



Youville Centre

Annual Report 2024-2025



Laiba, Class of 2025

Photo by Michelle Valberg

Youville Centre is an innovative centre that **inspires, educates** and **nurtures** young mothers and their children to utilize their strengths and achieve their goals

**Our
Mission**

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About Youville Centre

Youville Centre is a non-profit, registered charity that serves pregnant and parenting adolescents and their children. Accredited by the Canadian Centre for Accreditation, Youville offers a range of trauma-informed services designed to address the social determinants of health, reduce barriers to education, and support young families through a licensed Child Development Program. In partnership with the Ottawa Catholic School Board, Youville clients can complete their high school education on-site, empowering them to build a better future for themselves and create lasting intergenerational impact. Since 1985, Youville Centre has been an innovative organization that inspires, educates, and nurtures young mothers and birthing parents to build on their strengths and achieve their goals.

Vision



At Youville Centre, we believe every child and youth has the capacity to learn and grow, and that every young mother and birthing parent deserves to believe that anything is possible. Our programs and services help our clients pursue personal, academic, and parenting goals, creating brighter futures for themselves and their children.



Welcome

Many families we serve face systemic barriers such as food insecurity, unstable housing, or limited access to healthcare and education. Meeting these basic needs is foundational to learning and healing.

At the same time, we strive to create an environment that reflects and celebrates families' cultures, identities, and lived experiences. True belonging happens when clients feel seen, valued, and supported in the full context of their lives. We are committed to:

- **Language access through partnership** – operating primarily in English, we connect families to our sister organization CSC Vanier for French-language services.
- **Indigenous partnerships** – collaborating with Wabano to provide culturally relevant supports and ongoing staff learning.
- **Gender-affirming care** – respecting and affirming each individual's gender identity and expression, including young mothers, pregnant men, non-binary, and Two-Spirit clients.
- **Anti-racism** – addressing systemic racism within childcare and mental health systems, and building staff capacity through allyship, anti-racism, and culturally responsive practices.



Youville Centre acknowledges that we are on the traditional, unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe People, on whose land we **inspire, educate** and **nurture**.



Our History



Founded in 1985, Youville Centre was the brainchild of Sister Betty Ann Kinsella, a member of the Congregation of Grey Sisters and a former teacher at Immaculata High School in Ottawa and Our Lady's High School in Pembroke. Sister Betty Ann's vision was to create a centre that would give young mothers and their babies a chance for a brighter future through education, social supports, and parenting instruction.

What began as a small centre in Hintonburg serving 12 young mothers and their children, now provides innovative programs and services for approximately 100 young pregnant/parenting mothers, or birthing parents and their children each year.

At the outset, Youville Centre programming focused on providing education, housing support, counselling, childcare, and parenting instruction; all needs which continue to be addressed today. During its Hintonburg years, the Centre's programs and services, under Sister Betty Ann's leadership, grew and developed. In addition to its emphasis on education and housing, as Youville Centre matured, important services such as legal aid, public health, parenting and life skills instruction, nutrition courses, and enhanced crisis counselling, were added to the program.

In the spring of 2000, Youville Centre moved to its current location on Mann Avenue in the neighbourhood of Sandy Hill. After a very successful Capital Campaign, spearheaded by Sister Betty Ann, important renovations were made to Youville's current building in order to respond to the expanding population and the evolving needs of the young mothers and their children.

2020-2021 saw the completion of an expansion project; the addition of the new toddler Lilac room, with 15 licensed childcare spaces, bringing the Child Development Program capacity up to 70 spaces. The Centre was awarded its largest grant ever for the 2023 Roof and HVAC Project; a significant construction project to replace the Centre's aging, end of service life, roof and HVAC system. Construction onsite took place from June to December 2023. We can now look forward to staying dry with the new roof for many years to come and appreciate the healthy air quality in our building thanks to the automated functioning capabilities of the new HVAC system.

While programs have evolved over the past 40 years, the spirit of Youville Centre remains unchanged: making a meaningful difference across two generations, breaking cycles, and providing a hand up to young parents continues to be our priority.



Message from the Executive Director

As I complete my third year as Executive Director of Youville Centre, I am reminded that what makes this place truly extraordinary is its people. Every young mother and birthing parent who comes through our doors arrives with unique stories, challenges, and hopes. Taking the first step into Youville is often a step into the unknown, one that can be filled with fear or uncertainty.

Yet, time and again, I have witnessed how quickly that uncertainty is replaced with a sense of belonging and hope, thanks to the warmth and compassion of our staff and the strength of the community they discover here.

Since its founding, Youville has celebrated **656 graduates**—each diploma representing not only academic achievement but also perseverance and the collective strength of this community. From my very first visit, I knew Youville was special. Guided by the vision of Sister Betty Ann, it continues to be more than an organization: it becomes a family, a home, and a place of transformation.

We could not provide the programs and services we do without the support of our funders, community partners, and donors such as the ones listed below: {more information in later sections of this annual report}.

- The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services;
- The Ministry of Education;
- The Ottawa Catholic and Public School Boards; and
- M.F. McHugh Education Centre and St. Nicholas Adult High School

This year, we saw:

- A new Equine Assisted Learning program at Angel Rock Farms;
- Enhanced collaboration for Child and Family Therapy through Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre;



**Peter Embleton,
Executive Director**

- the introduction of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy in partnership with Westboro Psychology; and
- Coordinated substance use and addictions counseling with Rideauwood Addictions and Family Services

We are nearing the end of our four-year quality assurance cycle as an Accredited Child & Youth Mental Health Agency with the Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA), and a focus for the last year has been on compiling our evidence for our submission. We will be hosting a review team onsite in October to complete the evidence requirements to maintain our accreditation.

As I step away from this role, I do so with confidence in Youville's future. The next Executive Director will inherit a strong, vibrant community committed to ensuring every young mother, birthing parent, and child has the opportunity to thrive. It has been an honour to serve, and I will remain forever grateful to have had this opportunity.

I hope you enjoy reading more about our year, there are so many wonderful moments to reflect on.

Message from the Board Chair

As we reflect on the past year, Youville's volunteer Board of Directors is filled with gratitude and admiration for the resilience, compassion, and commitment that define our organization and the community we serve.

In a world that often presents significant challenges to young mothers, Youville Centre continues to stand as a beacon of hope—offering education, counselling, and child care to help them create brighter futures for themselves and their children.

This year, we once again saw firsthand the strength of the young women who attend our Centre. Their determination to learn, grow, and build better lives was met by the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and partners. From classroom learning to therapeutic counselling to the nurturing care of our early childhood educators and volunteers, every aspect of Youville's work is rooted in dignity and the belief in every young mother's potential.

