

2020-2021
**Annual
Report**



NOW MAGAZINE'S BEST YOUTH ORGANIZATION IN TORONTO - READERS CHOICE

Since the beginning of the pandemic, LGBT YouthLine has been consistently adapting to ensure that 2SLGBTQ+ youth had someone to turn to during a time when in-person groups shut down and isolation was at its peak. In this report, we outline a year full of change, growth, and most importantly, resilience.

This report is dedicated to all our volunteers, staff, Board members, and supporters who made sure we could – and continue to – show up stronger than ever for 2SLGBTQ+ youth in Ontario.

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.

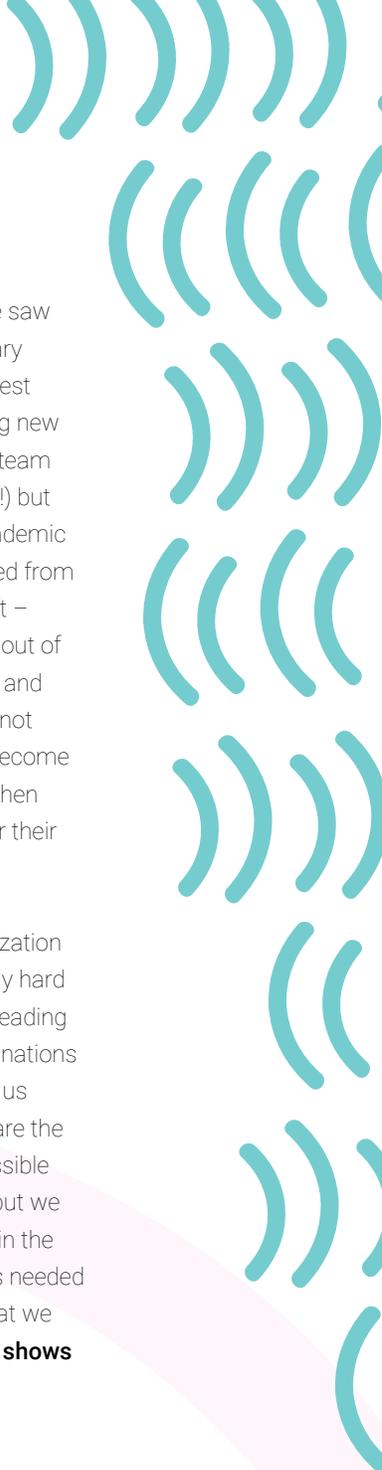
Land Acknowledgement

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 is located in Tkaronto (Toronto), which 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.

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Report designed by Carita Marsili



Letter from the Executive Director and Board Co-Chairs

As we reach the end of 2021, it's no exaggeration to say that this has been a year of both transformation and achievement. Amidst enormous changes and challenges within the non-profit sector as well as the wider world, LGBT YouthLine has not only continued to deliver crucial support to youth across the province, but also made great progress in the endless work of transforming how we work to ensure that our community's needs and values continue to come first.

We have all faced a year of loss and loneliness, and despite this our staff and volunteers showed up. They showed up for the youth we serve, they showed up for each other, and they showed up for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals everywhere by demonstrating their amazing resilience and compassion even when the world seems to be on fire. Or perhaps, because it is.

We as a community, particularly youth, have suffered for the loss of opportunities to gather in person during a time when we already had precious few places to do so safely. YouthLine made the difficult but ultimately prescient decision to close our service room and commit to a fully remote model, well before many other companies and organizations realized they needed to make similar changes, and were able to do so smoothly and with minimal interruption because our team recognized what was at stake and what was needed.

LGBT YouthLine exists to ensure that no member of our community is isolated during a crisis, and that principle has guided us during a time of global crisis to not only

survive but to seize opportunities to do better. We saw that a remote HelpLine was more than a temporary measure, but a chance to rethink how we could best serve and represent our community while opening new doors of accessibility. Our amazing peer support team not only made the transition look easy (it was not!) but showed unimaginable dedication even as the pandemic dragged on. In one instance, a volunteer connected from China to make sure they made their HelpLine shift – and that's just one example of their commitment out of dozens. Our leadership programs, YouthOrganize and the Provincial Youth Ambassador Program, have not only continued during this challenging time, but become even more meaningful as they create and strengthen connections between 2SLGBTQ+ youth no matter their circumstance or where in Ontario they might be.

