



Annual Report
2019/20

OUR MISSION



Our Mission

LGBT YouthLine is a 2SLGBTQ youth-led organization that affirms and supports the experiences of youth (29 and under) across Ontario. We do this by:

- Providing anonymous peer support and referrals;
- Training youth to provide support to other youth; and
- Providing resources so youth can make informed decisions.



Our Vision

Youth of all sexual and gender identities are celebrated and supported.



Our Values

In all aspects of our work and throughout the organization, as we pursue our mission, we live by the values listed below:

- Youth-Centred
- Confidentiality
- Anti-Oppression & Anti-Racism
- Accessibility
- Harm Reduction
- Sex Positive
- Indigenous Solidarity
- Growth and Learning
- Collaboration

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

LGBT YouthLine works in the place often referred to as Ontario, which continues to be colonized land, and is home to many Indigenous communities. Our head office, in Tkaronto (Toronto), is the territory of the Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, the meeting place of Tkaronto remains home to many Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island. YouthLine works in this context and on this territory with a continued commitment towards Indigenous solidarity.

Language: 2SLGBTQ/Queer, Trans, Two-Spirit

We use 2SLGBTQ (Two-spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer) and Queer, Trans, Two-Spirit interchangeably as umbrella terms to identify the youth that we serve. We acknowledge that these terms cannot/do not encompass the rich diversity of identities that may fall under these umbrellas, including two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, genderqueer, intersex, queer, questioning, asexual, aromantic, non-binary or any other non-normative identities related to sexuality and gender.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

05	Letter from the Executive Director & Co-Chairs
08	Celebrating 25 Years
12	Peer Support HelpLine
18	Pride Season 2019
20	Provincial Youth Ambassador Project
26	YouthOrganize
28	Our Team
30	Our Supporters
32	Financial Report
33	Our Funders

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CO-CHAIRS

This past year was a significant one for LGBT YouthLine. Not only was it our 25th anniversary (yay!), it was also a year where our organization experienced a lot of growth and change.

Our 25th year provided us with the opportunity to look back at what we as an organization have accomplished, as the first peer support service for 2SLGBTQ youth in Ontario, and in Canada. Throughout the past 25 years, we have

faced financial hardships, changes in government, funding structures, and yet we have persisted. Although YouthLine started as a phone line, we have evolved with changing technology adding online chat and text, to continue meeting youth where they're at.

We also celebrated our 25th anniversary with our friends and community members at our Youth Awards Gala in June 2019 and 'The Lesque is Drag', a celebration and cabaret in March 2020, which allowed us to celebrate and showcase the incredible talents, stories, and experiences of our past and present YouthLine community.

In addition to all the celebrating, YouthLine also took steps to extend our connections with 2SLGBTQ youth across Ontario, especially in smaller, rural, and northern communities. One of the highlights of the last year was launching new initiatives that helped us reach across the province to build new community connections. Through programs like the renewed Provincial Youth Ambassador Project and YouthOrganize, we learned about the needs of 2SLGBTQ youth and helped build capacity by providing trainings and support for local youth-led initiatives.

While our 25th year was a time to look back, we also started to look forward at what the next 25 years could look like, recognizing that there is still a deep need for support in 2SLGBTQ communities across Ontario. We secured funding to expand support for youth-led initiatives while identifying ways to improve, grow, and expand our HelpLine.

And then this year ended in a way that we didn't plan for: a pandemic, which resulted in us pivoting and trying to figure out how to provide services remotely as we recognized that 2SLGBTQ youth needed our support now more than ever.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CO-CHAIRS

Our landmark Peer Support HelpLine continues to be the core of our work, providing much-needed support to 2SLGBTQ youth across the province. Thanks to dedicated volunteers and staff, we are able to continue the work of ensuring 2SLGBTQ youth have the resources and connections to feel affirmed, find support, and build community.

Our priority has always been to balance the needs of our service users (who are experiencing higher rates of isolation than ever) with the needs of our volunteers (who are also

youth dealing with extremely difficult times). As such, we closed our in-person service room, temporarily closed our phone lines, and moved our text and chat lines remotely. This shift has allowed us to re-imagine our HelpLine structure to become a truly provincial line, with a peer support team from across the province. And for those wondering, our phone lines will reopen in March 2021, with the appropriate technology and supports in place for our volunteers and service users. We are unsure of what the next year will bring; however, we know that YouthLine will continue to adapt, revise, try and re-try when things don't work quite right, and persevere to continue to be here for 2SLGBTQ youth in Ontario.

We always say that once someone becomes involved with LGBT YouthLine, they will always be a part of the YouthLine family. So THANK YOU to our YouthLine chosen family now and over the last 25 years: our amazing staff, super volunteers, dedicated Board members, fantastic donors, and super cool supporters and partners. You all make YouthLine an organization that we can be proud of, and proud to be a part of.