The Board strives to ensure that it is reflective of our community and provides diversity in backgrounds, experiences as we succession plan for the future. This ensures that we can fulfill our mandate of developing governance policies for the operation of the Centre, overseeing the Centre's financial health and sustainability and finally, providing our Executive Director with the resources required to best serve Youville's clients – young mothers and their children.



**Lee Redpath, Chair/President
Board of Directors**

This year the Board members were thrilled to participate in two fundraising events held on behalf of the Centre: an Italian Dinner as well as a Golf Tournament. Many of us were honored to attend this year's high school graduation – it was simply wonderful to see 17 young women graduate. We had the opportunity to hear from a Class of 2014 graduate who credits Youville with assisting her in not only achieving a high school education but also her university degree while parenting her young family. {You can read more about Sarah's Story in this report.} Seeing our graduates succeed once they leave is just magnificent!

In September 2025, I will step down as President of the Board of Directors. I feel truly blessed to have had the opportunity to work with my fellow board members, meet numerous young mothers and be a part of the Youville Centre family. I wish you all nothing but the best that life has to offer.

Board of Directors 2024-2025

From September 2024 to August 2025, the following individuals served on Youville Centre's volunteer Board of Directors;



Lee Redpath - President/Chair

Public Servant (Retired)

Valerie Metzger – Treasurer

Controller, Bro Sun Media Consultants

(Marjorie) Jill Bennett - Director

Educational Consultant

Stefanie Bourada – Director

Sr. Manager, Canadian Medical Association

Jean Laurin - Director

CPA (Retired)

Stephen McCabe - Director

Superintendent, Education (Retired)

Sundee Viri - Director

Lawyer, Policy Advisor

Andre Potvin - Vice-President

Professor, Faculty of Education, uOttawa

Sarah Niman – Secretary

Legal Advocate

Lauren Benoit - Director

Council, Department of Justice

Nina Jetha – Director

Public Health, Gov. of Canada

Dr. Gillian Mann - Director

Research Consultant

Dr. Rana Pishva - Director

Clinical Psychologist



For more information and a current list of Youville Centre's Board of Directors, please visit our website at <https://www.youvillecentre.org/about-us/board-of-directors/>



Highlights of 2024-2025



Youville Centre staff and clients recognized **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation** (Orange Shirt Day); a day for communities to come together in a spirit of reconciliation and hope because every child matters. *Photo above of a reflective group walk.*



CDP Halloween Party

The Child Development Program celebrated Halloween by welcoming all families to our gym, filled with child-led activities, costumes and special treats made by Val. Dressing up for Halloween is always a fun event at the Centre.



Valentine's Day

Clients enjoyed decorating heart shaped cookies, ice cream floats and playing a friendly trivia game with the ITSP team, as well as the chance to create paintings celebrating love throughout the week.



Thanksgiving 2024

Youville Centre was filled with a sense of community as staff and clients collaborated on planning, decorating and preparing our annual Thanksgiving Meal. It was a special day that ended with full tummies from our shared meal and a sense of belonging.



During **Staff Paint Night**, some staff participated in a fun and relaxing group activity: a paint night where they 'painted a tote bag.'

This after hours event in November included a potluck of course, because we love food for every occasion here.



Community Engagement

Youville Staff, Diana & Liz, met with prospective future Registered Social Workers from the BSW and MSW degree programs and connected with community agencies at the annual field placement job fair in September.



Lunch and Learn Program

Our successful monthly Lunch and Learn speakers series took place with support from Famous5 Ottawa and TD Bank. Women from the community are chosen to speak to our young parents about careers while they enjoy a delicious lunch. The stories of inspiration and encouragement help our clients to consider a wide array of pathways and ideas as they plan for their future.

Pictured above is a presentation in March from WISE Ottawa, where Elsy David is demonstrating physical safety.



Equine Assisted Learning

Youville Centre partnered with Angel Rock Farms to pilot an equine assisted learning experience. The program supports skill building and self regulation through horse handling. Throughout the sessions, participants learned how to care for the animals while developing practical skills around communication, reading cues, assertiveness and problem solving. Based on feedback from clients and staff, we are excited to continue this program in the following school year.



United Way Minute

Youville Centre was asked to participate in a United Way Minute filming (*behind the scenes pictured*). Youville's Clinical Supervisor Natasha McBrearty spoke about our services, and Alumnae Crystal shared her story for this video, and for our 2024 Holiday Campaign.

We are grateful to the United Way Eastern Ontario for their ongoing partnership and support for our mental health programs and services.

Find the video on our website at [2024 Holiday Ways to Give - Crystal's Story](#).



Highlights of 2024-2025



The Canadian Museum of Nature's **Butterflies in Flight** exhibit was a highlight during a client field trip on a snowy day in February. The clients were able to observe the diverse species of butterflies up close in the tropical space, in addition to other exhibits.



Community Engagement
Youville staff Val and Kelsea attended a "Taste the French Difference" event to celebrate francophone culture. The event was organized by the Winning Strategies Project Team, a regional Ontario Health team initiative.



Holiday Party 2024
All families were welcomed to come together to celebrate the holiday season with treats, games, arts and crafts. The gym was filled with festive music, decorations & Santa's ho, ho, ho



Fairy Godmother
ITSP Case Coordinators were able to share in the graduates excitement as they helped choose the perfect dress for graduation day. Special thanks to the Fairy Godmother volunteers and donors for making this opportunity possible.



Volunteer Appreciation Week
Youville recognized our much appreciated volunteers during National Volunteer Appreciation Week in April with appreciation gifts and highlighted the theme *Volunteers Make Waves*. Read more about volunteers on page 24



Quality Assurance Committee
Representatives from the Child Development, Intensive Treatment and Academic Teams met to review the year's successes, challenges and identify areas of growth. These regular meetings guide our planning and provide essential feedback for us.



Youville Centre was successful in hosting four **Canada Summer Jobs Grants** placements between May - July 2025. The placements provided valuable learning opportunities for the successful students and enhanced our staffing capacity in both our Child Development and Intensive Treatment Support Programs. Youville Staff are pictured above with MP Mona Fortier at a July barbecue celebrating all the youth employment opportunities made possible locally from this federal initiative.



Ujima Project Staff, Mandy & Sophie, led the Make The Connection parenting groups. Parents and children engaged in activities and discussions to build attachment and connection. The Ujima Project was an initiative focused on improving the lives of young parents and their children, by combining family navigation, early literacy, and early childhood development. The funding for the Ujima Project concluded in January 2025, and Youville staff strive to continue the essential services this project provided over the last 3 years.



Youville Prom 2025
The students advocated and collaborated on the planning and execution of a special year end prom party for all students. The gym was transformed to a magical, shimmery hall filled with dancing, pinatas, photo booths, special treats and lots of smiles and laughter. The toddlers matched the energy by having their own prom filled with disco lights, music, bubbles and dancing.