We are so grateful to every member of the organization for giving their all, every day of an unprecedentedly hard year. And we are grateful to you, everyone who's reading this, for your support – whether that's through donations of time or money, through the care you've shown us when we've needed it, or through the way you share the stories of our successes and struggles. It's impossible to know what kind of challenges 2022 will bring, but we know that LGBT YouthLine will continue to thrive in the face of adversity, by showing up and doing what's needed as best we can and for as long as we can. It's what we do. **And we are grateful for our community, that shows up with us.**

With love and care,



Berkha Gupta

Berkha Gupta
Executive Director



Aus Bahadur, Juan Luis Garrido

Aus Bahadur & Juan Luis Garrido
Co-Chairs, Board of Directors



**Peer
Support
Helpline**

Peer Support HelpLine

Just one day after the closures, we were ready to come back on chat and text as a fully remote operation, while our phones stayed offline.

Our landlines could not operate remotely, and volunteers needed more training and resources if they were to continue supporting youth over the phone, as that is where we receive more acute crisis and prank calls. We needed to focus on strengthening our volunteer training program so that volunteers could feel safe and supported on shift. The temporary phone closure gave us a moment of pause to reflect on how to best transition to a fully remote phone operation.

During a time when many programs and services shut down indefinitely and isolation was at its worst for 2SLGBTQ+ youth, we knew our HelpLine was needed more than ever.

Our whole team understood the importance of our HelpLine for 2SLGBTQ+ youth in Ontario and immediately adapted to the rapid changes, even as they experienced their own challenges. We shifted our operations virtually but knew that we needed long-term solutions to meet the growing demand of our HelpLine in a remote context.

March 17th, 2020:

HelpLine shuts down following government announcement of closures

March 18th, 2020:

HelpLine re-opens remotely with basic infrastructure in place

April 2020:

Past volunteers come back to support growth and demand

While our volunteers showed up day after day to support their peers, our HelpLine demand grew 30% in the first few weeks of the lockdown, and we needed a way to ensure our youth volunteers could also take time off.

So, we asked for help.

Ten people – YouthLine alumni and former shift supervisors – came back to volunteer their time during those first few months of the pandemic. The support they provided was essential, not just for youth contacting our lines, but for the health of our volunteers and staff as well.

Our Peer Support volunteers especially showed their deep commitment to youth in the province. They knew our service was indispensable, and did whatever it took to show up. **One volunteer joined us from China every morning at 5AM!** Our community was there for us at a crucial time. We could not have sustained the lines if not for our volunteers – past and current – and their willingness to come back when we needed them.

“[Volunteering at YouthLine] has been one of the best things of being stuck inside.”

- Peer Support HelpLine volunteer

With a new cohort of Peer Support volunteers slated to begin in early April, our staff worked hard to revamp training materials to support our first-ever, fully remote cohort of volunteers.



May - July 2020:

First group of youth trained through a revamped virtual training



June 2020:

Chat and text services launch on a new mobile-friendly platform

Even before the pandemic, we were evaluating the accessibility of our HelpLine. We realized that not having a mobile-friendly chat and text platform created barriers to youth reaching the HelpLine, especially since we were limited to only chat and text.

We worked with a dedicated group of technology professionals to launch SnapEngage. SnapEngage met the needs for a mobile and user-friendly interface while ensuring the safety and anonymity of our youth when confidential support was needed more than ever. The completion of this project could not have come at a better time.

