



YMCA of
Three Rivers

Annual Report 2023

Bright Futures Start Here

2023 Annual Report

Building Bright Futures

That's what the YMCA of Three Rivers is all about. We empower people of all ages to ignite their potential through our diverse and innovative programs.

Whether it's nurturing a child's curiosity, helping a young adult discover their passion or providing a safe space for seniors to stay active and engaged, we focus on breaking down barriers and ensuring access.

We connect people to resources and create a supportive space to grow. Together, we're building a brighter tomorrow.

This is the YMCA of Three Rivers.

Message from our Board of Directors

It is said that volunteering is a way to shape the world in which you want to live. We are honoured to volunteer for the YMCA of Three Rivers alongside numerous passionate, dedicated, and talented people, both paid staff and volunteers.

We could not be more proud of how the people of our Y — volunteers, staff, members and the individuals and families we serve — come together to shine a light of inspiration. It's the people that make our Y so special.

This report highlights some of the incredible impacts the YMCA of Three Rivers has had this past year. We invite you to give it a read; and hope you will find something that sparks joy for you. It could be a new way to experience our Y, opening the door for friends and neighbours, or rekindling your well-being.

We invite you into the YMCA of Three Rivers; this is the community we choose.

Anne Eaton & Kelly Schultz

Chair and Vice-Chair, YMCA of Three Rivers Board of Directors

By the Numbers

The YMCA of Three Rivers isn't a place, it's a community. One where everyone plays a vital role in creating an environment where bright futures can take root and flourish. From our dedicated staff and passionate volunteers to our generous donors and enthusiastic members, we're all connected by a shared vision.

Here's a glimpse of the impact we're making together...



3,524

children from
2,539 families in
Child Care



18,242

people served
in EarlyON
programs



4,265

unique
individuals in
Camp programs



14M+

meals/snacks
served for Student
Nutrition



17,129

clients served
in Employment
Services



13,364

clients served
in Immigrant
Services



35,923

members served
in Health &
Wellness



5,684

financially
assisted members
(1,997 youth)



1,500

participants
in Health
Management



49,179

Youth
Program touch
points



52,394

Employee &
Member Insights
Surveys completed



\$1.5M+

raised in
donations and
support

Donors Make it Possible

It would be impossible to share our impact without celebrating our incredible donors. Thanks to our generous community, who contributed over \$1.5 million in 2023, more children can ignite their potential, more families can find the support they need, and more individuals can thrive.

A special thank you to those who donate to our Greatest Needs Fund. From fueling a wide range of programs to keeping the lights on and the pool full of water, gifts to this fund give us the flexibility to use the money where it is needed most.

As we look forward to 2024, we are so grateful for the continued generosity of the individual, staff, foundation, government, and corporate supporters who continue to help fuel our mission.

Thank you! Because of you, the YMCA of Three Rivers can continue to show up, offering programs that brighten the futures of individuals and families at every stage of life.

1000+

Generous Donors

476

Volunteers

35,000+

Members

The Donor Difference

Every Dollar Counts!

\$76k+

Raised from
donations of \$150
or less.

18%

Increase in unique
donors over 2022.

\$700k+

Donated in
support of our
greatest needs.



As long-time supporters of the Y, we've seen firsthand the incredible impact it has on our community. The childcare operations at the Y in Guelph are exceptional — every day, we see the joy and care in the children's faces as they interact with the dedicated staff and volunteers. We deeply value that the Y is truly a place for everyone. Whether it's providing a safe space for kids to learn and grow, offering a welcoming gym layout for all fitness levels, or fostering meaningful connections at the café, the Y touches lives in so many ways. It's a privilege to know that our contributions help make this possible.

We believe that if we're going to live out the Y's mission, we have to support it — because when we give, we're not just supporting a program; we're investing in a community where everyone belongs."

— *Joan and Gordon Framst*

Explore our Programs

The YMCA of Three Rivers remains steadfast in its commitment to sparking potential for all. Through a diverse range of programs designed to empower individuals and families at every stage of life, we're fostering positive change and growth within our community.

Explore the impact our programs had in 2023.