Highlights of 2024-2025

A few other highlights included;

- Ottawa Public Health was onsite to provide information on the administration & availability of Naloxone.
- Clients and staff participated in a Violence Against Women (VAW) vigil in collaboration with Wabano.
- Thanks to funding from the City of Ottawa and the Professional Learning Program, all staff were able to participate in a full day of learning to build capacity to meet our families' needs.
- Youville Staff attended the 2024 Ottawa Christmas Cheer Breakfast; Youville is a recipient of a financial donation from the event and funds are used to purchase gift cards to alleviate food insecurity.
- Thanks to funding made possible by OAYPA's Ujima Project, CDP leaders -Diana & Kelsea were able to participate in the Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion conference to continue to grow in our learning of the science and practice of early mental health.
- The toddlers visit the drop in playgroup at our neighbours at the Parent Resource Centre. The children are learning how to transition and engage with others in a new environment.

Please follow us on social media for more photos and updates on events and activities throughout the year.

Holiday Ways to Give 2024

Thank you to everyone who scheduled and dropped off in-kind donations individually and gave so generously for the holidays!

Personal Donors/Collection organizers:

- Barbara Crook (Youville Angel)
- Brenda Thomas (Youville Angel) & Friends
- Deb Bigras, Margie Sunstrum (Youville Angels)
- Zybina Richards (Youville Angel & PJ Elf)
- And many more personal donors who dropped off items from our Client Holiday Wishlist

Organizations and Donation Drives:

- Algonquin Travel and Cruise Centre
- Amazon YOW3
- Blanket Brigade
- Boom! Savings! Charity Shopping Club - Gavin Thompson (Youville Angel)
- Brookfield Renewable
- Canada Border Services Agency; Science & Technology Branch Staff
- Canada Border Services Agency; Human Resources Branch Staff
- Caring and Sharing Exchange
- CBC Radio Staff - Amanda Pfeffer
- Christmas Cheer Foundation - Breakfast
- City of Ottawa; Human Resources Employees
- Direct Bore Inc.
- Hunt Club Chiropractic
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church
- Invest Ottawa
- Merrick Professional Women's Roundtable
- Only Takes One - Ava Sidoli & Family/Friends
- Ottawa Food Bank
- Ottawa Hospital Research Institute Employees

- Ottawa Police Purse Project
- Our Lady of Visitation - Baby Shower
- PCL Construction Staff
- PEO Chapter J
- Pyjama Patrol
- Recruiting in Motion Ottawa
- Rooted Family Wellness Centre
- Shoebox Project Ottawa
- St Clare Mission, Dwyer Hill
- St Mark High School Diaper Drive
- St Monica Catholic School Social Justice Committee
- St Patrick Fallowfield Parish CWL
- St Philip Ladies Auxiliary
- uOttawa GirlUp Club
- uOttawa Holiday Donation Drive - Engagement, Development & Marketing Team, Telfer School of Management
- TD/MBNA, Women at TD Committee
- Toy Mountain





YOUVILLE CENTRE 2024 HOLIDAY WAYS TO GIVE

In Client's Words

"The holiday support I received from Youville helped bring a smile on my daughter's face Christmas morning"

"The gift cards, food, clothes and everything was super helpful and I'm so grateful. It gave me more motivation to get to school too!"

"Receiving services from Youville both for me and my daughter and knowing what's around {for support} really helps me."

"You don't even know how much you helped us, everything we received was extremely helpful and very much needed - diapers were so great for my family"

"Thanks a lot to the donors! We really appreciate your help and donations. It helps us a lot. Holiday YouStore was so helpful for my family."

"The gifts we received really helped our children have a good Christmas, the toys and gift cards were so helpful!"

"Up and blessed. Forever grateful and thankful. Thank you! XOXO"

"The holiday support made my daughter's first christmas unforgettable, she loves all her toys and blankets."



Community Partners

It is important to us at Youville Centre to work together with other community organizations to best serve our young families. Whether we refer our clients to community resources or work in collaboration with partner agencies or onsite partners, we are grateful to work together to support our clients.



Bi-weekly at Youville Centre, Dr. Megan Harrison, an adolescent pediatrician and Debbie Turner, a pediatric nurse from CHEO, offer a medical clinic

[Read more about the Youville Centre Medical Clinic on our website here](#)



Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP) City of Ottawa Case Coordinator, Patrick Blanc, visits regularly to meet with clients who are Ontario Works recipients; addressing any needs, questions or issues



Constables Sarah Marcantonio and Marie Carmichael; Community Youth Officers with the Ottawa Police Service's Community Youth Unit (CYU). Their regular visits are a key part of the CYU's proactive approach to building positive relationships with young people in Ottawa. As part of their connection to the M.F. McHugh Education Centre, the constables help Youville's vulnerable clients experience a positive connection with law enforcement. When they're onsite, our clients are able to ask questions, and seek guidance for navigating difficult life situations.



Thanks to Ottawa Network for Education (ONFE) funding, clients are able to begin each day with their nutrition needs met. The availability of breakfast and morning snack daily creates an environment ready for learning and growth.

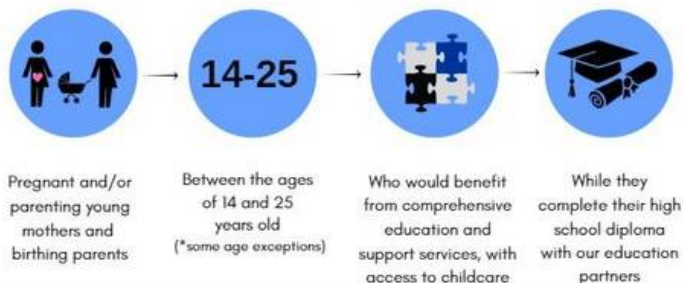
This year thanks to additional funding secured through the Ottawa Food Bank Strategy in Action Grant, clients were also able to participate at the same time while they ate, in a morning breakfast club, with related activities to provide enhanced access to food security and resources.

A few collaborations are highlighted above; for an extensive list of Youville Centre's Community Partners, [please visit our website here](#)



The Intensive Treatment Support Program (ITSP)

WHO WE SERVE



At any given time, we provide support services to up to **50** young mothers/birthing parents and **70** infants/toddlers on a daily basis. In some years, we have seen approximately **100** clients per year.

Youville Centre serves adolescent mothers and birthing parents through a comprehensive education and support program in partnership with M.F. McHugh Education Centre (ages 14–21) and St. Nicholas Adult High School (ages 21–25), while their children (0–30 months) attend our licensed Child Development Program.