Once we went fully remote, new possibilities and programming changes began to unfold. **This was an opportunity for us to truly meet our provincial mandate.**

Working out of our service room and hosting in-person trainings, we were previously limited to Toronto-based volunteers. We had been wanting to expand our HelpLine team to other

parts of Ontario, but knew it would have taken much time and resources to execute. **With the lockdown requiring us to go remote, what would have taken a few more years only took us a few weeks to pull off.**

We were now able to welcome 2SLGBTQ+ youth to join us from anywhere in Ontario. In Fall 2020 we were finally able to welcome **2SLGBTQ+ youth to join us from anywhere in Ontario.** After reviewing 71 applications, we accepted 15 new volunteers into YouthLine’s first-ever, province-wide Peer Support HelpLine training.

Around this time, we also publicly announced [an implementation plan](#) outlining a new tiered training and service model.

Time and time again, we are shown that 2SLGBTQ+ are the ones holding space for each other during crises.



Saying Goodbye to the Service Room

With change comes loss. Implementing a fully remote HelpLine meant saying goodbye to our service room, an integral part of YouthLine for years.

And it was a hard goodbye. For our volunteers, it wasn't just a workspace to clock in and out of their shifts. It was a cherished space that they made their own - filled with meaningful memories, traditions, and knickknacks. It was like a little cozy clubhouse for our community.

Volunteers were grieving the loss of the service room, a reprieve for those who did not have many other spaces where they could be their authentic, 2SLGBTQ+ selves.

But where there was grief, there was also celebration.

During this period, HelpLine staff and volunteers came together to bid farewell to the service room and share their fond memories of the space – grabbing snacks from the shelves, making a warm cup of tea, and sitting by the glow of twinkle lights while preparing for shift.

Not only was this an opportunity for us to reminisce about the past, it also opened up the discussion of how we can look towards the future and maintain a strong sense of community even at a distance.

We wanted to honour those beautiful moments of joy that volunteers found in our space. For instance, in a care package, volunteers received their own set of twinkle lights to hang up in their own spaces.

Aspects of our physical service room live on in many ways as staff and volunteers imagine and reimagine what a changing virtual service room looks like.

The Unicorn Bell

The Unicorn Bell is a HelpLine tradition, dating as far back as we can remember. Whenever a volunteer would take their very first phone call after training, a Shift Supervisor would ring the bell. Now, we ring the bell over video call when each new volunteer cohort completes a virtual shadowing cycle, to signify the end of their training.



January-March 2021

Staff facilitate a new multi-week training to prepare volunteers for remote phone support

“Nothing short of the most caring and inclusive experience of my life.”

- Peer Support Helpline volunteer

Prior to the pandemic, our Helpline volunteers supported 2SLGBTQ+ youth from our service room under the guidance of a shift supervisor.

Acute crisis occurs on the phones more often than any other medium.

Given that youth volunteers would be taking calls mostly unsupervised, they needed additional training to ensure that they have the information, resources, and tools to confidently support other youth.

Our staff developed a two-tiered training program to accommodate the needs of remote learners and improve volunteer capacity and retention.

Tier 1 prepares trainees to provide chat and text support, while Tier 2 provides volunteers with additional skills to take phone calls, after gaining experience on the chat and text service for a period of time.

From January to March, we virtually trained 13 Helpline volunteers to take calls, and were finally able to re-launch our phone service.

“Hearing that I’ve been a positive impact on someone’s day is one of the most fulfilling feelings I get!”

- Peer Support volunteer

We re-launched our phone lines two days short of a full year after we had shut them down. Without access to our landlines, we needed a solution for our Helpline volunteers to take phone calls directly over the Internet.

Just like our chat and text service, maintaining anonymity on our phone lines was necessary. Eager to bring back our phone service, our team searched for a new remote telephone system. Our months-long process led us to select **3CX** as our Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP) system. **3CX does not store our service users’ phone numbers or locations, maintaining their privacy and anonymity.**

The planning and execution of these technological changes was not an easy feat in the midst of mass panic and uncertainty. Implementing new technology meant our volunteers and staff were in a constant state of learning and adapting; it also meant coordinating with external partners and teams who were undergoing challenges and layoffs of their own.

Thanks to the tremendous patience, flexibility, and commitment from all of those involved, we got through it in the name of community care.