Child Care	08
EarlyON	09
Camp	10
Youth Programs	12
Student Nutrition	13
Employment Services	15
Immigrant Services	16
YMCA WorkWell	18
Health & Wellness	20
Health Management	21
JAIDE	23



Child Care

The YMCA of Three Rivers is committed to fostering a love of learning through play. We offer welcoming environments where children can explore, discover, and develop at their own pace. Our dedicated team of Early Childhood Educators provides high-quality care, focused on individual growth and socialization. We believe child care is an essential service, and we're proud to be accessible for families across our communities.

2023 Highlights

- Our new 88 space child care centre, St. Josephine Bakhita in Kitchener, opened.
- In 2023 we started work with the Region of Waterloo on an Access Pilot Program helping to make child care more accessible.
- In April, 377 staff from across our regions came together in our first ever in-person development session for child care professionals to participate in the Rainbow Diversity training. It was a successful day of learning and collaborating that strengthened the team.

EarlyON

Free to all families in Ontario, EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free play-based learning for children from birth to age six and their families. For parents, EarlyON offers a way to connect with other parents and get expert advice. The YMCA of Three Rivers is proud to have been the Lead Agency in Waterloo Region in 2023.



The Donor Difference

\$1,000 to EarlyON

2023 Highlights

- Based on participant feedback, extended evening and weekend hours were added in fall 2023 to improve access to EarlyON Centres.
- EarlyON staff supported 74 Welcome to Kindergarten events in schools helping kids and their parents prepare for and feel comfortable with the September 2023 transition to school.
- The YMCA of Three Rivers submitted a successful bid to become an EarlyON Operator in the City of Stratford allowing us to begin offering EarlyON programming in early 2024.





Camp

YMCA of Three Rivers camps offer day and overnight adventures for all ages. Participants explore nature, build skills, and make lasting memories in a safe and inclusive environment. We know campers form life-long friendships at camp and we loved seeing all the new and returning faces for summer 2023!



The Donor Difference

\$160,000+
to Camp Operations

\$37,000+
to Camper Fee Assistance

2023 Highlights

- Through a powerful collaboration with 10+ community agencies and the generous support of hundreds of Y donors, the YMCA of Three Rivers provided vital camp subsidies to over 600 campers, helping every child experience the joy of camp.
- Thanks to the last-minute support of Y donors, 13 Ukrainian and Turkish refugees were able to attend camp and experience its life-changing impact.
- Camp Ki-Wa-Y opened its doors to 80 members of the Somali community, offering them the chance to learn about the outdoors, build connections, and strengthen their community bonds.
- Our Overnight Camp program successfully completed the first season post-pandemic without any COVID-related closures, showing strong potential to return to pre-pandemic levels after unprecedented closures in the previous 2 years.



Camp will always be a special place for us.

As campers and staff members, we felt safe to take on new challenges, new adventures, and new responsibilities.

As camp alumni, we have continued friendships that were forged at camp and it's a second home we return to every chance we get.

As parents, we send our kids to camp with the hope they're challenged in the same way — nudged outside their comfort zone so they can grow and learn more about themselves."

— *Taylor and Lauren Weber*



Youth Programs

The YMCA of Three Rivers is a place to belong. We provide a diverse range of programs catering to both general interests and identity groups including 2SLGBTQ+, Black, and Newcomer Youth. Whether it's through programs like Youth Gambling Awareness, Moving Black Lives Forward, Homework Help, or playing basketball, participants continue to ignite passions, connect with like-minded peers, build resilience and challenge themselves.



The Donor Difference

\$245,000+ to Youth Programs

2023 Highlights

- In April, 80 Newcomer Youth program participants planned an Iftar event at the A.R. Kaufman Family YMCA. They invited friends and the community members who do not observe Ramadan to learn about it, fast for the day, and celebrate by sharing a meal together.
- Thanks to funding in part from CIBC, we expanded and grew the Just Hangin' Out program that supports youth with varying abilities, allowing the program to be offered in both our Cambridge and Guelph communities.
- A Teen Girls Sports program was launched at the A.R. Kaufman Family YMCA offering 1.5 hours of dedicated girls-only gym space facilitated by two female staff. This was made possible with Jumpstart's support and includes time for facilitated conversation with topics around the idea of participating as a girl in sports in our society today.