Clients bring many strengths and assets, while also navigating a range of health and social challenges, including but not limited to:

- Mental health concerns
- Substance use and addictions
- Disordered eating
- Intimate partner violence
- Food insecurity
- Unstable housing
- Infant development and mental health needs

In addition to supporting students and their children, Youville also serves families from the broader community who access childcare through the Child Development Program, as well as Youville graduates through the Aftercare program.

Case Management

Each student at Youville is paired with a dedicated Case Coordinator who helps them achieve educational goals, access health and social services, and ensure their child benefits from parenting supports and the Child Development Program. A personalized Service Plan guides each client, reflecting their strengths, needs, and cultural background, and connects them to a tailored care team and support network.

Client Goals This Year Were Related To:

- Education
- Parenting
- Housing
- Mental Health
- Health
- Employment
- Legal
- Income
- Transportation



Impact This Year:

- 86% of clients self-reported progress toward their goals
- 90.5% reported making progress toward educational goals
- 90.5% agreed Youville helped them manage life's challenges
- 100% of clients transitioning out had a plan to meet their needs



Intensive Treatment Support Program Staff at Graduation: Kaitlin, Liz and Kaitlyn (left to right)

Intensive Treatment Support Program (ITSP)

Our Approach:

At Youville Centre, everything we do is grounded in a trauma-informed, strengths-based approach. We recognize that many of the young families we work with carry the weight of past experiences, and we believe healing begins with calm, safety, and connection. [1]

Our goal is to create a space where students feel respected, supported, and empowered. A nurturing environment filled with predictable, caring relationships becomes an intervention in itself—helping young parents build trust, confidence, and new possibilities.

We use Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) (Hone et al., 2019) to work alongside students in navigating everyday challenges—from parenting and school to managing stress. By focusing on collaboration and skill-building, we help families access the full range of education, childcare, counselling, and community supports at Youville.

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) (Linehan et al., 1992) provides additional tools for growth. Students gain concrete skills in mindfulness, emotional regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal effectiveness. These skills help in the moment and also strengthen long-term resilience. Parents who practice compassion with themselves and their children become more present, reflective, and connected in their relationships.

We take a whole-family approach, recognizing that parent and child well-being are deeply linked.

Programs like Circle of Security (Powell et al., 2013) and Make the Connection support attachment, strengthen parent-child relationships, and lay the foundation for healthy development.

Equally important is youth voice and leadership. Many of the young people who come to Youville have faced stigma as adolescent parents. Here, they are met with dignity, respect, and the belief that they have valuable contributions to make. We focus on amplifying existing strengths, offering choice, and encouraging leadership at every stage—whether that's setting personal goals, shaping program design, or sharing lived experience.

Our work is also rooted in equity and cultural responsiveness. Many of the families we serve are navigating systemic inequities such as food insecurity, unstable housing, or barriers to healthcare and education. Meeting basic needs is foundational to any learning or healing journey. At the same time, we strive to create an environment that reflects and celebrates families' cultures, identities, and lived experiences. True connection and belonging can only happen when students feel seen, valued, and supported in the full context of their lives.

By reducing barriers and providing integrated, affirming supports, we work alongside young mothers and birthing parents to create stability, dignity, and the sense of possibility needed for meaningful growth.

[1] Perry, B. (2016). *The Three R's: Reaching the learning brain*. Beacon House Therapeutic Services and Trauma Team. <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/The-Three-Rs.pdf>

What Clients Say...

About experience:

- “Being able to have opportunities I never would have before like going to see the butterflies at the museum and the horses at the ranch.”
- “The best part was the experience itself. It was wholesome.”
- “Everything—I felt so supported and loved.”
- “The staff and the environment made me feel very comfortable to open up about what I was going through.”
- “Being able to have some time to myself while knowing my kids are in a safe place and so I could graduate.”

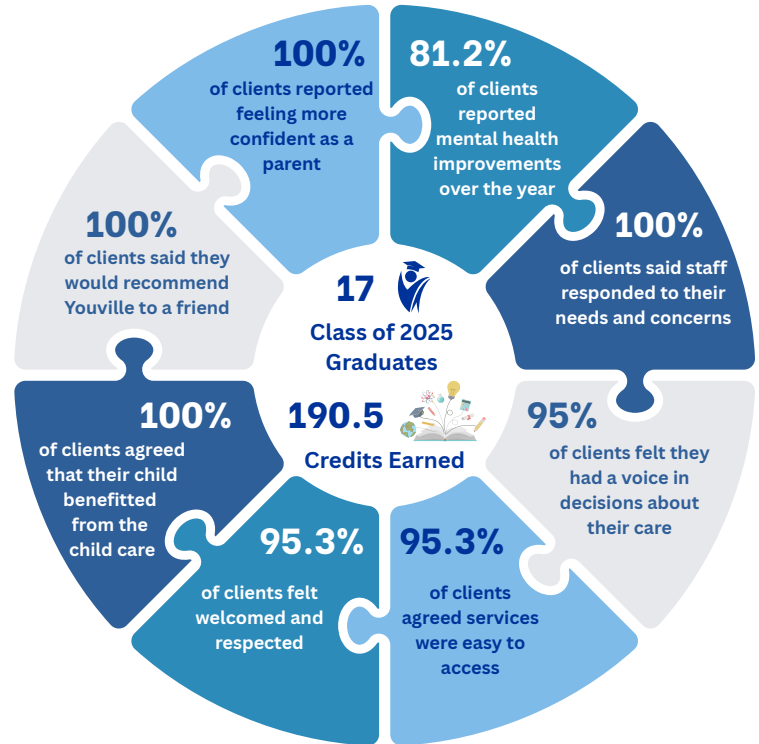


Saidee and Liana during Make The Connection circle time

About growth & opportunity:

- “Learning how to be a better version of myself.”
- “Being able to make friends, continue my education while my child is being socialized, and have support when needed.”
- “Doing prom and getting to see the friends I made graduate, being able to eat lunch—the meals are amazing. And everything that comes with the school too, even the staff.”

2024-2025 Client Achievements & Outcomes



About support & relationships:

- “Meeting all the amazing staff and getting to make memories with such amazing people.”
- “Meeting new people who are in the same situation as me.”
- “How welcoming the teachers and staff are.”



Sam and Zayne playing peek-a-boo during Make the Connection

Child Development Program

Program Overview

Our licensed child care provides early learning and care for 40 infants (ages 0–18 months) and 30 toddlers (ages 18–30 months). Our Child Development Program Manager leads a team of Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), as well as program assistants, kitchen staff, cleaning staff, and clerical personnel who collectively help deliver a quality child care program.