March 15 2021

Phone lines re-launch virtually with limited hours, maintaining anonymity



We went into the year not knowing what it would look like. We didn't anticipate extended lockdowns and isolation, and certainly didn't expect the loss of our service room.

This year taught us that despite all the barriers 2SLGBTQ+ youth face – pandemic or not – our resilience and drive to support each other was instrumental in getting through the worst parts. **For us, the youth are thriving.**

To commemorate everything that the YouthLine community collectively experienced this year, we commissioned Vale, a long-time HelpLine volunteer and now Operations Coordinator, to create a t-shirt as a final tribute to the service room.

HelpLine volunteers brainstormed what they wanted on the shirt, voting for an affirmational phrase and providing suggestions for imagery.

It was difficult to narrow down a favourite, so in addition to the phrase on the front – “the youth are thriving” – Vale incorporated several ideas into the design on the back.

The final shirt features meaningful motifs, representing the service room and the community we'd built over the years in the space: the orange couch where volunteers would relax and do puzzles in between calls; the many debates about the best snacks (Dunkaroos) and alternative milk products (oat milk) for the service room fridge; fidget/stim toys to help team members focus (the hand twirling the phone cord), and a huge inventory of identity buttons (the circles at the top). The phone and outbound mail reference the different ways in which service users connect with

YouthLine, while the phone cord and retro-inspired colour scheme are a nod to our start in the 90s.

We are indebted to our volunteers – they supported us just as much as we hope to support them, and we hope that this t-shirt serves as a joyful reminder of their hours spent with the YouthLine team.



PEER SUPPORT HELPLINE

Throughout this time of constant change and uncertainty, our commitment to showing up for 2SLGBTQ+ youth extended to showing up for our staff and volunteers. We could not overlook that our team was also deeply impacted by the isolation, grief, and upheaval caused by the pandemic. As a youth-led organization offering compassionate support to the 2SLGBTQ+ community, we recognize that we need to be intentional about relationship-building and offering support internally as well. With the inevitable disconnection caused by remote operations and an online team environment, we had to get creative and think about how to start building more supportive structures and practices for our volunteers. This included establishing check-ins before and after every shift, debrief spaces with mental health professionals, virtual group chats and hangouts, and care packages for every team member.

As our volunteer pool doubled, we decided to restructure our staff team to support these new changes and practices. We hired a second Peer Support Program

Coordinator and moved shift supervisors to Program Assistants, with increased hours, pay, and responsibilities. While we have made great strides in strengthening operations and implementing internal support initiatives, adapting to these changes is still an ongoing process as we (re)organize budgets and look for new ways to prioritize volunteer and staff wellbeing.