Student Nutrition

It is well documented that students coming to school hungry do not perform well in the classroom, have difficulty concentrating, display behavioural problems, are less alert, and are often lethargic. As a Lead Agency the YMCA of Three Rivers provides leadership for over 650 Student Nutrition Ontario programs serving Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph, Halton, Peel, and Waterloo Regions. These programs ensure children have free and universal access to nutritious food so they can eat, learn, and succeed.

In 2023 our Student Nutrition Programs proudly:

- Served 694 schools
- Provided 14,834,503 meals and snacks
- Supported 100,418 students/day on average





The breakfast program means the world to our school. Located in a high social risk area, our community is home to a large percentage of newly landed immigrants. Our breakfast program means that children do not need to learn on a hungry stomach.”

— *Student Nutrition Program Community Partner*

Employment Services

It is well documented that students coming to school hungry do not perform well in the classroom, have difficulty concentrating, display behavioural problems, are less alert, and are often lethargic. As a Lead Agency the YMCA of Three Rivers provides leadership for over 650 Student Nutrition Ontario programs serving Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph, Halton, Peel, and Waterloo Regions. These programs ensure children have free and universal access to nutritious food so they can eat, learn, and succeed.

2023 Highlights

- Our Employment Services Multi-Employer Job Fair held in July was nominated for the 2023 Cambridge and North Dumfries Community Awards in the category of Community Collaboration.
- Starting January 2024 the Employment Services team started to deliver services with a new approach as part of the provincial transformation of Employment Services. This requires a new approach to supporting those in Waterloo region who are unemployed or underemployed on their career path. 2023 was spent preparing our team and learning from other YMCAs who were further on their transformation pathway.
- The Employment Services team hosted a number of job fairs serving over 200 people seeking employment where we were able to help connect them with local employers.





Immigrant Services

No matter where you come from or who you are, the Y is a place where everyone is seen, heard, and included. Thanks to the generous support from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada) and our other funders, we're able to provide instruction, mentorship, and training programs for all newcomers in Stratford-Perth and Waterloo Region.



The Donor Difference

\$106,250 to The Newcomer Journey

2023 Highlights

- Nearly 200 youth participated in Newcomer Orientation Week and learned more about what school is like in Canada, made new friendships, and gained confidence for their first day of high school in a new country.
- The Power of Trades program held its first graduation ceremony in February of 2023, celebrating as participants moved into the work placement stage of the program. Staff supported graduates finding job placements in fields/trades including Construction, Early Childhood Education, and Plumbing Apprenticeships.
- A 4-year funding agreement with Scotiabank provided financial support in the form of bus passes, access to technology, course enrollment fees and more. This funding offers meaningful support helping newcomers feel at home faster.



I am writing this message to express my thanks and gratitude to you. It is very, very difficult to meet my living expenses to start and develop a new life in Canada with my son. Thanks to you, I started the nursing equivalence process, which is my profession... [The] help you gave me during this process...[and the support] you invested in me is a big step towards becoming a nurse again...thank you again for your support.."

— *Immigrant Services Program Participant*



YMCA WorkWell

At YMCA WorkWell, we look to science and insights to drive a clearer understanding of workplace health and well-being. No two workplaces are the same — so why would there be a one-sized-fits-all approach to workplace culture and well-being?

2023 Highlights

- YMCA WorkWell signed an official contract with YMCA Canada to offer Employee Insights Surveys, Member Experience Surveys, and Child Care Family Insights to YMCAs across Canada.
- WorkWell celebrated 3 years as a portfolio within YMCA of Three Rivers and continues to provide insights to have a greater impact on the entire Y movement.
- We worked with 78 organizations in 2023, including 35 of the 37 YMCAs in Canada.



Working with the YMCA WorkWell team has been a knowledge-building, rewarding and insightful process. Their reports bring our workplace culture to life — making it easier to identify both short and longer-term actions to drive positive change. The WorkWell team is comprised of experts who are approachable and so willing to share their knowledge and to help us be the best leaders we can be for our own teams.

From insights surveys and reports, to leadership coaching and professional learning programs, YMCA WorkWell is the partner you didn't know you needed. So, fine tune your budget, or get a grant, and start your journey to a healthy workplace culture with this amazing team!"

— *RisingOaks*



Health & Wellness

It's our goal to create a welcoming environment for individuals of all ages and abilities to reach their health and wellness goals. Through a variety of programs, from fitness centers to group fitness classes, we empower members to live a healthier, more vibrant life.



