



HITTING OUR STRIDE

**Annual
Report
2017/18**



To people who believe that every person is of value and has promise, YSM is the vibrant, local Christian development agency that is leading an infectious movement - going beyond meeting immediate needs by offering holistic programs and a pathway that can transform the lives of people living with poverty in Toronto from merely surviving to thriving.

Our Goal

YSM will work in partnership toward the realization of the end of chronic poverty in Toronto in one generation.

Our Core Values

TRANSFORMATION

We joyfully journey with people toward sustainable change.

COLLABORATION

We actively leverage and implement the best contributions of all.

INNOVATION

We continuously evolve our methods toward better outcomes.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We honour the trust placed in us by meeting our commitments.

COMMUNICATION

We use language to intentionally build understanding, unity and trust.

CELEBRATION

We have much to celebrate, and so we do...often.

Letter from the Board Chair & CEO

At YSM, we see no reason to accept entrenched and systemic poverty as an inevitable reality. The positive strides we have witnessed at YSM this past year are proof that transformation is possible and a testament to the resilience of our city's most vulnerable. Our wrap-around model of care and innovative solutions have shaped a clear and distinctive path forward for those who need us most. As you go through the pages of this report, you will read of the many ways YSM, in collaboration with our strategic partners, is walking alongside our community members on their journey out of poverty.

TIMES™ is now active in York South Weston, Downtown East and Taylor Massey Oakridge. It has informed the effectiveness of our programs for the last two years and the progress made by our community members. The data points to the effectiveness of our approach. This vital work has led us to take a new path towards employment services by connecting our

community members with meaningful jobs that propel them toward careers. This approach defines our commitment to being a leader in the transformation of workforce development in Toronto.

We can only achieve our goal by partnering with others. This year, we are proud to have joined with WoodGreen, Children's Aid Society of Toronto and Tim Horton Children's Foundation among others. These collaborative partnerships will advance our respective goals as well as leverage each other's strengths and resources to create the greatest possible impact for those we serve.

There is so much to celebrate. This past year was one of positive and important strides as we advance in the creation of pathways towards ending chronic poverty in Toronto in one generation. You have been a big part of the journey. Thank you for your vital support in making our city building and life changing work possible.



Angie Draskovic
President and CEO



William Onuwa
Chair, Board of Directors



Changing Lives

OUR HOLISTIC APPROACH TO COMBATING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

Jamie* struggled with poverty for as long as she could remember. Not knowing if she would have enough money to make it through the month caused ongoing anxiety, sometimes making it hard to perform daily tasks. Losing her job triggered a depressive episode, leaving her feeling helpless and hopeless about life. She was on a wait list to receive mental health counselling services, which could be as long as a year, when she came to YSM's walk-in counselling clinic for immediate help. Like many, she rated her anxiety level at a 10 (out of 10) on her intake form and felt as if she had hit a dead end.

In her session, a professional counsellor identified some of the complex issues impacting her mental health - including an extensive history of trauma, anxiety, depression and social isolation. At the end of her session, Jamie rated her anxiety level 4 out of 10. Her counsellor then linked her to our other life supports – including food bank, adult services and the employment department – leveraging the wrap-around supports available at YSM to create a clear and manageable pathway to stability, which would help address and alleviate some of the issues that were keeping her from moving forward. **Jamie is now in ongoing counselling with YSM, attends our trauma transformation group and is integrated with other services specifically designed to meet the complex needs of adults who struggle with poverty.**

At YSM, we recognize that ending chronic poverty in Toronto

in one generation requires a unique blend of interventions in each person's life. Given the crucial role that mental health plays in an individual's transformation, we have partnered with WoodGreen Community Services to increase our capacity to provide mental health care in times of crisis. To offset the burden and backlog of doctor's offices and emergency rooms and provide access to counselling for community members who often fall between the gaps in the system, the clinic offers low barrier access for urgent or immediate crises.

“With YSM's help, I am learning to cope with my anxiety and feel hopeful for what is ahead. Thank you!”

Jamie

While a 45-minute professional counselling session cannot solve all of an individual's problems, the strength-based, solution-focused model identifies the issues and strategies that can lead to positive change. Through the clinic, we walk alongside our community members by helping to de-escalate moments of extreme stress, fear, anger or grief while also providing an opportunity to further link community members to other counselling and much-needed services and resources.