Using Ontario's pedagogy of the early years **How Does Learning Happen?** (HDLH), and knowledge of the **Early Learning for Every Child Today** framework (ELECT), our Registered Early Childhood Educators create meaningful learning environments and experiences based on the children's interests, to support their holistic development.

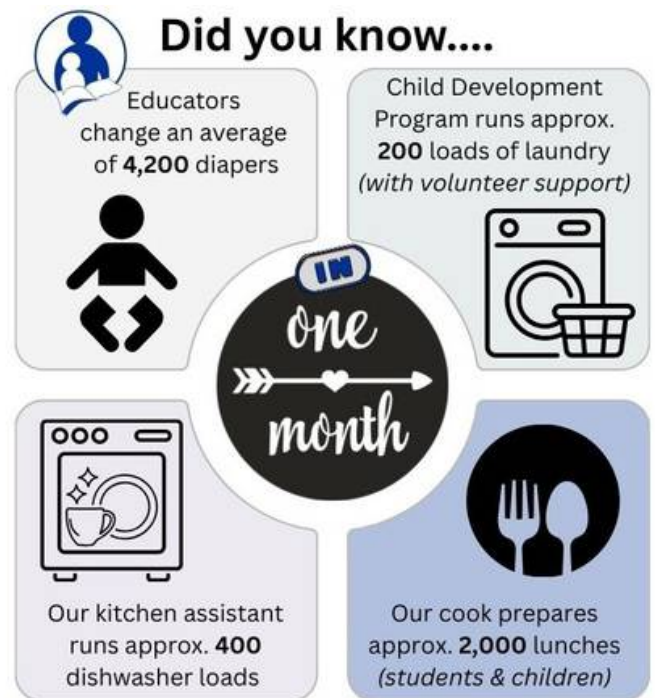
HDLH emphasizes the views of the child, the role of educators and of the families, and the concept of learning through relationships. Putting the interests and needs of the child first is the forefront of this pedagogy, hence its four foundations: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression. Recognizing children as capable and curious creates programs and services that value and build on children's strengths and abilities.

Screening and Early Identification

Our Child Development team is trained in administering the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ3). This screener provides an in-depth overview of children's developmental milestones for each specific age group. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE2) uniquely screens for concerns with a child's social and emotional development, an area directly related to their overall mental health and well-being. The developmental screens are used to implement interventions that help mitigate the impact of potential delays when a parent is waiting for a community agency's referral. The Developmental Support Plan (DSP) is written in the voice of the child that outlines specific ways in which primary caregivers and program staff can support the child in reaching their developmental goals.



Educator CJ connecting with Ayan



Educator Coreena guiding Diba in some risky play

Child Development Program

Parent Engagement

The Child Development Program utilizes “Storypark”, a virtual documentation tool. This online software allows staff to post picture stories about the learning that occurs with each child during their day in our program. Educators also use the tool to create and share program plans along with information regarding each child’s daily routines.

A Living Learning Wall documents and highlights the children's learning and experiences in our front lobby. This fluid documentation is a place to share photos and stories to display the children’s strengths, experiences, interests and growth with our families and community.



Serena and Selena connecting during their nap

Continuous Professional Development

Continuous professional development allows our staff to remain up-to-date with best practices and current research in areas such as curriculum and pedagogy, early childhood mental health, risk factors for parents and their children, as well as current and relevant parenting strategies. Through the funding made available through the Professional Learning Program and partnership with the City of Ottawa, the centre was able to cease operations so the team could engage in a full day of learning to enhance our capacity to serve families.



Renesame and Ronan exploring the park during a neighborhood walk



Educator Romy and Flynn



Aulani creating a fingerpaint masterpiece



Kayson and Atreus learning about bugs

Child Development Program

Infant Mental Health Promotion

Infant Mental Health Promotion refers to the social, emotional, and cognitive well-being of infants and young children. Supporting infant mental health means that we:

- **work collaboratively with children, parents, and community partners to prevent developmental problems;**
- **intervene early when children are identified as being at-risk;**
- **encourage a sense of security, safety, and the ability to establish and maintain satisfying and healthy relationships;**
- **support a child's learning and development through establishing meaningful connections;**
- **promote the ability for parents and young children to cope with and solve problems within their environment;**
- **empower parents to learn how best to experience, control, and express their own emotions and to help develop those skills in their children; and**
- **strive to promote stable, supportive families and communities.**

A child's development in the early years is crucial; this is a period of time where the relationships children form build the foundation for their perception of their self-worth and abilities, as well as that of their caregivers and of the world around them. We believe that parent education is vital, and that when parents are armed with information regarding their child's development in regards to their social-emotional and cognitive needs, they are better prepared to understand how best to respond to their child. Our team of educators participate in training provided by Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion (SickKids) as well as the opportunities provided by Practice Change Champions and the Ottawa Child and Youth Initiative.

Afiaa learning about her own reflection

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC)

Youville Centre remains enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreement with the City of Ottawa and Province of Ontario. This national child care plan supports quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in licensed child care.

The goals are to create more affordable, quality licensed child care spaces; support the early childhood workforce through enhanced compensation, training, and professional learning opportunities; and improve accessibility by addressing barriers to providing inclusive and flexible child care. This is a transformative period in the history of licensed child care. Eligible families have been able to receive a partial reduction of fees of up to 52.75% and will continue to experience further reductions. This has been much needed, welcome respite for families faced with rising costs and increasing financial demands.

Our Child Development Program strives to support our young families and provide a quality early learning and care environment in an ever changing climate. The educators and support staff ensure that the programs creatively operate without interruption and with the children's health, safety and development as a top priority.

We will continue to advocate for the ongoing support and resources to ensure we continue to prioritize the needs of our most vulnerable populations, two generations at a time.



Education Partners

M.F. MCHUGH EDUCATION CENTRE

Our Youville program thrives because of the commitment to empowering our students. We are deeply grateful for the continued partnership in fostering an environment where every student can achieve their full potential.

This year, the students at Youville have demonstrated engagement and enthusiasm across a diverse range of learning opportunities and themed activities, significantly enriching their educational experiences. The curriculum was designed to foster a comprehensive approach to development, encompassing creative expression, practical life skills, and mental and physical well-being.

A standout highlight was an immersive exploration into the fascinating world of prosthetic makeup. Students delved into understanding the intricate applications and techniques required to create compelling illusions of various effects. This hands-on experience not only honed their artistic skills but also provided insights into the science behind visual effects.

To increase and engage in practical life skills, students actively participated in comprehensive cooking programs. These programs went beyond simple recipe following, focusing on the essential principles of family meal planning, nutrition, and budget-friendly culinary practices. This focus provided our students with the knowledge and confidence to prepare healthy and enjoyable meals for themselves and their families.