The Donor Difference

\$46,000+
to Health & Wellness

\$16,000+
to Member Fee Assistance

2023 Highlights

- 2023 marked a significant milestone for our Health and Wellness division, with peak monthly membership reaching a post-pandemic high of 18,377 individuals and nearly 36,000 members served overall.
- With a focus on water safety and building self-esteem 1,140 children participated in our nationally recognized swimming lessons.
- We remained committed to community well-being offering financial membership assistance to over 5,500 individuals.

Health Management

The YMCA of Three Rivers' Health Management Programs are life-changing. Our evidence-based programs like Diabetes Fit and Rock Steady Boxing have been designed to help individuals at risk of, or living with, chronic illness continue to live actively. The demand for these programs continues to grow and in 2023 we responded to meet the demand.

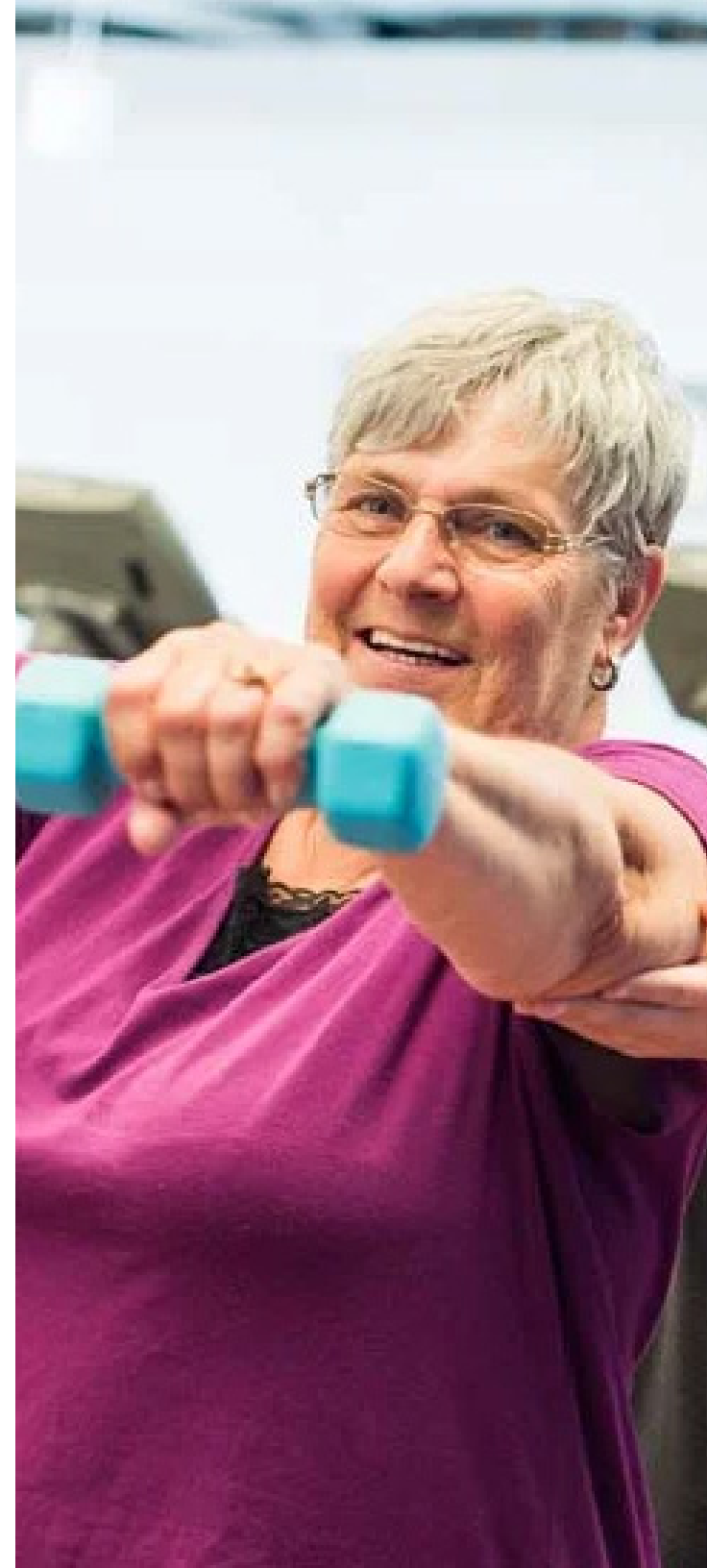


The Donor Difference

\$140,000+ to Health Management

2023 Highlights

- In 2023 we refreshed our recruitment strategy for our Diabetes Fit program supported by Sun Life, resulting in 26% of participants coming from racially diverse populations. This was up from 13% in 2022 helping us ensure we are meeting needs across our community.
- With support from Seniors Community Grant, we expanded our schedule of workshop offerings targeted to older adults. Participation increased by nearly 50% year over year, highlighting the demand for these services.
- We are excited to have received an Ontario Trillium Fund grant to increase our adaptive fitness equipment, improving our accessibility options for everyone to remain in good health. The equipment will be installed in 2024.





I went in with a walker. Now, my balance is so good. I can get up and down the stairs, climb in and out of the bathtub, climb on the curb, get in and out of the van now.

I had a walker in my house and outside the door as well. I had handrails everywhere to help me get down the hall. March of Dimes was going to help me with a ramp. My worker applied for me to get a sit in thing to go up and down the stairs. None of that is needed now."

— *Diabetes Fit Participant*

JAIDE

In 2020, the YMCA of Three Rivers embarked on a journey of dismantling systemic barriers and fostering a more inclusive environment for all. We remain committed to our intentional Justice, Access, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (JAIDE) work and made significant progress in 2023.



The Donor Difference

\$140,000+ to Health Management

2023 Highlights

- We established a JAIDE Advisory Council comprised of diverse voices from across the Y.
- With funding from the Community Services Recovery Fund we partnered with AgentsC to develop JAIDE training workshops for our staff.
- We integrated JAIDE goals into our leadership framework to ensure accountability.
