



Let us not forget that we are on traditional Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat Territory. Our organization is grateful for the opportunity to meet on and use this land. We thank all the generations of Indigenous people who have taken care of this land.



50th ANNUAL REPORT



CORE PURPOSE

Helping Youth Overcome Challenges

Mission

Youth Diversion helps youth overcome challenges by providing prevention, intervention and educational services that divert youth from risk and support their ability to thrive.

Vision

All youth in our community are supported in making choices that contribute to their overall wellbeing, help them reach their potential and expand their leadership capacity.



Board President's Report

This past year has been truly remarkable for our board. We have had a full complement of board members for the first time in recent memory. We reinitiated the Nomination and Executive Committees, bringing back crucial functions after a period of rebuilding. As we move toward the next year, we are excited to see what further action the board undertakes in the coming year.

We have continued to strive for pay equity and the expansion of the organization's programming after years of chronic underfunding. We recognize that our staff are integral to the agency and its ability to deliver necessary services to our community. To that end, we were able to increase their pay scale this past year, bringing it in line with contemporary agencies elsewhere. The importance of our staff cannot be overstated, and we continue to look for ways to recognize that importance.

We will be looking to update our strategic plan in 2026. This will include identifying what objectives were achieved in the previous plan, what objectives are ongoing, and what new objectives are needed to help youth overcome challenges.

As it is the end of my term as Board President, I would like to say what a tremendous honour and privilege it has been to serve the agency in this role. The work that this organization does is vital, and it is becoming more so with each passing year. I want to thank my fellow board members, the staff, and the volunteers of Youth Diversion for caring so much about our community. I know there are great things to come for our agency.

We are saying goodbye to a long serving board member. Clark Moffatt is retiring from the Board after serving for 6 years with two of these years as our Board Treasure.

Clark's calming presence and sense of humour will surely be missed. On behalf of the Board of Directors, congratulations Clark and all the best.

The Board of Directors would like to welcome Katie Fizzell as our newest Board Member. Katie has over twenty years of experience effectively designing, implementing, and coordinating experiential learning programs at the secondary and post-secondary level. Welcome aboard Katie.



Executive Director's Report

"There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil, to one who is striking at the root" Henry David Thoreau.

As we celebrate Youth Diversion's 50th anniversary, I am both proud and humbled to reflect on the legacy of an organization that has stood as a beacon of support, compassion, and transformation for half a century. Since our founding in 1974, Youth Diversion has worked tirelessly to support young people in our community—providing vital resources, mentorship, and second chances that have helped shape thousands of lives.

This milestone isn't just about longevity—it's a testament to the power of community and the unwavering dedication of our staff, volunteers, board members, and community partners. We've grown from a small, grassroots initiative into a multifaceted organization that responds to the evolving needs of youth with creativity, empathy, and resilience.

We started the year with a social media campaign to highlight the accomplishments of the agency and better educate our community about the work we do. Youth Diversion has been at the forefront of many new initiatives over its 50 years. We were one of the first agencies in Ontario to offer a suspension and expulsion program allowing students a safe place to continue their studies and receive much needed support. Our MEND program was one of the first programs in the Province to introduce Restorative Practice within an entire school board shifting the landscape on how we address conflict in schools. Our Diversion Program is the longest continuing diversion program in Ontario and our Kairos Substance Use and Addiction Service is one of a small few substance use and addiction outreach service in Ontario specifically for children and youth 8-17 offering outreach support directly within schools. We host one of the few Intersections Programs in Ontario providing Police and Child Protection Workers with additional resources to support children and youth not meeting their mandates and we have one of the longest running mentoring programs in KFLA matching adult allies with at risk youth.