Another learning opportunity to showcase their creative talents, our students embarked on a remarkable project involving the creation of personal mosaics. Utilizing broken glass pieces, they transformed discarded materials into stunning displays of artistry and individuality. This activity developed patience, precision, and an appreciation for transforming imperfections into beautiful works of art.

Our students also regularly participated in nature walks as a personal goal, recognizing the critical importance of mental and physical well-being. These outings served as a vital means for promoting wellness benefits, de-stressing, encouraging mindfulness, developing a deeper



Margarita Zioldo,
Principal



M.F. McHugh teaching team pictured on Graduation Day: Tiff, Tara, Kaethe & Julie (left to right)

connection with nature and opportunities for physical activity.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue building on this success by promoting an inclusive and empowering learning environment where every student feels supported and inspired. We are dedicated to providing diverse educational opportunities that not only prepare our students for academic and career success but also equip them with essential life skills and a strong sense of well-being.

This would not have been possible without the invaluable support of our sponsors and the unwavering dedication of our agency partner and teachers. We are very grateful for the continued opportunity to work collaboratively with the Youville Intensive Support Program (ITSP), Child Development Program (CDP), administration and volunteers who ensure our students have the tools, resources and support to access school and empower them for their future.

Education Partners

Our commitment to collaborative partnerships with the agency, community organizations, and families remains consistent, ensuring that our students receive comprehensive support as they navigate their educational journeys and transition into post secondary opportunities.

To read more about the M.F. McHugh Program please visit our [website page here](#) 



St Nick's Teacher Sue (left) pictured on Halloween with McHugh Teachers: (left-right) Tara, Julie, Kaethe & Taylor

ST. NICHOLAS ADULT HIGH SCHOOL

On behalf of St. Nicholas Adult High School, it gives me great pleasure to once again be a part of Youville Centre's Annual Report for 2024-25. The past year has been one filled with goals, challenges, and triumphs which have strengthened our ongoing partnership with Youville Centre.

At St. Nicholas, we are extremely grateful to the entire Youville Centre family... the dedicated staff, deeply committed volunteers, supportive partners and, most importantly, the young adults and children who make up this special, caring community.

The Ottawa Catholic School Board's spiritual theme of being called to Open Doors is particularly relevant to Youville Centre in that young persons are fully welcome in this safe and empowering environment of hope, care, and strength.

Providing a St. Nicholas pathway at Youville for students to continue their education while receiving support for themselves and their children is an underscored goal of the utmost importance to the OCSB. Our teacher leaders strengthen and enhance this target by providing both instruction and support in a variety of high school courses, assisting students in their acquisition of an Ontario Secondary School Diploma which opens so many doors and endless possibilities of varied future opportunities and pathways. St. Nicholas' unified connection to Youville Centre satisfies one of our Board's strategic commitments, that of Be Community while, at the same time, satisfying a second commitment of Be Innovative, by challenging all young women at Youville to reach their highest potential through relevant and current curriculum along with numerous experiential learning opportunities.

St. Nicholas will continue to fulfill its educational role as Youville Centre continues its focus of hope, achievement, and joy for so many. On behalf of the students, faculty, staff, and administration of St. Nicholas Adult High School and the OCSB, thank you, Youville Centre, for your continued collaboration, support, commitment, and partnership overall.



Don Murphy, Principal

[To read more about the St Nicholas Adult High School Program please visit our website page here](#) 

Congratulations Class of 2025!



On June 19, 2025, Youville Centre hosted our 37th Graduation Ceremony, along with our Education Partners, M.F. McHugh Education Centre and St. Nicholas Adult High School. This year we celebrated 17 graduates. St Nicholas Adult High School Guidance Teacher, Heather Marshall, was our Master of Ceremonies. We began with congratulatory dignitary greetings and messages from our Executive Director Peter Embleton and Don Murphy, St Nicholas Adult High School Principal.

“Today, we gather to celebrate a truly momentous occasion.[...] Each of you has shown true strength, balancing the demands of family responsibilities, your education, and your personal lives with unwavering determination and grace. Your dedication to your loved ones and your future is nothing short of inspiring.” *Don Murphy*

As part of our ceremony annually, we have an alumnae of Youville come back and speak to our graduates about their journey, and share words of wisdom for the days and years ahead. This year, our guest was Sarah, who graduated in 2014. You can read her special message to the graduating class on page 22, a true testament to the impact Youville has had on her life.

As the graduates crossed the stage, one by one, to receive their diplomas, their graduation photo with their child[ren] was presented on screen, and their teachers read personal anecdotes about their time at the Centre. Bursary awards were also announced and photos taken. It was a lovely day celebrating our graduates with their family and our supporters.

More details about our June 2025 graduation ceremony can be found on our [website blog here](#). 

SPIRIT OF YOUVILLE 2025

This year, the student who was selected to give the “Spirit of Youville” address on behalf of the 2025 Graduating Class was Laiba. She was chosen because she embodies the Youville “voice” by demonstrating personal growth, leadership skills and academic perseverance while developing her parenting skills along the way. Congratulations and thank you Laiba!

St Nick’s Teacher Jonathan (left) and Executive Director Peter (right) pictured presenting a Spirit of Youville award to Laiba after her graduation speech



“Each and every one of us have different stories, but the struggle and challenges we go through as young mothers are the same. When we first came to Youville, many of us were unsure what our goals were and what we wanted to do with our lives. We were new mothers experiencing many things at once. We had doubts, fears, but over time this place was more than just a place to learn. It became a place to grow, to start over and to believe in ourselves. Every tough decision, they all matter and here we are.

We made it! My advice for the future is simple: just show up for yourself, life might not go as we plan it but if you keep moving forward even small things will lead you to big changes.” *Laiba, Class of 2025*

Summer School 2025

Youville Centre, partnered with the Ottawa Catholic School Board, to provide in-person summer school courses throughout July. Two elective courses - Art and Leadership were offered to support students in advancing their educational journey to move closer to their goal of earning the high school diploma (OSSD).

The courses were engaging and accessible, with hands-on activities that supported the diverse learning styles and practical needs of our students. Highlights included four field trips: bowling, an escape room, a visit to the art gallery and a final outing to the Canada Agricultural and Food Museum, where students were invited to bring their children. These shared experiences added connection, joy and real-life context to the learning process and skill building.



Summer School 2025 Fun Day: photo above of teachers/staff dressed as students, and photo below of a student dressed as Executive Director Pete



Summer School 2025 field trip and picnic lunch at the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum/Experimental Farm with children



Summer School 2025 team building field trip to a bowling alley

Youville Centre Alumnae


Over the past 40 years, Youville Centre has served over 1,500 young mothers and their children. The majority have received their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) during their time at Youville Centre. Our graduates go on to post-secondary education and the world of work while enjoying their success as parents, and becoming committed employees and active members in the community. We are grateful to alumnae who return to Youville and share their personal perspectives with our current clients, inspiring them to stay focused on their goals despite challenges they may face. Some of our former graduates have also made in-kind and financial donations to help the young families attending Youville Centre today in gratitude for the support that they received from Youville.

