

WINTER 2017 UPDATE



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LIFE'S

MOST PERSISTENT AND URGENT QUESTION IS,
"WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR OTHERS?"

In our Fall Update, we shared with you about the 3rd pillar of Youth Unlimited's mission, Safe Communities, and how we are working to create safe spaces for teens in Edmonton. Now, over the past few months, we've had a lot of discussions with our YUE team surrounding the 4th pillar of our youth care: **Opportunities to Give Back**. Our mission at YUE is to invest in the lives of youth by providing Holistic Care, Mentoring Relationships, Safe Communities and Opportunities to Give Back. That last pillar -Giving Back- is the cornerstone of the work we do. As teens in our programs come to find a sense of belonging, discover who they are and experience the richness of community, our desire is for them to start recognizing their gifts

and begin to use them to help others, just as they've been helped. By teaching youth to give back we envision not just transformation of young lives but transformation of our community. We hope that as you read these stories about the importance of giving back, you will see how valuable **youth** giving has been in enabling teens to serve those in need and help give life to others.

"Do they not want to serve? Are they apathetic? Does our culture cause us to be so self-absorbed that teenagers care more about themselves than others? Or...are we just not giving them opportunities to give back?"

At The Cellar Youth Centre, we've noticed an increase in the number of kids who are showing leadership ability and initiative. This last year has been an exciting season

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At Stepping Stones a couple weeks ago we had the opportunity to have a volunteer come in and teach some of our young moms how to crochet. She spent an hour and a half with us teaching the moms some basic stitches and even sent them home with some yarn and a hook so they could continue practicing on their own! The moms loved learning and are excited to use their skills in the future.

Giving back is something that we find very important within Youth Unlimited as a whole, and within Stepping Stones it is just as important. We'd like to bring back our volunteer, now that the girls have a basic understanding of the simple stitches, and have her teach the young moms how to crochet little hats. The moms in turn would like to take the hats that they make and donate them to a local NICU in Edmonton so that the babies born who have to spend time in the NICU will have a cute hat to wear and take home.



Some of our moms personally have had a child stay in the NICU but the common denominator is that they're all moms. They all have children and know how hard it can be at the beginning. A gesture like this allows a mom to feel that someone cares about her and her baby. It may be small but it is important nonetheless. We can't wait to be able to donate some hats to a local NICU and give back to our community!

KAYLEIGH PIPKE
STEPPING STONES



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of growth, seeds being sown, and preparation for more. In our planning over the summer we recognized the need for something new that would be able to combine our desire for more leadership development with more opportunities for our youth to give back. This is where "**Strong Leaders**" was born.

Strong Leaders is a new weekly initiative at The Cellar. We get to use this program to equip our youth to develop and employ leadership abilities, to grow in their life skills, recognize and utilize their gifts and talents. One thing that

“ STRONG LEADERS DON'T JUST LEAD, THEY SERVE” ”

ties all of these things together is opportunities to give back:

Strong Leaders don't just lead, they serve.

Recognizing others over self is an important life skill.

God gives us gifts that we can use for His purpose.

Jesus teaches us that *"it is more blessed to give than to receive."*

Strong Leaders has "serving" at the foundation of each topic and activity. So whether we're learning how to budget, cooking Omelets for each other, playing a game, studying leaders in history and the Bible, taking strength-finder quizzes, or planning events, it's all about serving and giving!

We have several organizations we plan to serve with our Strong Leaders group throughout this year, but one is worth mentioning because it causes a neat full-circle loop with "giving back".

"Basically Babies" is a charity that works to provide for the basic needs of newborn babies born to families in extreme need in the greater Edmonton area. They provide an entire year's supply of things like clothing, outerwear, storybooks, sleepers, footwear, etc. YUE's Stepping Stones program recently got in touch with Basically Babies and will be a recipient organization. This means that the young mom's that Stepping Stones works with will be receiving Layettes that our Strong Leaders group at the Cellar help to organize and put together. How neat is that?!

We're excited to see how God will continue to work in the lives of our students. We're even more excited to see how He'll work through them as they become stronger leaders and give back to their families, friends, schools, and communities.

JENNIFER KRAUSE
THE CELLAR YOUTH CENTRE

• 20 CHARITIES WHO CARE FOR THE VULNERABLE •

Youth Unlimited is passionate about giving youth an opportunity to give back. But it's important to lead by example. So how does YU give back? One way is through The **Ride for Refuge**. Being the host charity for this event gives us an incredible opportunity to give back to our city by providing a fun and easy way for charities to raise funds for their programs or projects. This year, we had 20 charities in Edmonton join us who all care for the vulnerable, exploited or

things run smoothly. We had 6 friendly welcome greeters helping organize the chaos. We had an energetic group of cheerleaders giving the enthusiasm our participants needed to start and finish the day strong. We had welcome desk attendants keeping everyone in the know. We had rest stop attendants keeping everyone hydrated and satisfied.

The list is INCREDIBLE!

“IT'S LIKE WE GET TO
LINK ARMS AND SAY
“HEY, WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER”.
IT IS POWERFUL.”



displaced in our city. It's like we get to link arms and say "hey, we're in this together". It is powerful.

So far, over **\$112,000** has been raised for these charities! But this event just isn't possible without the many volunteers who sacrificed their time and energy to help make the day a success.

This here is a shout out to all our amazing Ride for Refuge 2017 volunteers.

We had 17 people volunteering as Route Marshals to keep our riders safe. We had 9 champions who set up and tore down the route, giving up some precious hours before dawn. We had 4 Route Rangers who collectively biked over 100km to ensure our riders were safe and encouraged throughout the ride. We had 10 incredible registration volunteers making

From the bottom of my heart, THANK YOU to everyone who volunteered their time to help us out at Ride for Refuge. It's amazing to know that more and more youth in Edmonton can be given HOPE through expanding our reach with these funds. And the icing on the cake: Through Ride for Refuge, more and more people in all types of vulnerable situations can be cared for by the charities who joined us on September 30th.

So to our volunteers: we appreciate ALL you've given of your time and gifts. You are a champion of HOPE.

AISLINN MACHUSHYK
ROUTE CO-CAPTAIN // RIDE FOR REFUGE



IN THE PAST 10 YEARS, YOUTH SUICIDE
HAS RISEN **200%**



ON ANY GIVEN DAY, **HALF** OF THE HOSPITAL
BEDS BEING USED BY YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVE
TREATMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.



51% OF TEEN GIRLS SAY THEY FEEL
PRESSURE TO TAKE AND SEND EXPLICIT
PHOTOS OF THEMSELVES

THIS DOES NOT HAVE TO BE THEIR STORY.

Together, we are faced with the huge task to help positively steer the direction of these lives, and YOU have the power to do it, TODAY.

This Christmas, you have the power to transform a life.
Please consider Youth Unlimited in your Year-End Giving.

INCARCERATION OF A JUVENILE FOR
ONE YEAR COSTS SOCIETY OVER

\$100,000



BUT
A GIFT OF...

\$25

WILL SUPPORT
ONE HOUR OF MENTORING
FOR A STUDENT AT RISK



\$33

WILL ALLOW 1 TEEN TO
ATTEND ONE MONTH OF DROP-INS
AT OUR YOUTH COMMUNITY CENTRES

\$584

WILL ALLOW 1 TEEN TO ENGAGE IN
ONE FULL YEAR OF PROGRAMS
AND SUPPORT THROUGH YOUTH UNLIMITED



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