2024 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ The Board of Directors finalized its bylaws ensuring we are now in compliance with the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act
- ✓ We received front page coverage from the Whig Standard recognizing 50 years of helping youth overcome challenges
- ✓ We contracted with Eyre Purkin to support our efforts to strengthen our Donor Stewardship initiatives and seek out new funding streams for the agency. This resulted in one of our most successful fundraising years in our history.
- ✓ We established the “Kids Can’t Wait” initiative to address the shrinking landscape of prevention funding.
- ✓ We established a Philanthropy Advisory Committee to further embody “Kids Can’t Wait” with Judge George Thomson as the honorarily chair.
- ✓ Alandra LaFirst was this year’s Heather Lynn Wells Education Bursary winner with two additional students receiving cash rewards
- ✓ Thanks to a grant from the Community Foundation of Kingston, we hosted a successful summer camp for over 20 at risk youth
- ✓ Our 50th Anniversary Gala was sold out and raised \$57,000 towards our “Kids Can’t Wait” initiative.
- ✓ Judi Beaman and George Thomson pledged \$25,000 over 5 years towards our “Kids Can’t Wait” initiative.
- ✓ We secured funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario. As a result, Intersections was brought back.
- ✓ Our participation on the local Planet Youth Initiative
- ✓ Strengthened our partnership with the Kinsmen Club of Kingston
- ✓ Hockey Helps the Homeless raised over \$82,000 for Youth Diversion. Our second highest private donation in our history
- ✓ Our ongoing work in Hastings and Prince Edward County to address the lack of substance use and addiction services for youth under 18.
- ✓ Youth Diversion has anchor status with the United Way of KFLA and the United Way of HPE
- ✓ Kingston Laser Clinic Youth Christmas sponsorship



Celebrating 50 years of helping youth overcome challenges

In May of 1974, Youth Diversion was born. The first clients of Youth Diversion were accepted by the Juvenile Court Committee, now known as our Youth Justice Committee, providing them an alternative to the court process. We hired our first Director with a budget of about \$12,500 and within a few years, The agency introduced our Mentoring Program and established our Volunteer Program.

During the 1980's, we formed many partnerships in our community as we continued to establish ourselves. Youth Diversion almost closed its doors due to a lack of support from the provincial government for diversion programming. Locally, Youth Diversion may have ceased to exist without the strong support of our community, Crown Attorney and Police.

During the 1990's, we expanded our services to include Lennox & Addington County, and our annual budget increased to \$97,000. The Agency officially became a charity, allowing it to diversify its funding and begin to put more effort into prevention programming. Rebound became a core program allowing the Agency to further explore purely preventative programming and it was a first introduction to the United Way KFLA.

By the 2000's, Youth Diversion was well established as a leader in our community for supporting youth at-risk. Our Restorative Approach caught the attention of the Provincial Government, and we were asked to pilot Restorative Practices in our local school boards.

By the 2010's, we welcomed Kairos Substance Use and Addiction Services to our complement of programs and ensured that these services were available for children and youth under 18.

Over the years, Youth Diversion has supported over 30,000 children and youth, and 2500 volunteers have provided more than 75,000 hours of support. We have been part of over 500 community tables, initiatives and projects to better the lives of people living in our community and beyond. Staff have provided workshops and trainings to over 25,000 community members.

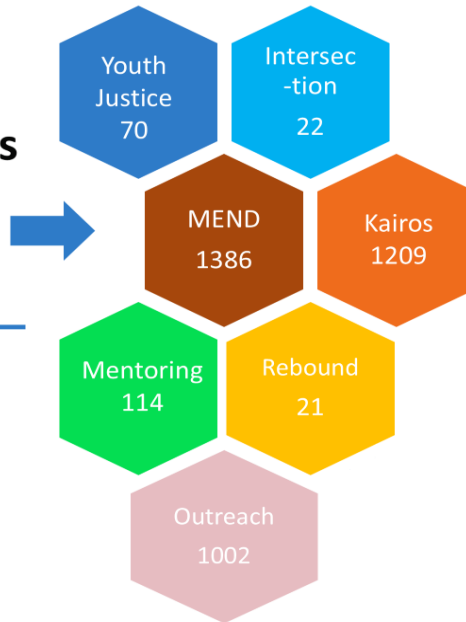
As we look into our future, Youth Diversion remains committed to innovation, collaboration, and compassion—ensuring that every young person has the opportunity to grow, heal, and succeed.



HELPING YOUTH OVERCOME CHALLENGES

Reach

3824 children, youth, and families impacted through our services



Impacts

- ▲ 18% improvement in recognition of the impact of their behaviors.
- ▲ 11% Improvement in decision-making skills.
- ▲ 11% Improvement in Social Functioning
- ▼ 12% Decrease in substance use.