Notebook cover designed by HelpLine Volunteer, Bella Shulman, for care packages

What's Next

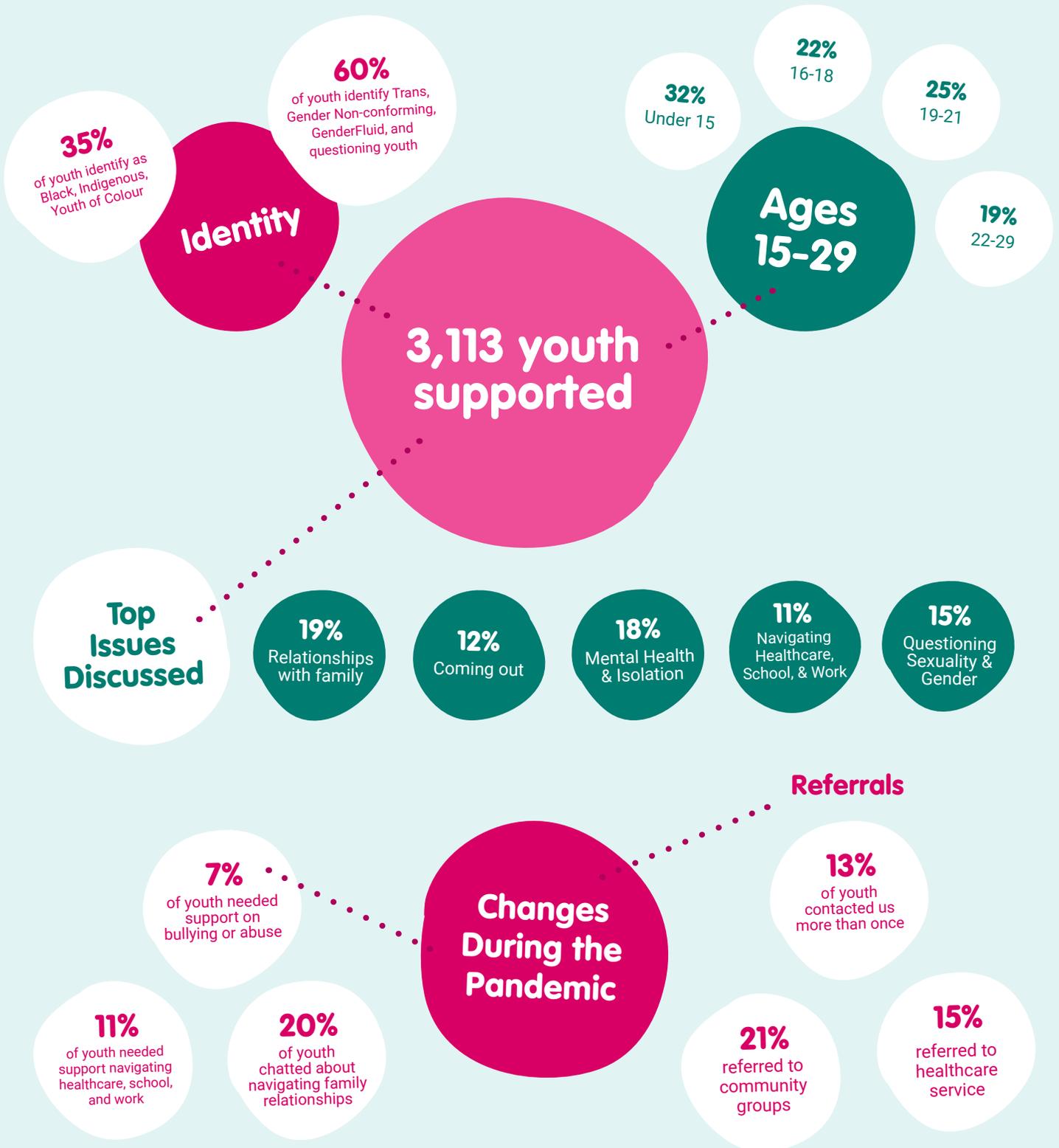
Despite this year's challenges, our community ensured we could continue to show up for 2SLGBTQ+ youth in Ontario. Just like our staff and volunteers, the generosity and care of our donors and funders meant that we could focus on the work without worry about financial resources.

In this year, we continue to move forward on actualizing a sustainable remote HelpLine. We are currently implementing an e-Learning Management System, which will allow us the stability to provide accessible training to youth across the province. **By the Spring of 2022, we will have the capacity to take on more volunteers with a stronger training program, that we can continue to build on as youth needs evolve.**