Thank you,

Berkha Gupta
Executive Director

Adriana Chang & Juan Luis Garrido
Co-Chairs, Board of Directors



The Lesque is Drag



25th Anniversary and Youth Awards Gala



NOW Magazine's Best Youth Organization in Toronto



2SLGBTQ Youth Needs Assessment Launch



Youth Award Winners



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS



25TH ANNIVERSARY & YOUTH AWARDS GALA



Celebrating The Outstanding Achievements Of

Fae Johnstone for Trans Activism

Tamar Brannigan for Queer Activism

Aanya Wood for BIPOC Activism

James Schlonies in Academic Environments

Iehente Foote in Social and Health Services

Dinaly Tran in Arts & Culture

Beze Gray in Social Justice & Community Empowerment

Winner profiles, pictures and recap at
youthline.ca/youthawards

25TH ANNIVERSARY DIGITAL ARCHIVE

With support from **The Arquives**, we put together an online archive showcasing YouthLine's 25 year history available at youthline.ca/history

YouthLine at Pride Day 1998



YouthLine Timeline & Archive at the Youth Awards Gala



Youth Line at Pride 2012



THE LESQUE IS DRAG: 25TH ANNIVERSARY CLOSING CELEBRATION & CABARET

We hosted a closing cabaret and dinner at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre with alum, supporters, staff, board, and volunteers. The event was also a celebration for PYAP's closing retreat, with most Youth Ambassadors in attendance. Many YA's and volunteers performed, and for some it was their first queer show.



PEER SUPPORT HELPLINE

Highlights

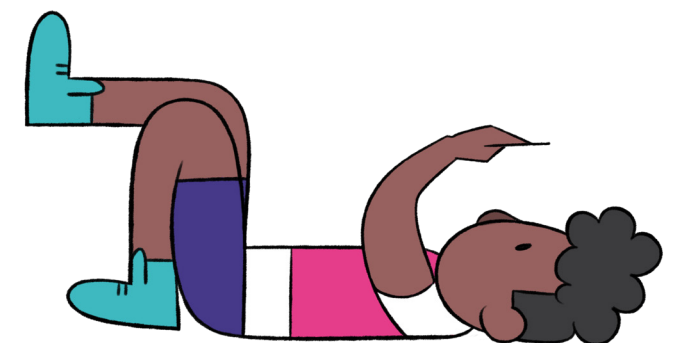
Added a **Programs Manager** to support program growth – this addition has allowed to better our tech infrastructure, support for crisis contracts, and longer term planning

Increased supports and training for HelpLine staff, including **ASIST training**, **Vicarious Trauma** training and bi-monthly support from a counsellor

Launched a **new mobile and user-friendly chat and text platform**, with better data organization to allow us to be more adaptive to changing needs

Updated our volunteer training content adding **new readings and self-reflection questions**, to better support trainees in their learning process

Increased leadership among HelpLine volunteers in supporting **new training groups and creating social spaces** for their peers