Demographics

School Issues

63% of clients reported a school issue including:

- 59%** Learning/behavioral challenges,
- 50%** Suspension/Expulsion,
- 47%** School Avoidance

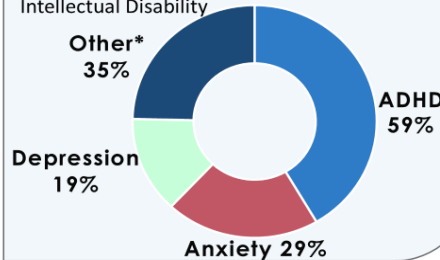
Screening the Level of Behavioral Health Disorders using the GAIN-SS.


- 74%** Internalized Disorders (Anxiety/ Depression)
- 80%** Externalized Disorders (ADHD/Conduct Disorder)
- 65%** Issues with Substance Abuse
- 44%** Issues with Crime and Violence


Mental Health


69% of clients have a confirmed mental/physical health diagnosis with a total of 380 mental health diagnosis including:

*Substance related, mood disorder, ODD, ASD, Intellectual Disability



 26% of clients either were or are currently being supported through FCS.

 8% of clients have experienced a housing issue (homeless, living rough, in a shelter, couch surfing).

 4% of the clients we supported last year have been red flagged for human trafficking risk.

Volunteers


108 New/ongoing volunteers  **3400 hours of support**

Community Engagement

5598 People impacted by:

Presentations  Education
Conferences Workshops
Symposium

Costs

 **\$1.00/day compared to \$200/day per day to incarcerate a youth.**

Adverse Childhood Experiences (childhood trauma)

63% of clients reported experiencing at least 3 or more adverse childhood events. The following is a breakdown of the ACES events:

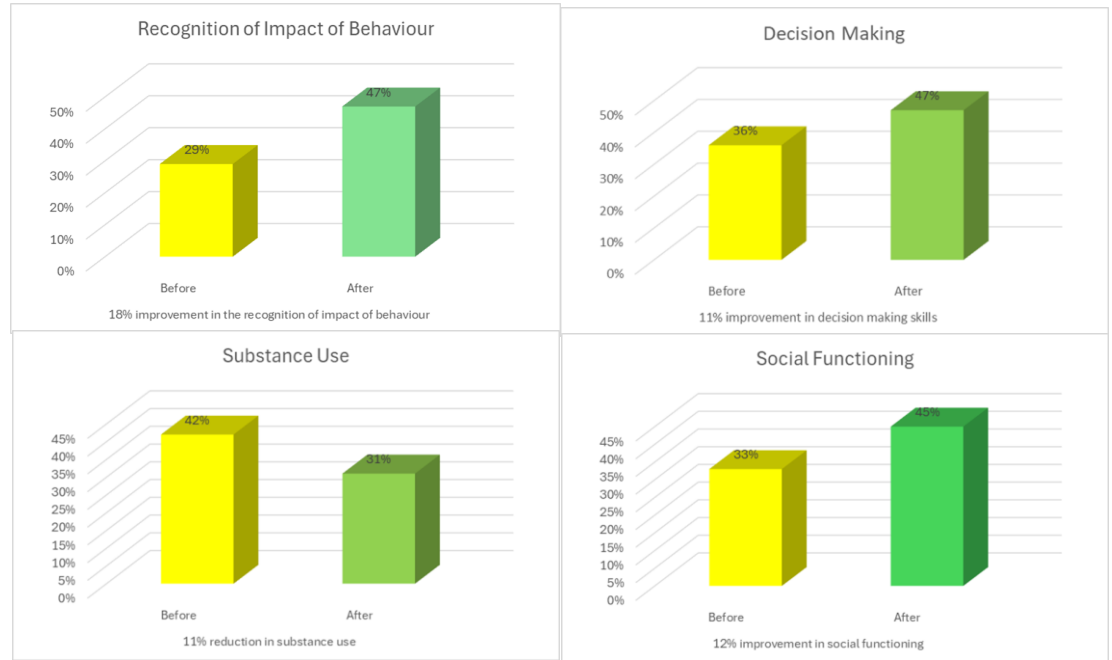
- **100%** of clients reported some form of parental issues (addiction, mental illness, incarceration, loss of a parent)
- **60%** experienced some form of abuse (emotional, sexual, and/or physical)
- **13%** experienced domestic abuse.