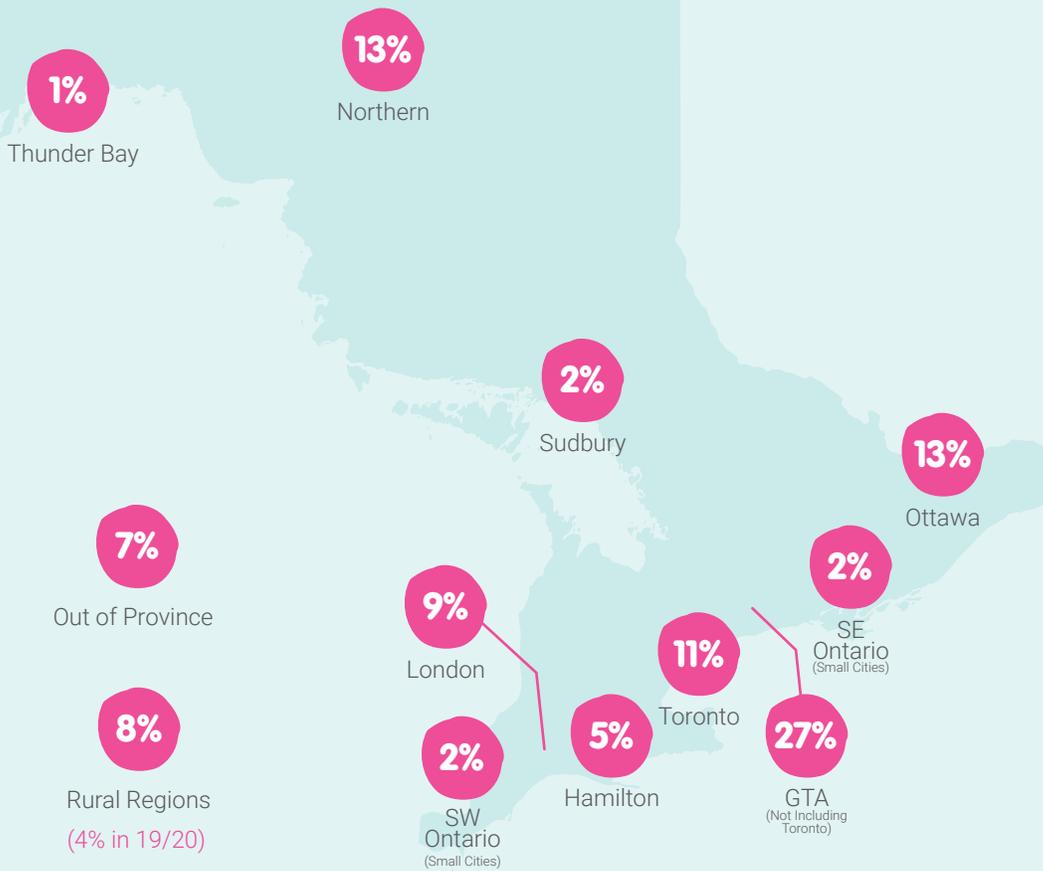
With the generosity of our community, YouthLine continues to invest resources to grow our staff team, improve our tech and program infrastructures, increase volunteer supports, and expand our reach to 2SLGBTQ+ youth in every part of Ontario.



Who We Supported



Location of Youth



HelpLine Service User

“ OH MY GOSH. A phenomenal experience. They were simply a delightful experience. I am so grateful. I'm feeling so much better because of them. ”

“ I felt very safe and that I was being listened to. I went from being really depressed to being calm and feeling like things weren't so bad. Really grateful for that. ”

Helpline Volunteers

59

Active Volunteers

55%

are BIPOC

32%

are Trans, Gender Non-Conforming

5,194

volunteer hours

More than 2X from 19/20

27

new volunteers trained

✳️ 13 alumni volunteers and staff returning over the summer to support the lines

The background is a vibrant pink color with a repeating pattern of dark pink, curved, brushstroke-like lines. A large white circle is positioned in the lower-left quadrant, containing the text.

Youth Leadership Programs

PYAP Provincial Youth Ambassador Program

While PYAP was always intended to operate in an online environment, it was anticipated that there would also be in-person gatherings such as retreats and project launches. However, the pandemic meant PYAP had to be shifted to an entirely virtual model. The staff and Youth Ambassadors (YAs) found creative ways to build community and relationships through online socials, games, and skillshares.

To better meet the needs of YAs across Ontario, the staffing structure of PYAP shifted to a "Regional Assistant" model with an assistant in each region: North-East, North-West, and Southern Ontario.



Retention of YAs became difficult as we moved further into the winter months. The YAs grappled with competing responsibilities, hard life circumstances, and the realities of existing as a 2SLGBTQ+ youth during a global pandemic in a volunteer position. As a result, some YAs left the program before the official end date.