PEER SUPPORT HELPLINE

Who We Supported In 2019/2020

3,280

Youth Supported

Youth Who
Identify As

BIPOC* 37%

Trans** 59%


Age of
Service Users


Under 15: 26%

16-18: 22%

19-21: 19%

22-29: 32%

 **50%**

25% 

 **25%**

Top Issues Discussed

Mental Health & Isolation
Coming Out
Questioning Identity

Peer Relationships
Health (Including Sexual Health)
Family Relationships

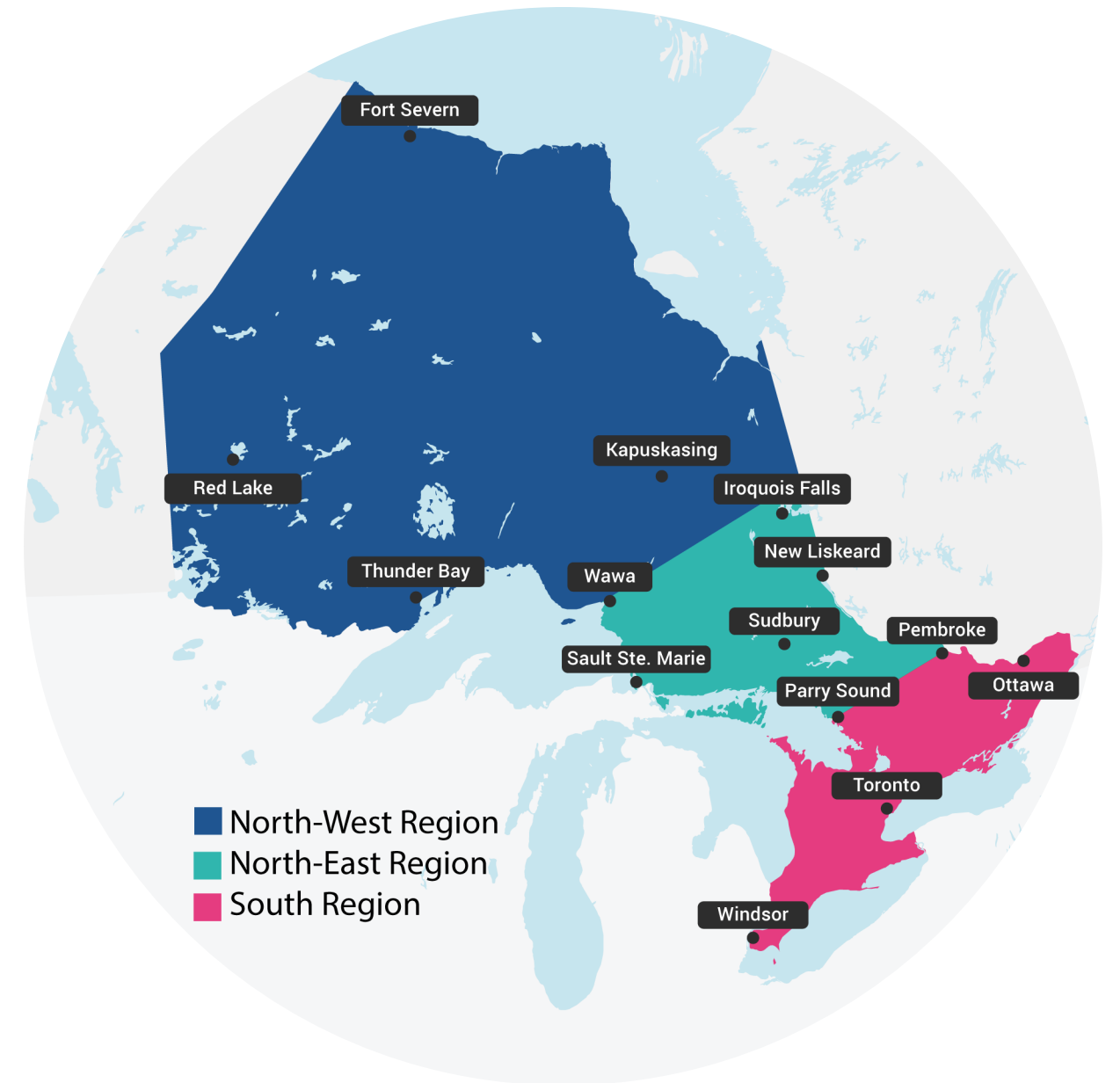
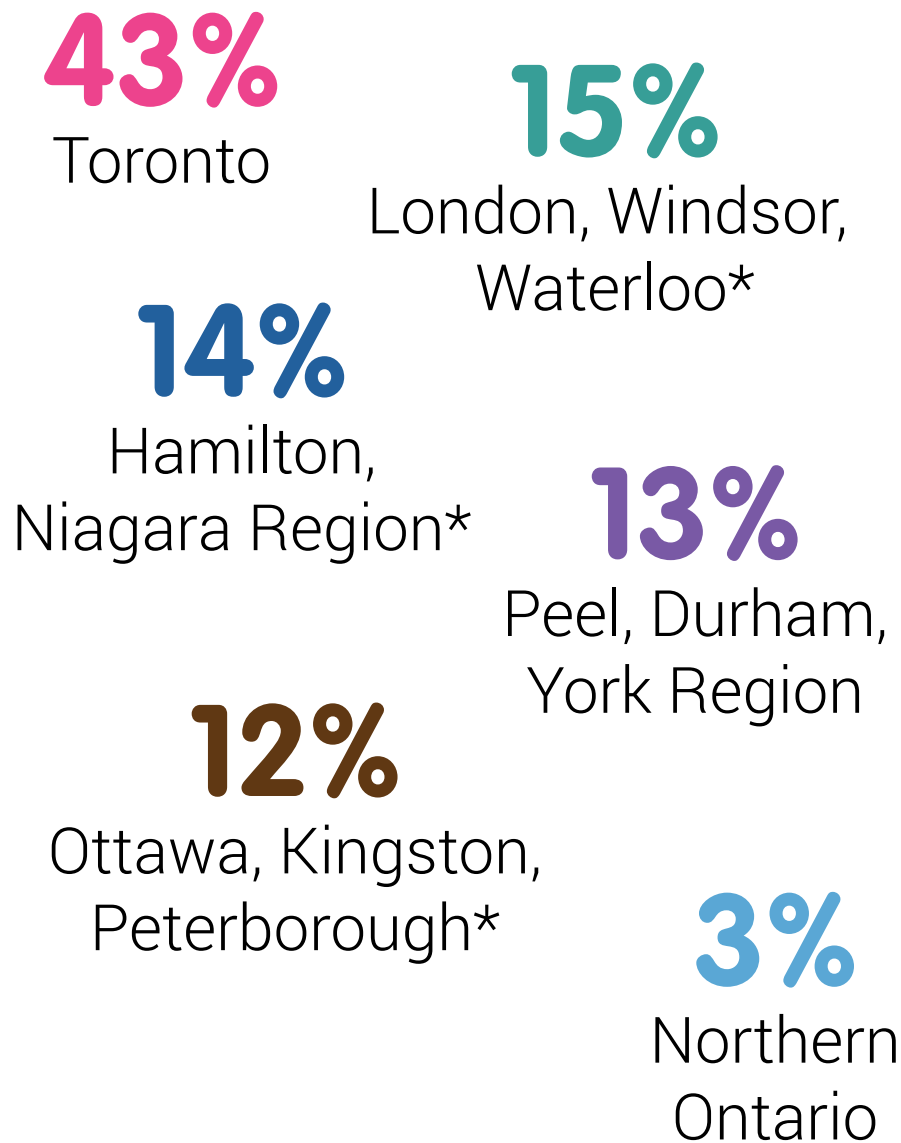
**Almost 10% of
youth reached out
to us to get
support on
bullying or abuse.**

*BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, Youth of Colour

**Trans: Includes Trans, Gender Non-conforming, GenderFluid, and questioning youth

PEER SUPPORT HELPLINE

Who We Supported In 2019/2020



4% of youth were from Rural/Remote Ontario

*Includes neighboring areas

PEER SUPPORT HELPLINE

Quotes from Service Users

"I felt like I could talk to someone for the first time ever. I felt comfortable and was provided with some answers that may have changed my life for the better."

"Thank you so much for having this support available, especially as an online chat. It's really dangerous for some of us to talk via phone or text because of nosey parents and this is just such a good option!"

"It was nice to talk to someone briefly about something I can't talk to anyone about."

"The volunteer I spoke with was incredibly helpful, supportive, and created an environment I felt comfortable opening up in. They checked in with me, went over everything I asked to talk about, and gave advice where I requested it."

"I really enjoyed talking to someone that actually understood my problems and that I could talk about dysphoria with. This has made me feel soooooo much better."

"They were really creative with coming out tips, and made me feel confident in coming out."

PEER SUPPORT HELPLINE

HelpLine Volunteers

42

Active volunteers

2,434

Volunteer hours

Volunteers Who
Identify As

BIPOC*

52%

Trans** 37%

"It's made me more confident in my queer identity and made me feel like I'm actually connected to a community in a way that's healthy and meaningful. It's a mutually beneficial experience I'm very grateful to have."

"Being a peer support volunteer the past year has been super rewarding! It's been great to be able to talk folks through big moments in their lives like coming out, or hearing about them find new love! It also feels good to be contributing to my community and getting to make connections and friends with other LGBTQ+ folks!"

"There are so many good things that have come out of my time at YouthLine and it's hard to put them into words. I've become a much more open, empathetic listener, and these skills have helped me nurture my relationships and be a better friend. Even more than that though, I've learned to treat myself with the same openness and love as service users -- I've learned to reserve judgement and ask myself things like "what do you think is making you feel that way?" and have started validating my own feelings instead of reacting with shame and self-hatred."

*BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, Youth of Colour

**Trans: Includes Trans, Gender Non-conforming, GenderFluid, and questioning youth

RESOURCES & OUTREACH

Resource Database

Our resources database now has **200+ Regionally Tagged Resources** for 2SLGBTQ+ youth in various parts of Ontario.

Outreach

Our HelpLine reaches youth through support of service providers, educators, and youth spaces across Ontario. This year, we started reaching school counsellors through Canadian School Counsellor Magazine and Ontario Schools Counsellors Association.

43,947

Unique website visitors

11,043

Cards distributed

1,451

Posters distributed

144

New groups recieved our materials
(orgs, schools, youth spaces)

PRIDE SEASON 2019

Toronto Blue Jays Pride Night Game



Trans March, Toronto



Georgian Bay Two-Spirit Pow Wow



PRIDE SEASON 2019

54 Pride Events in 44 cities across Ontario!

Innisfil
Kincardine Kenora Scarborough
Pembroke Brantford Halton London Muskoka
Barrie (Simcoe Region) Toronto Grey Bruce
Windsor-Essex Peterborough Hamilton
Kawartha Lakes Minden North Bay
Durham Region Kitchener-Waterloo
Elliott Lake Sault Ste. Marie Rainy River Brampton
Timmins Thunder Bay Brockville
Oxford Chatham-Kent Fort Frances
Niagara Owen Sound Guelph Dryden
Sudbury Sioux Lookout
York Region Red Lake Haldimand-Norfolk
Kingston Bay of Quinte Orangeville Simcoe
Ottawa Six Nations

PROVINCIAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



**Provincial Youth
Ambassador Project**

18
Youth
Ambassadors

11
Trans-Identified
Youth

7
Indigenous
Youth

9
Racialized
Youth

2,920
Hours
Completed

8
Youth from
Northern Ontario

10
Youth from
Southern Ontario

“PYAP has created opportunities for me to be a leader in my community. I’ve had a chance to meet people I never would have met before, and have had many meaningful conversations with folks about ways we can make things better in our community. With the support of PYAP, I feel like I have a voice, and that I can make a change.”