TRACKING OUR PROGRESS

Youth Diversion continues to place an emphasis on outcome measures through the various tools that are used to measure our outcomes. It should be noted that only clients and not participants of Youth Diversion are the focus of our outcomes.

Pre and post measurements indicate an 18% improvement in recognition of impact of behaviours, 12% improvement in social functioning, 11% decrease in substance use and a 11% increase in decision making.

63% of clients were identified as experiencing at least 3 or more ACEs



Adverse Childhood Experiences.

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- 100% of clients reported some form of parental issues (addiction, mental illness, incarceration, loss of a parent)
- 60% experienced some form of abuse (emotional, sexual, and/or physical)
- 13% experienced domestic abuse.

Housing

- 8% of clients have experienced a housing issue (homeless, living rough, in a shelter, couch surfing)

Mental/Physical Health Concerns – Diagnosed

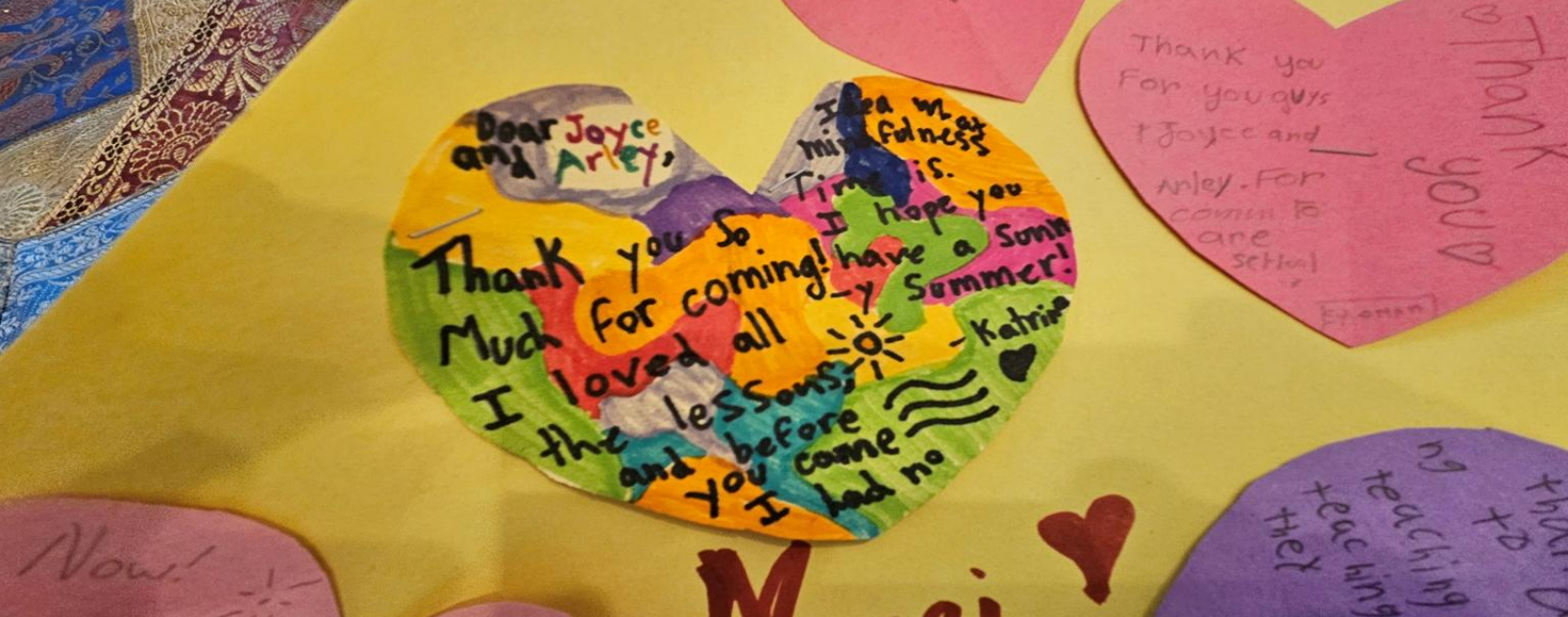
69% of clients have a confirmed mental health diagnosis with a total of 380 diagnosis including:

- 59% ADHD
- 29% Anxiety
- 19% Depression
- 35% other

Education

63% of clients reported a school issue including:

- 59% of clients reported a learning/behavioural challenges
- 50% suspension/expulsion
- 47% report school avoidance



Leadership in the Community

Youth Diversion staff are active contributors to, and participants with, many community initiatives, collaborations, committees and working groups. Their efforts help to maximize resources, ensure timely intervention and support the ability of our young people to overcome challenges. The following is a sample of committees and initiatives Youth Diversion staff contribute to:

- Provincial Restorative Practices Consortium
- Road Map To Wellness
- Provincial Youth Outreach Community of Practice
- Kingston/Frontenac Community Risk Watch and Governance Tables
- LDSB Threat Assessment Protocol
- Supervised Alternative Learning
- Kingston and Area Association of Administrators of Volunteers
- Children, Youth and Families Services Planning Committee
- Provincial Youth Justice Community of Practice
- Hastings and Prince Edward Community Drug Strategy Table
- Planet Youth Task Force
- KFLA Community Drug Strategy
- Community Safety and Wellbeing
- ACE's Coalition
- Rainbow Network
- Kingston Rotary Club
- LDSB Mental Health and Addictions working table
- HPEDSB Mental Health and Addictions working table
- Human Trafficking Coalition
- Community Drug Strategy's Stigma and Education Sub committee
- Quest Concurrent Mental Health and Addictions Pathways for Youth
- Hastings and Prince Edward Child and Youth Planning Table



The Staff

The Agency's staff is often sought after for their expertise on education, training and providing consultations in the areas of youth justice, addictions, restorative practices and youth engagement. As a result, we reached over 5500 youth and adults through various events and workshops such as United Way presentations, guest lecturing at St. Lawrence College and Queen's University and hosting community psychoeducational workshops.

We want to also acknowledge past staff who have moved on this past year:

Brett Emburgh

And a final special mention to Bailey, our first Pet Therapy support animal and her handler Dale Blimkie. Bailey has spent the better part of 10 years supporting hundreds of children and youth throughout Kingston Frontenac Lennox and Addington, Hastings & Prince Edward Counties.

**OVER 5500
PEOPLE REACH**

Years of Service	Staff
26-30	Shawn Quigley
	Jackie Franklin
21-25	Dale Blimkie
16-20	Tom Revell
	Dave Breen
11-15	Jake Beatty
	Jaymi Hayward
5-10	Arley Irvine
	Lora D'Alessandro
	Joyce Eikre
1-4	Caitlin Donovan
	Mel Urquhart
	Chris Parsons
	Allie McParland
	Missy Bodden
	Leah Parnell
	Maggie Cantarutti
NEW HIRES	Olivia Whiteside
	Bailie Zettel

Corporate Sponsorship

It takes more than just Government funding to ensure our programs and services are available and free to over 3000 children, youth and families living in Kingston Frontenac Lennox and Addington, Hastings and Prince Edward Counties. Last year we needed to raise 21% of our overall budget to achieve our financial goal. We could not have done this without corporate sponsorship. We would like to acknowledge the following Corporate Funders for their amazing support this past year:

Cher- Mere
Queen's University
Lions Club of Kingston
Community Foundation of Kingston
Susan Creasy Financial
Revel Realty Kingston
Starbucks Foundation
Alliance Wireless
Wilkinson and Co
Foyston, Gordon & Payne
Foundation

Rotary Club of Kingston
Canadian Corps of
Commissionaires
KCCU
Alice and Murry Maitland
Foundation
TD Ready Commitment Grant
Canada Life
Aureus Solutions
Kingston Laser Clinic
The Laidlaw Foundation

RDR Financial
Churchill Foundation
Kingston Police
Association
Empire Life
Axon Properties
Robinson Group of
Companies
The Law Foundation
Archdiocese of Kingston
DigiGraphics
Amherst Island Radio





Donor Stewardship

This past year our donations, fundraising and sponsorship account for about 21% of our overall budget. We were very fortunate to be part of several third-party fundraising events including:

The Lobsterfest

The Legg Family

Kingston Road Runners

Cher-Mere

The Mad Hatter

Youth Diversion would like to thank our Legal partners for their financial support with court donations totalling over \$10,000 last year.