*Name and photo have been changed to protect privacy



Building Communities

DESIGNING AN IMPACTFUL PATHWAY TO MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

Osman first came to YSM's Employment Centre a year after arriving in Canada. He had previously applied to many jobs with no success and was eager to find employment. Our employment team helped him enrol in *Get Into Customer Service Cineplex*, through our employment partnership with Cineplex and Prince's Trust Canada which aims to help youth gain the experience they need to break the cycle of precarious work to secure meaningful employment.

Throughout the program, Osman proved himself by supporting his peers, excelling in his work training shifts and bringing a great desire to learn. **At the end of the program 80% of the youth were hired - including Osman.** Today, he continues to work at Cineplex, taking on new responsibilities with the support of this team, while also studying to complete his high school diploma. He has hopes of soon continuing on to post-secondary studies and loves his job and the learning opportunities it offers.

At YSM, we recognize that people struggling with poverty often face multiple barriers in accessing meaningful job opportunities, including obstacles that are a direct result of living with poverty. Our Pathways to Employment model, created as part of last year's Wealth Creation Think Tank strategy, focuses on building essential, practical pathways to employment and career development for community members. Our Employment Services programming embodies

the holistic wraparound supports and services within our RISE model of care by recognizing the complex and wide-ranging needs of each person looking for a job.

"I have built up my skill set and I am more confident as a result of the program."

Osman

We understand that for community members like Osman to achieve long-term success, we must work with like-minded partners with viable job opportunities today and those projected to be in demand in the future in order to propel people towards long-term employment. In collaboration with leaders from the Toronto Board of Trade we have identified seven sectors that meet these criteria - construction and building services, IT, logistics, hospitality, health care, advanced manufacturing and retail.

We are now leveraging our resources by actively working with existing partners, such as Starbucks Canada, while also seeking new compassionate partners who will offer mentorship, flexibility and grace during a community member's early employment days. By addressing the systemic barriers that continue to contribute to chronic poverty, we are committed to taking a leadership role in the transformation of workforce development in Toronto.



Transforming Toronto

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES TO CREATE GREATER POSITIVE IMPACTS

When Beth* first came to YSM, it was to attend a parenting workshop offered in partnership with Toronto Public Health. She was struggling and as a result, Children's Aid Society of Toronto (CAST) moved her daughter into foster care. Now on a path to recovery, Beth was determined to get her back.

After her initial experience with YSM's Cornerstone Family Services, she asked for additional support in reuniting her family. We helped her find an apartment, connect with counselling services and enrol in YSM's family-to-family mentorship program, which pairs community members with mentor families to provide an avenue to build a solid support network. This connection also reinforces the skills gained through the parenting workshops while modelling healthy relationships and minimizing isolation. When she was on her own, Beth faced barriers in trying to navigate and communicate with her social worker. Cornerstone provided her with robust wrap-around supports and as a result, child welfare and the courts were confident that her plan of care to ensure child safety would be fulfilled and Beth reunited with her daughter.

At YSM, this new partnership with CAST shares a goal of strengthening and stabilizing families with a focus on the disproportionate number of black children in care. Families who seek our support or have been referred to us often face multiple barriers and challenges, and children who have previously been under care are more likely to struggle

with similar barriers when they themselves become parents, thus perpetuating the cycle of poverty. We recognize the strong correlation between families who seek our support and their continued involvement with the child welfare system. To that end, we formed a collaborative partnership in 2018 with CAST in order to have a greater positive impact with families currently engaged with them. Through this groundbreaking partnership, we are working to share best practices and stabilize families by using YSM's wraparound model of care in order to tackle the root causes contributing to black children being put into care in far greater numbers. Our aim is to realize best practices in the stabilization of the family unit so that all children can continue to have positive options and be fully supported in their development.

"The Children's Aid Society of Toronto values the prevention work of YSM in the sphere of youth homelessness. YSM's relevant, multiple services strengthen families in crisis to reduce or shorten CAST involvement."

Mahesh Prajapat

COO, Children's Aid Society of Toronto

By implementing these proactive measures to decrease and prevent family separations, a powerful, new, holistic model is being established so that others in the sector can both adopt and adapt it to better serve the members of their communities. Together, we can realize a Toronto where children are safe and families are strong.