Nonetheless, it was clear that the YAs were able to build relationships with one another, develop skills, and create amazing projects together!



Unicorn design by SJ Graphics | saidjiddaw.com



This year brought a very exciting launch of YouthOrganize in its new iteration!

YouthOrganize brings 2SLGBTQ+ youth together from Peel and Halton regions to build skills, community and initiatives that supports the needs of local 2SLGBTQ+ communities. YouthOrganize is funded for three consecutive years, which brings exciting possibilities of longer-term projects and initiatives.

The first year of YO has been full of growth and learning. The program experienced many adaptations, especially given the fact that it was originally intended to be an in-person program, but had to shift to be fully remote. The program was adapted multiple times to better fit the needs of volunteers, and continues to be adapted into the new fiscal.

After two rounds of recruitment, the first cohort of YouthOrganize volunteers began in the fall with 16 youth from Peel and Halton regions.

The first cohort has been busy working on their initiatives, and are looking forward to launching them in the coming months. Some projects include a 2SLGBTQ+ Employment Safety Guide, a Service Provider Audit, Comedy Drop-In, and a Workplace Safety Workshop.

"I got to think about needs in my community, and think of ways to meet those with the support of a great crew of others."

- Youth Ambassador

The background is a vibrant pink color with a repeating pattern of teal, curved, brushstroke-like shapes. A large white circle is positioned in the lower-left quadrant, containing the text.

PYAP Projects

LGBT YouthLine’s Big 2SLGBTQ+ Colouring Book

“The ABCs of Being 2SLGBTQ+” features beautiful, creative, and heartwarming artwork by YouthLine staff, HelpLine volunteers, Youth Ambassadors, and friends of YouthLine.

In the colouring book you will also find the PYAP mascot, an adorable unicorn.*



[DOWNLOAD THE COLOURING BOOK](#)

The Affirmation Project Card Deck

The Youth Ambassadors from North-East Ontario created [The Affirmation Project](#) to address feelings of isolation and lack of community spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ youth in Northern Ontario. They wanted something tangible to easily give out – a reminder to 2SLGBTQ+ youth that they are not alone and they are loved.

Each card in the deck contains an affirmation submitted by youth from North East Ontario.

[GET THE CARD DECK](#)



North West Needs Assessment

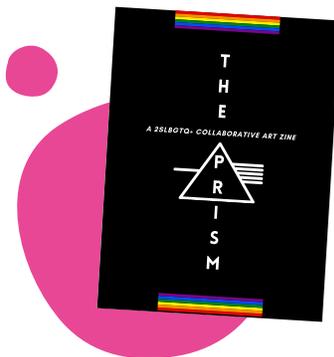
Youth Ambassadors from North West Ontario created a Needs Assessment using a survey and sharing circles to learn about the experiences and community needs of 2SLGBTQ+ youth living in North West Ontario.

The Prism Zine



[The Prism Zine](#) is a collaborative art zine focusing on the experiences of 2SLGBTQ+ youth in Brantford, Brant, and Six Nations of the Grand River. Destiny Pitters, who led the project and designed the zine, shared her thoughts on why she wanted to create The Prism Zine:

“When I had learned about the flag’s symbolism myself, I knew it could make for a great art project that showcases and celebrates how 2SLGBTQ+ folks experience these things in our day-to-day lives, and I’m so happy the youth got the chance to do just that!”



[READ THE ZINE](#)

We’re Here...For You

Created by Youth Ambassador Abbey Lee Hallett, “[We’re Here... For You](#)” is a video and audio-sharing series that aims to provide 2SLGBTQ+ youth with community, affirmation, education, and resource-sharing during the pandemic and beyond.

[WATCH THE SERIES](#)

The B2YG Youth Space & Zine

Malek developed a Black-only online space to foster connections and share resources among Black 2SLGBTQ+ youth in Ontario. The series of workshops engaged Black 2SLGBTQ+ youth by critically analyzing media and participating in fun activities together. The workshop participants also created a zine called the B2YG Zine, which was shared with the participants.