“I see the problems in my community, I see the ways that they can be changed, and I see how youth have a role in this change. PYAP created a community and a platform for us to use our voices. Through PYAP, I have taken on a leadership role, I am proud of my accomplishments, and I am eager to continue to advocate for change.”

PROVINCIAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



Provincial Youth
Ambassador Project

Opening Retreat

Lots Of Relationship Building

Workshop On Anti-Oppression

Mapping A Needs Assessment

Learning About Colonization
& 2SLGBTQ Indigenous Experiences

Closing Retreat

Final Needs Assessment Launch

Tour Of The Arquivos

YouthLine's 25th Anniversary
Celebration & Cabaret

Medicine Making Workshop

Needs Assessment Report
Recommendations Session



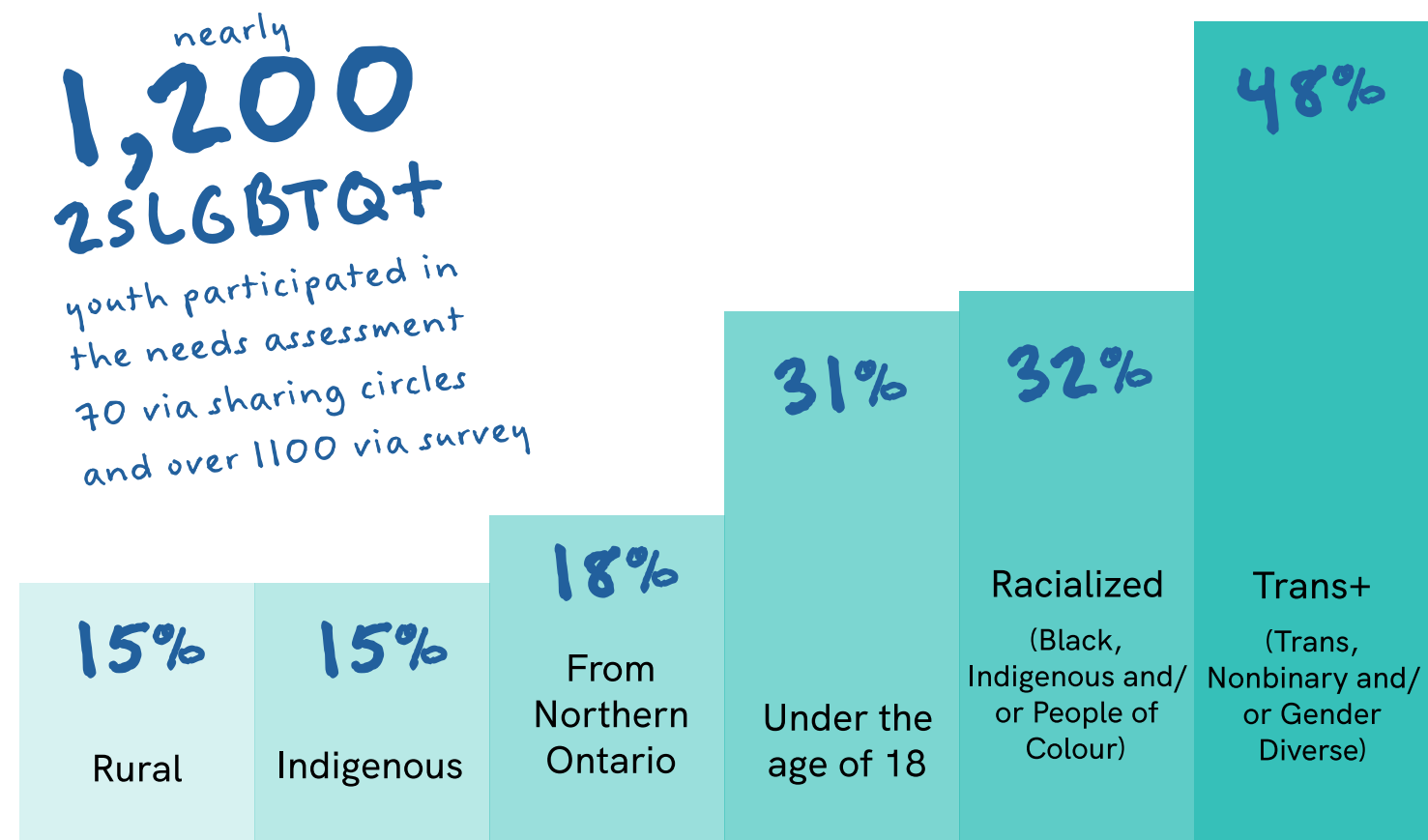
PROVINCIAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



Provincial Youth
Ambassador Project

We're Here: 2SLGBTQ+ Youth Needs Assessment

Through surveys and sharing circles, 2SLGBTQ youth across Ontario were asked about their experiences, needs, and suggestions. From the data, a **Summary Report** and **5 Snapshot Reports** were created.



Reports available at youthline.ca/publications

Based on YA input, a recommendations report is set to release in late 2020.

PROVINCIAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



Provincial Youth
Ambassador Project

Needs Assessment Launch Tour

Brantford
Mississauga*
Ottawa
Peterborough
Toronto
Sioux Lookout
North Bay
Thunder Bay
Owen Sound
Waterloo
Sudbury



Toronto Launch



Waterloo Launch

*Unfortunately, the Mississauga launch had to be postponed due to weather and then cancelled due to COVID-closures.

PROVINCIAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



Provincial Youth
Ambassador Project

Circle of Belonging: Letters of Love to Northern 2SLGBTQ+ Youth

YAs hosted **6 Zine-Making Workshops** in Kenora, North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sioux Lookout, Sudbury, and Thunder Bay. The Zine includes **56 submissions** from 2SLGBTQ+ youth across Northern Ontario.

Available online to view or print at youthline.ca/publications
Print copies available for free for Northern Ontario youth.



PROVINCIAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



**Provincial Youth
Ambassador Project**

Navigating Rural Landscapes as 2SLGBTQ+ Youth: A Grey-Bruce Collaborative Zine

YA in Grey-Bruce region hosted a zine-making workshop with 8 youth participants. The zine is available online to print or view.



Southern Ontario Photo Exhibit

5 Southern YA's took photos representing their experience in their local communities. YA's wrote about their connection to the picture. The exhibit was displayed at each launch.

YOUTHORGANIZE

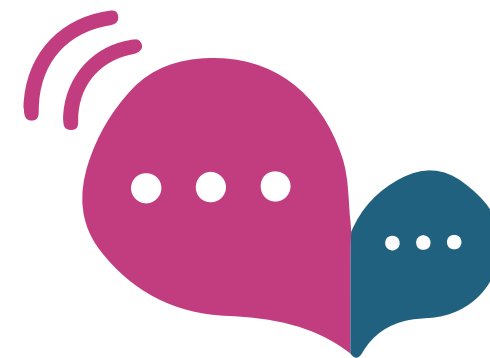
New pilot program to support 2SLGBTQ+ youth leadership with webinars, resources, and skill-sharing spaces.

Based on a needs assessment of current and aspiring grassroots youth leaders, we developed:

- An online community portal on Slack
- Series of **7 Webinars**
- **6 Resource Toolkits**

We quickly learned that many of the youth attending were teens who wanted more ongoing skills development and support. Adapting to learnings, YouthOrganize launched in Peel and Halton Regions to provide 2SLGBTQ+ youth an opportunity to build skills, get support, and work with peers to develop programming on specific areas of interest.

More info can be found at youthline.ca/youthorganize



youthorganize
by LGBT YouthLine

YOUTHORGANIZE WEBINARS & RESOURCES

Webinars hosted

- Introduction to Peer Support
- Exploring the Needs of Your Community
- Workshop Facilitation & Consent
- Event Planning 101
- Running BIPOC Centered Events
- Boundaries for Organizers
- Leveraging Mainstream Media for Advocacy

Resource Toolkits Created

- Organizing 101: A Step by Step Guide
- Organize 201: Going Deeper
- Accessibility & Organizing
- Active Listening for Organizers
- FNMI: What's That (A Resource on 2SLGBTQ Indigenous Communities)
- 2SLGBTQ+ Organizing in Ontario Schools

2SLGBTQ+ youth developed all toolkits and hosted each webinar

Available at youthline.ca/publications

STAFF TEAM

Berkha Gupta
Executive Director

Cameo Ferguson
North-West Regional Assistant, PYAP

Elizabeth Hawksworth
Communications Coordinator

Hayley Moody
Manager, Provincial Engagement

Jack Lewis
Coordinator, YouthOrganize

Katrina Moffit-Pleasance
North-East Regional Assistant, PYAP

Thanks to our four shift supervisors who support volunteers during shifts - our lines couldn't operate without you!

Minna Frederick
Manager, Peer Support

Sierra Savedra
Coordinator, Peer Support

Shivanie Mahabir
Operations Coordinator

Sreya Roy
Coordinator, YouthOrganize

Vincent So
Southern Regional Assistant, PYAP

Past staff: Alisha Willis, Joan Rupram, Kelly Schieder, Kenisha Raymond, Larae Harbour, Lauren (Wren) Pragg, Priya (Pree) Rehal

BOARD & VOLUNTEERS

Continuing

Adanyi Phillip

Adriana Chang **Co-Chair**

Aus Bahadur

Cheyenne Diaz

David Yang **Secretary**

Juan Garrido **Co-Chair**

Khadijah Kanji

Sylvan Tang **Treasurer**

Yara Kodersshah

Outgoing

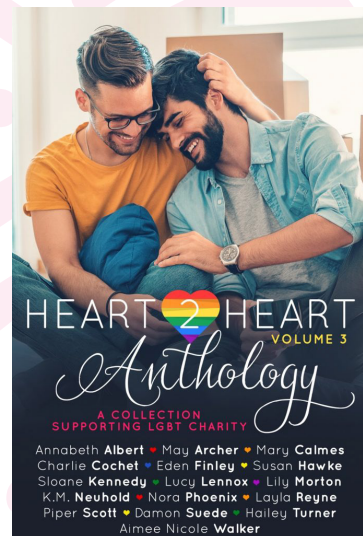
Amy Verhaeghe

Kanaka Kulendran

Our confidentiality policies don't allow us to list all of our wonderful volunteers publicly. However, the work we do would not be possible without the incredible individual and collective efforts of all our Peer Support volunteers, Youth Ambassadors, and committee volunteers.