*Name and photo have been changed to protect privacy

Year at a Glance

KEY MILESTONES

20th Annual PATH Clothing Drive (January 2018)

Launch of YSM's Walk-in Counselling - Designed for those who urgently need mental health care and ongoing support. For many in immediate crisis, the walk-in counselling clinic is their only access to counselling. **(March 2018)**

YSM's Employment Job Fair - Connecting employer partners with community members, allowing them to practice their networking skills and help create workforce engagement. As a result, **40% of the participating job seekers found employment**, a key element to helping them gain financial independence. **(March 2018)**

YSM expands community development efforts into York-South Weston - Building partnerships with local organizations and creating relationships with the community as part of our mandate to build stronger communities. **(April 2018)**

Launch of YSM's Learning Lab - A new "drop-in" style program offered through Bridges, to help adults improve their literacy by focusing on reading, writing and math. **(May 2018)**

Hoops for Hope basketball tournament and BBQ - YSM's Evergreen HOPE program participants and Toronto Police teamed up to bridge the gap between street involved youth and law enforcement officials to help the youth build stronger, healthier ties to their community. **(August 2018)**

Anti-Bullying Art Exhibit *Bullying Through Your Eyes* - The OVOL youth got creative and used multiple art platforms – such as music, visual art displays and poetry to share their experiences with bullying in the community and how they are combating it through the OVOL initiative. **(August 2018)**

PROGRAM STATS

POSITIVE STEPS FORWARD BY THOSE IN CARE MANAGEMENT, CAPTURED BY TIMES™ *

Cornerstone (Families in need)	Evergreen (Street youth)	Bridges (Adults experiencing chronic poverty)	Mental Health
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130	601	390	70
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Grand Total **1191**

*Positive moves include securing shelter, employment, education and healthier living.

40,000

visits to Bridges, adult services and programming

29,800 +

visits to Cornerstone, family services and programming

26,610

visits to YSM's Food Bank

36,800 +

visits to YSM's Evergreen Centre for Street Youth

9,300 +

Visits to computer lab (kids and adults)

82%

of the **600** people who are case managed through YSM's Employment Services are employed, in training or education.

3,473

volunteers invested

48,000

hours

Over

1,000

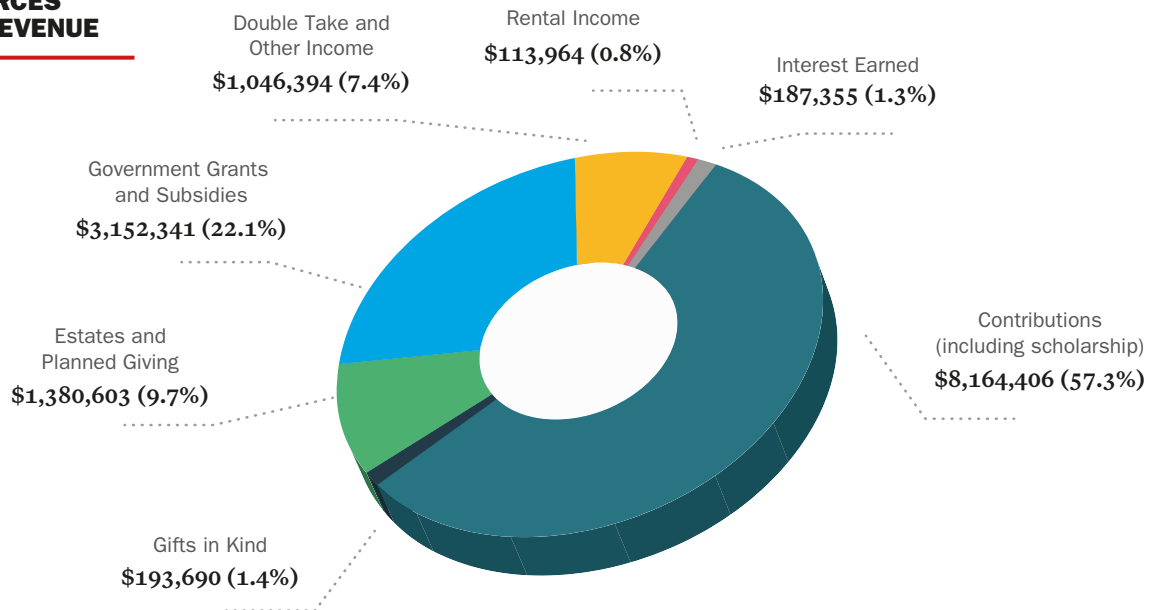
visits to YSM's counselling and mental health walk-in clinic