DID YOU KNOW?

Alumnae clients are also eligible for bursaries. Some of our generous donors designate funds to alumnae who are continuing their education.

In addition, we offer Second Generation Bursaries, in honour of our previous Executive Directors, which make it possible for the children of Youville Centre alumnae to attend post-secondary education with financial support.

We are pleased to be able to continue our work with two generations. Alumnae are encouraged to consult our website for more information about applying for bursaries.

Our 2025 Alumnae and Second Generation Bursary recipients are featured on our [website page here](#) 

CLASS OF 2014 - SARAH'S STORY



Sarah's speech to the Class of 2025 at Graduation

My name is Sarah Tunstall, and I'm a proud Youville graduate, Class of 2014.

That might sound like a long time ago, but I still remember exactly how it felt to sit where you are. I think I was having a bit of an out of body experience because I didn't hear a word that was being said. It felt surreal. When I came to Youville, I already had a daughter, and I was pregnant with my second. I was a determined person, but I didn't really know what kind of future I was working towards. All I knew was I wanted better for my children, and my education felt like the key to whatever that was.

When I was here at Youville, I felt safe.

This school gave me a place to breathe. Outside of this school, I was constantly judged, as I am sure you all have experienced as well. People looked at me like I was irresponsible. Like I was a failure before I even had the chance to try. But at Youville I was seen as someone who **could**, not someone who **wouldn't**. My journey wasn't easy. I had a really hard start in life. I moved through many schools, struggled with substances and mental health, and was street involved by 15. When I got pregnant, everyone told me to have an abortion.

Not one person thought that something good could come from me becoming a mom. Not one. And yet, here I am. Standing in front of you today. Living proof that people can be wrong about you. And I know every single one of you here has a why. A reason you kept going, even when it would have been so much easier to quit. You came here, you worked hard, you did this with babies in your arms.



Alumnae Sarah speaking to the Class of 2025 at Graduation in June

And let me tell you something, most people will never understand how much strength that takes. What you just did? It's incredible. You beat the statistics. You proved them wrong. And you need to hold onto your why. Because life will throw things at you again. That's just the truth. When I left Youville, I felt invincible. I thought the hard part was over. I enrolled in college, but then life got hard again. I missed assignments, my mental health spiraled, and I failed. It broke my heart.

Here's the thing: failure will come. Bad days will come. You'll get tired. You might feel like giving up. But don't. Cry. Scream. Take a break. But don't ever quit. The same strength that got you to this point while coping with whatever else you have going on outside of these walls, let that carry you forward. Let your why walk beside you on your hardest days and pick you back up.

I failed so many times. I dropped out. I tried to study while living in abuse. I hit walls over and over again. But I still finished college, and then I went on to Carleton University where I earned an honours bachelor's degree and I was named program ambassador for my graduating year.

Now, I work for the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking as the Partnerships and Marketing Coordinator. I have two part-time jobs that help me provide for my kids and live with dignity. And I am not the smartest person in the room. I didn't have all the pieces in place. But I had grit, and I had my kids. And that's all you need.

You don't have to have it all figured out, you just have to keep showing up. So, to every single one of you, every fierce, powerful, beautiful mom in this room, I am so proud of you. I'm emotional just looking at you. Your babies are so lucky to have you. And whatever comes next, I promise you: you have what it takes. You always have. Congratulations. You did something extraordinary.

Funding Model

SUBSIDY AND OTHER INCOME

Child Development Program

Social Support Programs

Net Fundraising, Donations, Foundation & Other Revenue

Property Fund Revenue

TOTAL SUBSIDY AND OTHER INCOME: \$3,250,178

EXPENDITURES

Early Child Development Program (CDP)

		% OVERALL	% PROGRAM
Amortization, Administrative and Occupancy	\$ 130,865	4%	6%
Program Support	\$ 239,701	8%	12%
Salaries	\$1,712,696	59%	82%
	\$2,083,262	71%	100%

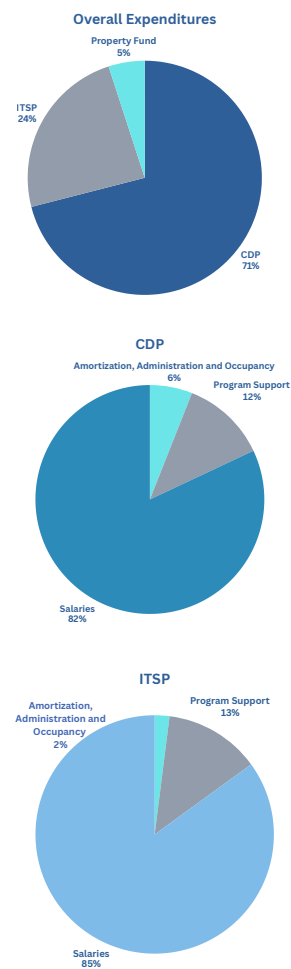
Intensive Treatment Support Program (ITSP)

		% OVERALL	% PROGRAM
Amortization, Administrative and Occupancy	\$ 14,837	1%	2%
Program Support	\$ 87,858	3%	13%
Salaries	\$ 573,958	20%	85%
	\$ 676,653	24%	100%

Property Fund Expenditures (PF) \$ 157,343 5%

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$2,917,258

Surplus funds are used to cover previous deficits, fund capital repairs and expansions such as the recent expansion of childcare spaces. **\$ 332,920**



****For detailed actual financial results please see the audited financial statements (fiscal year April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025) available on our website at www.youvillecentre.org**



Fundraising Report

Youville Centre would like to thank the following government funders, corporations, foundations, organizations and groups for making a significant contribution in the 2025 fiscal year, ending March 31, 2025;

Government Funders

- The City of Ottawa
- The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)
- The Ministry of Education, Government of Ontario (MOE)
- The Ministry of Infrastructure, Government of Canada
- The Government of Canada



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to the many individual donors including those who supported the following events;