**Thank you for showing your love by supporting
thousands of youth in the past year!**

OUR SUPPORTERS 2019/2020



Third Party events offer a fun way for individuals, groups and organizations to show your love and raise funds for us. In 2019/2020, our supporters organized 26 events raising a total of **\$57,757** accounting for over **28%** of our donations.



Thank you also to all the individuals who have hosted Birthdays or other events on Facebook - these funds contributed **\$11,804** last year!

Academy of Lions
Albert Cambell Secondary School
BIPOC Mental Health Fundraiser
Cycling Club
Daddy O' Doughnuts
Dan Levy Birthday Fundraiser
Heart2Heart Anthology
HeartStrong Tattoo
Lavender Party
Lox & Schmear
QAPD Comedy Show
Qupping Coffee Event
Men of Curling Calendar (John Epping)
mini mioche
Peachy Keen Pets
Punk Sucks Closing Party
Rangle
RBC Aldershot
RuPaul Fantasy League
S&C Electric Pride
Stantec Toronto
Sterling Silver
Telus Pride Event
TVO Pride Event
Warner Music

OUR SUPPORTERS 2019/2020

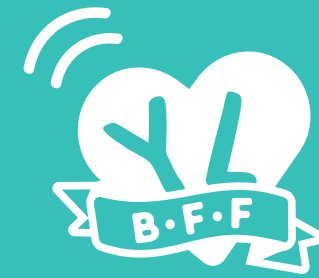


Groups & Foundations (Over \$10,000)

Andree Rhéaume & Robert
Fitzhenry Family Foundation
Dawn Tattle Foundation
Finastra
Jays Care Foundation

Group Donations (Under \$10,000)

AECON
CB2
CBC Radio (In Honor of Schitt's
Creek)
Delta Bingo & Gaming
Hootsuite Toronto
Schitt's Creek Legion
Stantec