1400+

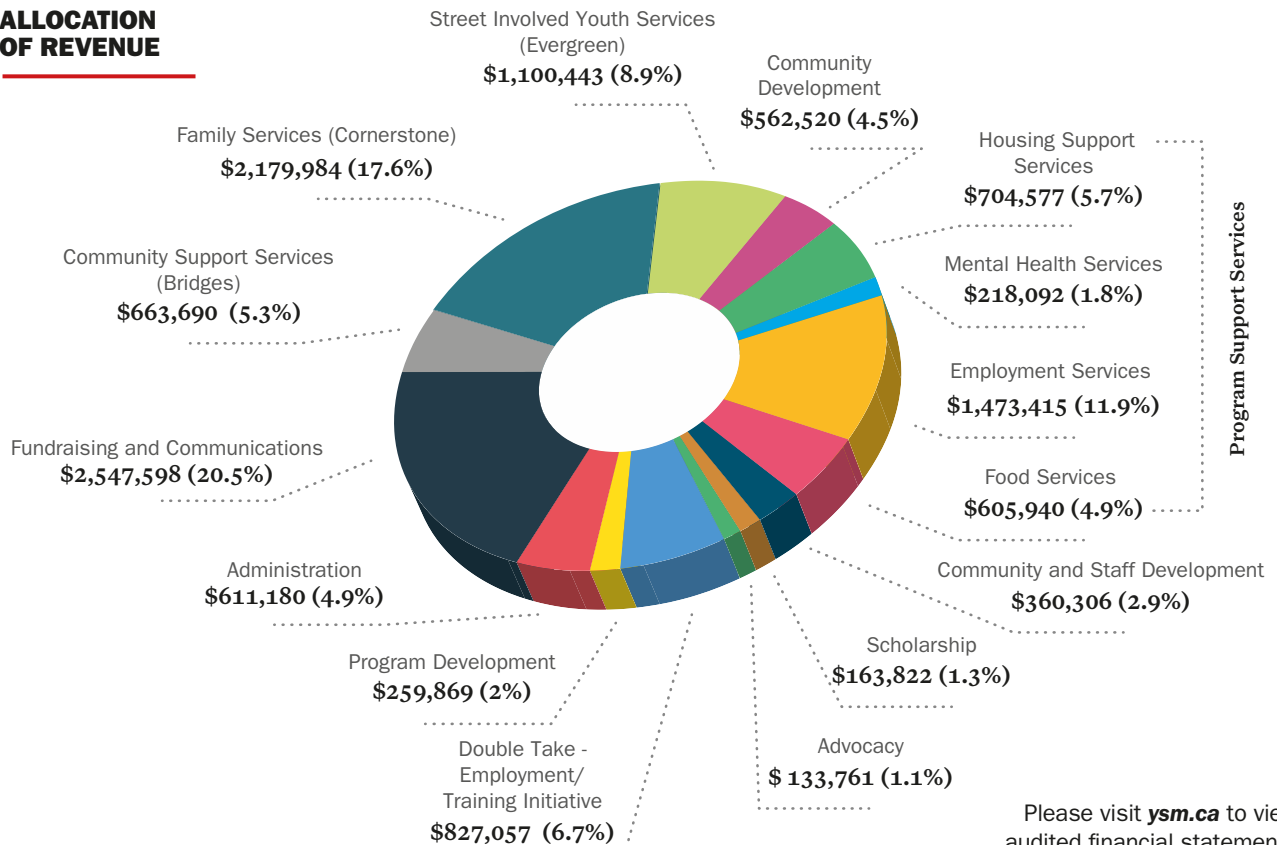
homeless and at-risk youth received housing supports - including assistance securing housing, eviction prevention, housing stabilization and budget assistance

Financials

SOURCES OF REVENUE



ALLOCATION OF REVENUE



Please visit ysm.ca to view audited financial statements

Vision for Tomorrow

EXPANDING OUR COLLECTIVE REACH TO CREATE PATHWAYS OUT OF POVERTY

For 123 years, Yonge Street Mission has been helping, supporting and encouraging those in Toronto who need us most. As the city has grown and changed, we have adapted and changed as well.