- We conducted surveys to measure employee awareness and perceptions of JAIDE initiatives.
- We gathered further feedback through a second JAIDE employee survey and a Town Hall discussion.

As we look to 2024, we are continuing to evolve, rolling out more training for our leaders, turning survey insights into action and becoming more project focused with our JAIDE Advisory Council. Part of our evolution will be the next iteration of our Action Plan, the JAIDE in Action Road Map.





He left the pool at ARK and rushed into the changeroom to meet his mom, so excited. She asked what the excitement was all about and he told her his swim instructor wore a hijab. He had never seen a swim instructor who looked like him (he doesn't wear a hijab, but identifies as a person of colour). In mom's words, "representation matters."

— *Swim participant story as told to staff*



Message from the CEO

2023 was a landmark year for the YMCA of Three Rivers; the first full year of operations following various pandemic-related closures since our unification in 2020. And if you've made it this far in our Annual Report, you know our team knocked it out of the park.

CEOs often talk about sleepless nights full of worrisome risks and sticky challenges. But for me, if anything, it's sheer joy for the work we do that keeps me awake. At the YMCA of Three Rivers there's no end to the excitement.

Like the time a glider plane crash-landed right in front of our waterfront at Camp Belwood last summer. It's a testament to our staff's training and composure that they sprang into action, kept the campers safe and saved the pilot's life. The next day they were back to delivering quality programs like it wasn't a wildly unusual event. My adrenaline was pumping for days!

This is just one opportunity I've had to be proud of our aquatic leadership training, our exceptional child safety practices, and our leaders for supporting these young adults. From child care families to newcomer Canadians and youth to newly employed parents; there are hundreds more stories that remind me why the Y is so important. I would love to hear your Y story — or, if you're new to our community, we can help you write one.

I am privileged to lead this team of incredible people — both paid staff and volunteers. By investing in our people, we see it ripple into the impact for our community. And thanks to donors, funders, community partner agencies, and supporters, this ripple is amplified. Together, we are building bright futures in a community where the gaps are fewer and farther between.

Mike Ennis

Chief Executive Officer, YMCA of Three Rivers



This is the YMCA of Three Rivers

Learn more about your YMCA of Three Rivers, including our Mission, Vision, and Values at ymcathreerivers.ca.

Audited financial statements available at ymcathreerivers.ca/leadership-and-impact.

Charitable Number: BN 11930 7098 RR0001