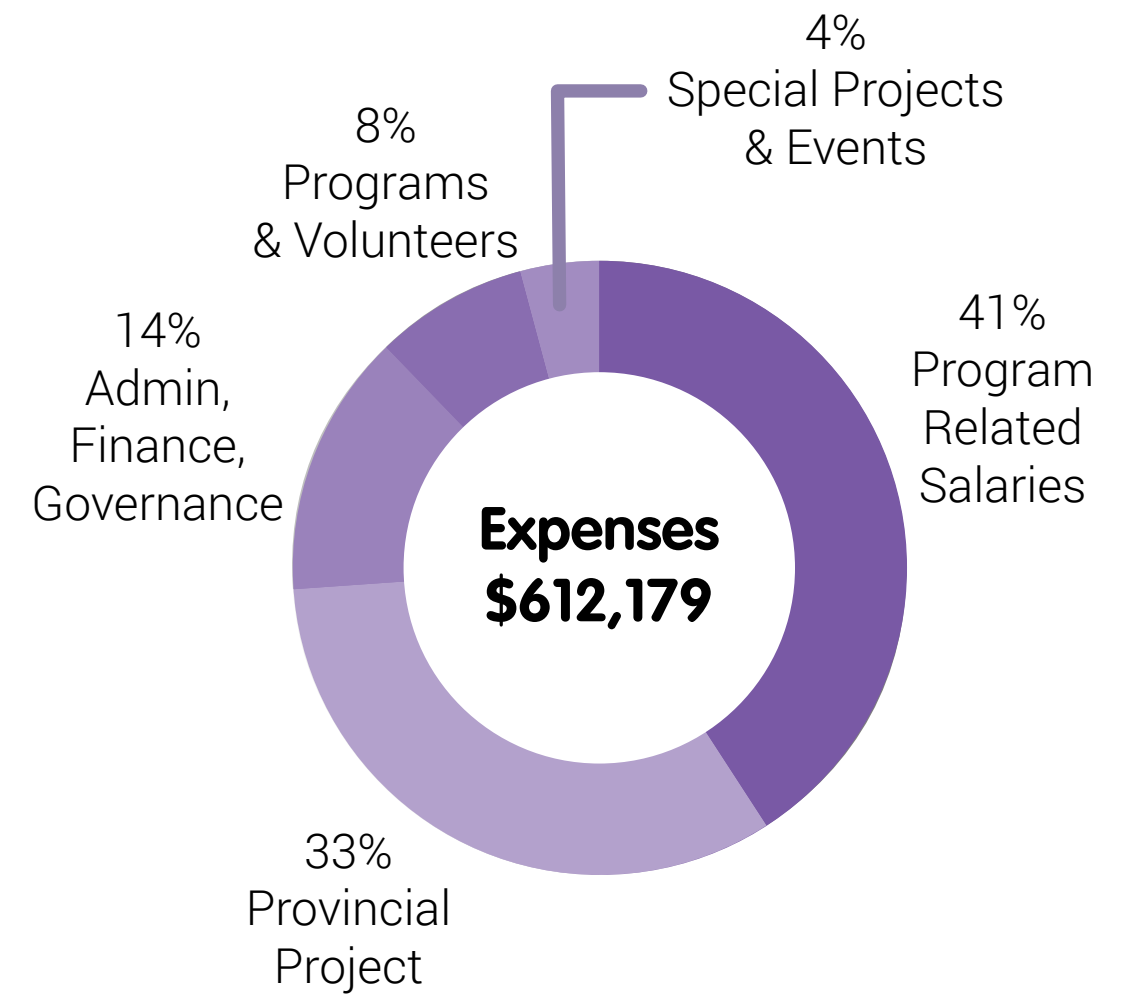
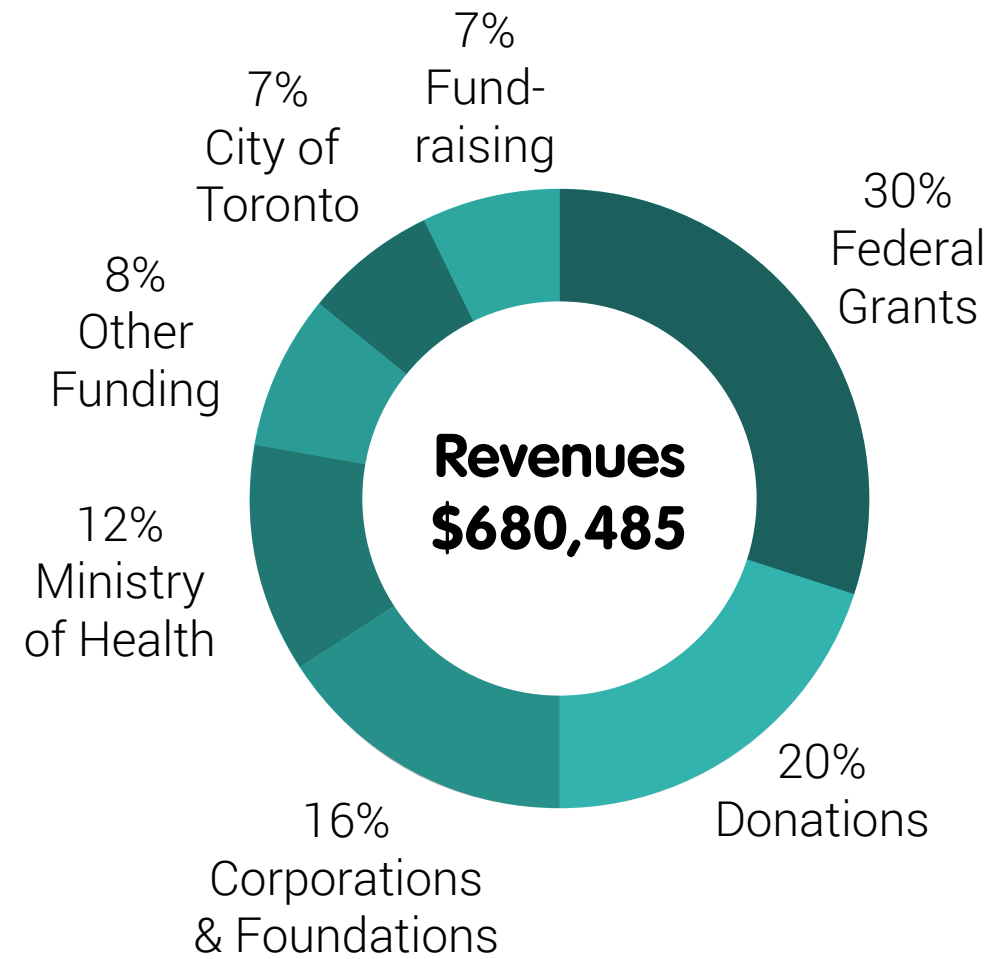


Very special thanks to our 47
Monthly Donors that provide
us with a reliable stream of
funding throughout the year.

Thanks for being our BFF!

We aren't naming our individual donors as many chose to remain anonymous or not be publicly acknowledged for their contributions. Our donors are an important part of our community and support network, that make it possible for us to continue to be here 25 years later. We couldn't do this work without you so **THANK YOU for supporting our work <3**

FINANCIAL REPORT



Visit youthline.ca/reports for 2019/20 audit.

OUR FUNDERS 2019/2020



Funded by the Government of
Canada under the Canada
Service Corps program



Keep In Touch!

www.youthline.ca



@lgbtyouthline

Sign up for our Newsletter!