Holiday Ways to Give - Financial and in-kind donation

[Mother's Day Giving Campaign](#) - Donors

Graduation - Bursary Donors and in-kind donors



Foundations, Grants and Corporate Donors

- Algonquin College
- Amazon.ca & Amazon YOW3
- Arbor Memorial Foundation
- Ashbury College
- Association of Financial Professionals Ottawa
- Brenda Quinlan Foundation
- Brighter Futures For Children of Young Parents
- Ciena
- Community Foundation of Ottawa
- Congregation of Notre Dame Visitation Prov. Centre
- Danbe Foundation
- Dominion Chalmers United Church Women
- Eastern Ont. & Western Que. Christmas Cheer Foundation
- Famous 5 Ottawa
- Filles D'Isabelle, Cercle Notre-Dame du Rosaire, #1093
- Godzspeed Communications
- Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
- Hammer & Associates Inc., Brokerage
- Harmil Group
- Holy Spirit Parish CWL
- Hope & Aspire Fund
- Immaculate Heart of Mary CWL
- IODE Memorial Silver Cross Chapter
- IODE Walter Baker Chapter
- Kelly Family Foundation
- Kiwanis Club Of Nepean
- Knights of Columbus - St. John The Apostle #10470
- Knights of Columbus Council #5558
- Knights of Columbus Council #16005
- Knights of Columbus, Council #12898
- Knights of Columbus, Divine Infant Council #7873
- Knights of Columbus, Good Shepherd Council #9005
- Knights of Columbus, Holy Redeemer Council #9544
- M.F. McHugh Education Centre
- Manotick Tree Movers Inc.
- Mary Berthe Fund
- Ottawa Catholic School Board
- Ottawa Doll And Collectors Guild
- Ottawa Network for Education
- Our Lady of Visitation
- P.E.O. Chapter J
- PCL Constructors Canada Inc.
- Rotary Club of Nepean-Kanata
- Rotary Club of West Ottawa
- Shepherd's Fashions
- Sisters of Holy Cross
- St. Clares CWL
- St. Mary's Home/St. Mary's Outreach Centre
- St. Maurice Catholic Women's League
- St. Philip Ladies Auxiliary
- Sue Martin & Paul Bush Charitable Foundation
- The George & Susan Neilson Family Foundation
- The Ottawa Food Bank
- Ujima Project, Abiona Centre
- United Way East Ontario

Thank you to our Supporters;



2024-2025 Third Party Fundraisers

Over the years, some of the best ideas of how to fundraise for the centre have come from our donors! As a non-profit organization, we are grateful for the support we receive from our generous donor community, and we are happy to assist with third-party fundraising events and initiatives.

 [Read more on our website page here](#) about how you can hold an event on our behalf.

Girl Up uOttawa - Canada Helps Fundraiser

Knights of Columbus Council #9544 - Golf Tournament

Knights of Columbus Divine Infant Council #7873 - Italian Dinner

Ottawa Doll Club - Annual Doll Show and Sale

Only Takes One - Ava Sidoli Birthday Donation

A First Communion Celebration - Canada Helps Fundraiser

It Takes a Village

Volunteer Acknowledgements

We are so grateful to have a committed, caring group of volunteers from the community who give their time and talent to help Youville Centre's young families.

In addition to our volunteer Board of Directors {see page 7}, Youville Centre would like to recognize the following outstanding volunteers who, through their gift of time and talent, contributed to our success over the last year:

SWAP Shop/Donation Sorting

- Christine Caletti
- Lynn Page

Child Development Program:

- Tonie Chene
- Catherine Charron
- Yolande Cremer
- Agathe Houle
- Evelyn Stevens

Photography:

- Anne Girard (Graduation 2025)
- Youville Centre Angel: Michelle Valberg (Annual Report Front Cover 2025)
- Diane Valberg (Equine Learning Photos)

“I love volunteering here...holding those sweet precious babies warms my heart. The staff are busy and only have so many arms. I am thankful I can give back to my community in small ways that are helpful and I love what Youville means and what it does for these young moms.”

Youville CDP Volunteer

SWAP Shop & YouStore Donors

Thanks to our generous community donors and dedicated volunteers, clients can access our SWAP shop for gently used clothing, toys, equipment and household items or the YouStore for new items such as toys, clothing, hygiene items, cleaning products, and health/beauty products.



CDP Daffodil Volunteer Tonie engaging in a sweet moment of play with Blue

We are grateful for support with in-kind donation procurement/collection of needed items from donors including, but not limited to;

- Gavin Thompson (Boom! Savings! Charity Shopping Club)
- The Recollective (Carla & Kelly)
- The Thrifted Mini (Children's Consignment)
- OLV Fundraising Group
- Amazon YOW3
- Barbara Crook

thank you

For a list of in-kind donations we are currently in need of, please visit our website page here.



From all of us at Youville Centre...

thank you

to our generous community!



PCL Cheque Presentation for a 2024 donation, funding a drain repair and new CDP glider chairs



St FX High School students pictured onsite for a cheque presentation from a fundraising campaign



Amazon YOW3 (Barrhaven warehouse) staff pictured dropping off Mother's Day gift bags for clients



Youville Angel Gavin and a donation of items from the Boom! Savings! Charity Shopping Club



Giving Grammas Margie and Deb pictured dropping off Spring gifts for all the Centre's clients



Youville Angel Barbara pictured dropping off holiday cards with gift cards for every client



Knights of Columbus Council #9544 cheque presentation from Spring 2025 Golf Tournament



Youville Angel & PJ Elf Zybina pictured with graduation gifts for the Class of 2025



Knights of Columbus Council #7873 cheque presentation from 2025 Italian Dinner fundraiser



Judi and Sally from PEO Chapter J dropping off a donation of Mother's Day flowers for the Centre




Ava Sidoli dropping off a donation of items collected by her Only Takes One community for her birthday



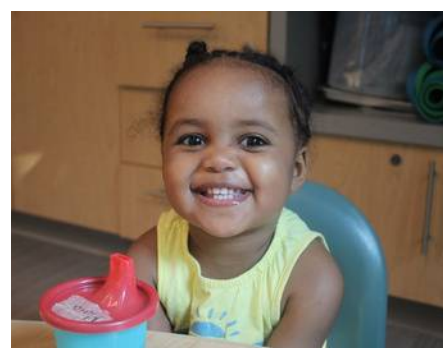
A staff collection of toys and gifts from Brookfield Renewable for our 2024 Holiday YouStore

Looking ahead to 2025-2026

- In Fall 2025, we host the Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA) onsite review team, as part of our accreditation review process, with the goal to maintain our current accreditation as a Child and Youth Mental Health Agency.
- The Board of Directors is currently succession planning for an upcoming Executive Director transition.
- To view our 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, as well as our 2025-2026 “Realizing our Vision” operational plan and progress report from 2024-2025, please visit our [website page here](#). 

In 2025-2026, we will continue to provide our programs and services for young pregnant and parenting women and birth-giving parents to;

- To relieve poverty;
- To advance education; and
- To promote health.



613-231-5150



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www.youvillecentre.org

Charitable Registration Number:
1 1884 8456 RR0001



Youville Centre

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Youville Centre - Ottawa



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HumansOfYouville



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