COMPLETE PHASE 2 OF YSM'S EVERGREEN CENTRE FOR STREET YOUTH AND CREATE THE PREEMINENT YOUTH HOMELESSNESS HUB.

Last year, phase one of the new YSM Evergreen Centre on Spadina Avenue opened. Its multiple practical spaces allow us to better meet our community's diverse program needs, while continuing to treat each person with respect and dignity as we help them progress and sustain change. Additional floors will continue to open in phases and we are actively pursuing funding and partnerships with like-minded agencies and individuals to become the preeminent centre for youth homelessness in Canada.

CITY WIDE COLLABORATION FOR CHANGE



By collaborating with new stakeholders and developing new partnerships, we are better able to understand and address the deep complexities of poverty reduction in our communities. We are pleased to be working with the City of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Action Plan (2019-2022) and we are a contributing member of the Downtown East

Evaluation Advisory Group. And, as our city works to realize a 20-year revitalization plan to build stronger communities, we are helping those we serve to successfully integrate into the community, while ensuring that their unique voices are heard in this vital city building work.

INNOVATIVE PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS



Seeking to further support bonding and growth among families we serve, YSM's Cornerstone Services for families in need has also entered into two strategic partnerships. Innovative partnerships with Children's Aid Society of Toronto (CAST) and Tim Horton Children's Foundation will help stabilize, strengthen and connect families facing involvement with the child welfare system and help them celebrate their positive moves forward, thereby reducing the risk of further involvement from CAST.

We have taken bold steps, in partnership with others, to build momentum and create positive action to change and transform the lives of people living in Toronto. We invite you to join us in the mission of ending the cycle of poverty in Toronto. Visit ysm.ca to learn more.



YSM Board of Directors
volunteering at our 2018
Christmas Toy Market

Thank you

BUILDING NEW PATHWAYS OUT OF POVERTY TOGETHER

At YSM, volunteers and donors play a vital role as we walk alongside our community members on their journey out of poverty. Your continued support is what makes our city building and life changing work possible. Your investment of time, resources and funds has helped us build new pathways out of poverty. The stories shared in this annual report are a sample of some of the milestones and accomplishments made possible with your support. We are deeply grateful for your help in making YSM's programs and services possible.

"As a volunteer and donor, I consider it a privilege to serve at YSM. I serve as teacher at Bridges and have recently started as a mentor in the Adult Mentoring Program. I have particular interest in mental health problems within the disadvantaged community and this year our company has made a financial commitment to supporting the Walk-in Counselling clinic. There are many programs at YSM and all focus on the needs of the whole person. Working with people has changed me in many ways. The YSM RISE Model is the gospel in action. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve."

Claus L.

Donor & Volunteer

"As a newcomer to Canada, I knew volunteering at YSM would be an excellent opportunity to do some good in the community. My favourite moment so far has been taking part in the Christmas Toy Market and seeing the faces of proud parents choosing gifts for their children. Through this experience, I've learned first-hand how impactful YSM is to the community. It's not just about helping those in need, but also about providing people with necessary tools to reintegrate into the job force or improve their skills. It's a place where people can learn, grow and express themselves through art and activities."

Pascal

Pascal Savarino Photography. Volunteer



Leadership Listing

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Gundy Jackson
Vice Chair

Gordon Sutherland
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SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Angie Draskovic
President & CEO

Angela Solomos
VP, Philanthropy

Brent Mitchell
VP, Programs & Community Development

Phillip Fearon
VP, Operations



At YSM, all assistance is given strictly on the basis of need, regardless of colour, culture, religion, economic status, gender, sexual orientation or social condition. We believe that all individuals deserve the opportunity for full and just participation in society.

YSM services and programs operate from these locations:

Martin Centre & Church at the Mission

306 Gerrard Street East

YSM's Evergreen Centre for Street Youth

365 Spadina Avenue

Davis Centre

270 Gerrard Street East

Genesis Place

280 Gerrard Street East

Double Take & TD Computer Literacy Centre

310 Gerrard Street East

**Learn more about changing
lives, building communities, and
transforming Toronto with YSM**



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