We are most grateful to the many foundations who have recognized our work through grants and sponsorships

Anna & Edward Churchill
Foundation

Starbucks Foundation

Foyston, Gordon & Payne
Foundation

Alice and Murry Maitland
Foundation

The Law Foundation of
Ontario

Laidlaw Foundation

ENACTUS Queens

Hockey Helps the Homeless

Lifetime Giving	
Visionary \$30,000+	Brad French and Alliance Wireless Security, Judge George Thomson and Judge Judi Beaman, Stephanie Aubertin,
Cornerstone \$20,000+	Susan Creasy & Tim Byrne
Advocate \$10,000+	RDR Financial & Paul Di Rinaldo, Nick & Martha Bala, Janet Mitchell, Aba Mortley & Ted Baily
Supporter \$5,000+	Jeff Easton, Alida Moffatt, Sandra Lachapelle, Scott Sly, Dr. John Leverette
Annual Giving	
Prevention \$10,000+	Anonymous x1
Intervention \$2,000-\$9,999	Don Heath, Ryan Wahab, Jocelyn Ruhl, Nicholas Hayton, Benjamin Greenlees, Anonymous x1, Don Richardson,
Just Cause \$1,000-\$1,999	Julie Decicco, Brant Peppley, Seth Vezeau, Rudy Spurr, Eyre Purkin Bien, Olga Cioci, Cathryn Gillespie, Isobel Rice, Clint and Renee Legg, Paul Malo,
Our Funding Partners	
United Way Hastings & Prince Edward	
Limestone District School Board	
United Way KFLA	
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	
Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic District School Board	
Kinsmen Club of Kingston	
Ministry of Health	

Volunteers

As we gather for our Annual General Meeting, the staff and myself would like to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude to all our 108 newest volunteers who have given your time, energy, and heart to support our mission.

Thanks to your incredible commitment, you've collectively contributed for over 3,400 hours to empower and uplift our at-risk youth. Whether you offered mentorship, guidance, advocacy, sitting on the Board of Directors, or a listening ear, your presence has made a real and lasting difference.

Our community members are also a great support. The YMCA and The Boiler Room Climbing Gym have allowed our Mentors to bring their Mentees to their facilities at no charge. Your dedication reminds us that change happens one relationship at a time—and you are at the heart of that change.

This is why it matters:

I just ended a mentorship that reached six months and received such positive feedback from the parent. Thanks to the program and to the mentor, the mentee has really come out of their shell, is now going to school every day and looks forward to it, has made friends and sometimes goes to play hockey at the park with their mentor, and has joined a ball hockey team.

On behalf of our team and the young people whose lives you've impacted: thank you. We are inspired by your compassion and proud to have you as part of our community.

Jackie

108 new volunteers

Our Clients



The data below takes into consideration participation in our workshops and psychoeducational programming. Monthly costs include staff time, program costs and regular case management support.

Program	2023 2024 clients	2024 2025 clients	Estimated Cost per client 24/25
Kairos	1757 (clients + workshops)	1209 (clients + workshops)	\$49 per month
Mentoring	86	114	\$139 per month
Rebound	31	21	\$0 (was not funded)
Youth Outreach	537 (clients + events)	1002 (clients + events)	\$6 per month
SNAP	63	0 (program closed)	\$0 (program closed)
Intersections	75	22 (Jan – March 2025)	N/A
MEND	644 (clients + workshops)	1386 (clients + workshops)	\$10 per month
Youth Justice	94	70	\$172 per month
Total	3287 (clients + workshops)	3824 (clients + workshops)	\$31.00 per month

\$1.00 per day to provide our prevention programs

Statement of Revenue and Expenditures

