAND

NO KID CHOOSES TO BE HOMELESS

WELCOME HOME



MESSAGE FROM HELIX HOUSE

We can't believe it's been over a year in our new house. We had some changes in the Fall with Stacy joining the Helix support team to assist our youth in their journeys, as well as two new youth joining our SIS program. We also welcomed five former YWS youth to Helix House as they began their lives as renters in a supportive environment.

We cannot thank everyone enough for their ongoing support. Sleep Country graciously continues to donate mattresses for our youth, we enjoy deliciously prepared meals from DISH, and explore our city thanks to the scooters from Beyond Our Streets Riding Club and the Tangerine rental bikes. We are blessed with two refurbished laptops from Sky's the Limit to support our youth, and, of course, we cannot forget to mention Home Depot for beautifying Helix on the inside and out.

We have been focused on building a community at Helix, and things are constantly transforming to meet our changing needs. It takes many hands to make a program successful, and we are so very grateful. Thank you for your continued support.

Happy Holidays from Kim and Stacy!!

WINTER WONDERLAND

The holiday season can be a difficult time for the youth who call YWS home. Many are faced with a variety of difficult memories, but thanks to our wonderful community of donors and supporters, we are able to create an environment of joy and hope.

Earlier this month, we were joined by our former board chair, Moez, and his family, along with long-time supporters Tammy, Yvonne, Sue, and Ed to help us decorate for the holidays. We are so grateful for all of their help to make YWS feel like a cozy home this holiday season.

From all of us here at YWS, staff and youth, THANK YOU!!



NO KID CHOOSES TO BE HOMELESS

Have you experienced the magic of the movies in the GTA this holiday season?

In November, we collaborated with the dedicated team at Borealis Creative, longstanding supporters of YWS, to bring to life a compelling commercial for Cineplex Theaters. This project involved the collective effort of everyone to create something truly special to raise awareness about the realities of youth homelessness.

We want to express our deepest appreciation to each person involved in this project. Your commitment, creativity, and passion have contributed immensely to shedding light on the realities faced by homeless youth.

Thank you for being an integral part of this meaningful initiative.

Wishing you all the joy of the holiday season and a heartfelt thank you for making a difference.

This commercial would not have been possible without the generous contributions of:

Creative Team from Borealis Creative:

Mark Hickmott - Co-Founder

Ronn Battaglia - Co-Founder

Zoran Jovicic - Designer

Annabel Hancock - Designer

Myah Willis - Intern (borealiscreative.ca)

Talent:

Khaleah

Rashoy

Brandon Kent Wong

Mia Consentino

Production Team:

Byron Kent Wong - Director, Editor, Producer - zero11zero

Patty Hennesey - Production Manager

Kenrick Hau - Production Manager



WELCOME HOME

“A young woman, pushing a baby buggy, knocks at the front door of Youth Without Shelter as a winter storm howls in her ears. She is buzzed in to the inner sanctum, where staff swoop in to pick up her baby, a delicate 4-month-old girl.”

In 2007, The Toronto Star article “How charities come to the rescue” introduced the world to Sanchia, a 23-year-old mother who gave birth while staying here at YWS. “For two months, Sanchia visited the premature baby each day in the hospital, carrying breast milk she had expressed and stored in the shelter’s fridge. When it was time for the baby to come home, shelter staff had found an apartment and furniture for the little family.”

Earlier this year, Sanchia returned to visit YWS with her children, one of whom is the small bundle of joy pictured in the original article. YWS is a very unique organization – not only do we have a multitude of programs and services to support youth experiencing homelessness, but we also have multiple staff who have managed these programs for over 20 years. It means so much to see former YWS residents come back to visit us. The stories about graduating from school, landing dream jobs, creating new friendships, or starting families always warm our hearts. The happiness our youth create for themselves and the foundations they build to reach their dreams truly fuels us to continue with the work that we do here at Youth Without Shelter.

To all youth who have walked through our doors, or called YWS home, we wish you all the happiest of holidays. Your strength and resilience in the face of adversity is so very inspiring, and we wish you all health and happiness for the new year!



THANK YOU

MONIKA FOX - DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY

As 2023 draws to a close, I find myself humbly reflecting on the past twelve months and the remarkable achievements we've accomplished together. Among numerous initiatives, we successfully reopened our shelter to full capacity, expanded our employment program, hosted our inaugural Trades Expo, and broadened our housing and after-care program, ensuring our former residents receive ongoing support to maintain stable housing conditions.

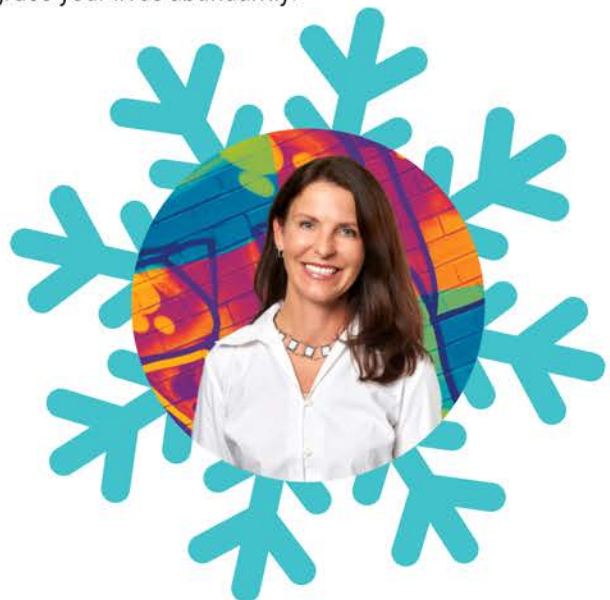
Our corporate and community partners orchestrated citywide food drives, consistently stocking our food bank. Countless volunteers joined us, preparing meals, painting our youths' rooms, organizing clothing and hygiene donations, and meticulously maintaining our premises. Our dedicated team laboured tirelessly to provide our youth with a comforting home.

Imagine being 16 and seeking refuge at a local shelter. What must the first night be like? What fears would you face? How long until you adjust and make friends in this new environment? Despite the challenges, under Moe's guidance, our frontline team—Shania, Kelly, Georgette, Olu, Michael, Tonka and Rashoy – welcomed each youth with open arms, crafting personalized plans and ensuring they felt valued and supported. This resilient team, backed by our frontline relief staff, not only cares for our youth but also serves as the primary contact for our donors and volunteers. We deeply appreciate everyone who took a moment to extend their appreciation and support to them.

None of our progress would be possible without YOU, our steadfast supporter. I acknowledge that, like many, you may also be facing hardships due to economic strains and rising living costs. Yet, your commitment to supporting others remains unwavering and I find it incredibly inspiring and humbling.

Thank you for your invaluable contributions—volunteering, donating, engaging on our social platforms, and advocating on our behalf. I extend heartfelt wishes for a peaceful holiday season to you and your loved ones, along with the best for the year ahead. May health and happiness grace your lives abundantly.

With my sincere gratitude,
Monika



GREATEST NEEDS FOR WINTER



DONATIONS NEEDED

- Winter Coats
- Winter Boots
- Sweaters and Hoodies
- Black Hair Care
- T-Shirts

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

Donations and Meal Drop-Offs:
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
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Marketing and Communications:

416-748-0110 ext. 35
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