Queerness during COVID

Bek, a North East Youth Ambassador, hosted a workshop conversation about what it means for 2SLGBTQ+ youth to be socially isolated during a global pandemic.

*Unicorn design by SJ Graphics | saidjiddawy.com



#DoBetter:
2SLGBTQ+ Youth
Recommendations for
Change in Ontario

In March 2021, we launched: “Do Better: 2SLGBTQ+ Youth Recommendations for Change in Ontario.”

The Do Better report draws from the 2019-2020 PYAP Needs Assessment, where almost 1200 2SLGBTQ+ youth across Ontario shared their insights. The 7 Recommendations target all sectors across Ontario, specifically those in positions of power, and demand systemic change.

As part of our launch strategy, we hosted five webinars, each with a unique panel of 2SLGBTQ+ youth and a guest moderator with direct experience in the area of focus. The webinar focuses were Social Services, Health Care, Education, Rural/Northern Ontario, and Trans/Gender-Diverse Youth. We also hosted a 2SLGBTQ+ youth-only session focused on the “Taking Action” Tool found on the website.

Our webinars generated a ton of positive feedback, follow-up emails, presentation requests, and orders for our outreach material.

From the feedback, we will be creating a #DoBetter toolkit that will provide information needed for folks to do presentations within their own communities, schools, and organizations.



Illustration by Harmeet Rehal

Ensuring 2SLGBTQ+ youth in Catholic Schools have supports

In January 2021, Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) removed YouthLine from their website’s list of resources. The removal was in response to a harmful article smearing the validity and age-appropriateness of YouthLine’s website and work.

On January 11th, we released a [public statement](#) demanding the TCDSB immediately re-instate LGBT YouthLine in their resources for youth. This issue brought out a wave of support for YouthLine’s work, with the issue covered in major media outlets. While TCDSB acknowledged their

mistake and re-instated YouthLine, this issue led YouthLine to dig a bit deeper into English Catholic School Boards across Ontario. We found that 85% of the websites for English Catholic School Board in Ontario did not list any resources for 2SLGBTQ+ students. Of the 15% that do, three of them only list YouthLine while one also lists TransLifeLine. [You can read more about our research here.](#)

Since then, we have seen students rally for school boards in Ontario to share information about 2SLGBTQ+ services and resources with their students. YouthLine continues to

support youth leaders, and build our capacity, to ensure that we can advocate for every school in Ontario to have access to YouthLine’s and other 2SLGBTQ+ resources,

What Structural Homophobia Looks Like

Over 85%

of English Catholic School Boards in Ontario did not list any resources for 2SLGBTQ+ students.

VIEW THE INFOGRAPHIC



Outreach & Partnerships

(in a Remote Environment)

Even during times of social isolation and physical distancing, we found ways to connect with communities and organizations throughout Ontario. Throughout the year, we connected with over 40 organizations, Pride collectives, and groups to virtually deliver presentations, speak on panels and conferences, and to just connect and share resources about supporting 2SLGBTQ+ youth!

Some highlights include:

-  YouthLine staff co-facilitating a conversation with Adam Garnet Jones, author of "Fire Song," through The Fold – Festival of Literary Diversity in Canada.
-  YouthOrganize guest appearing on "Peel Matters" on Sauga 960am to talk about youth organizing in Peel.
-  Working collaboratively with "I-Think" and 50+ elementary school students to address systemic issues of homophobia and transphobia within schools.
-  A YouthLine voice on the YouthRex Panel "[Cultivating Online Community for Youth.](#)"
-  PYAP sharing info about YouthLine to youth from Timmins Youth Wellness Hub.

PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT:

Reconnecting Your Spirit

In collaboration with M'Wikwedong Building Gender Diverse Communities, we received a grant to create a program exclusively for Two-Spirit, Indigiqueer and LGBTQ+ Indigenous youth who live in Ontario: "Reconnecting Your Spirit."

We hosted 1 cohort this year, with 15 youth participating. Over a week-long period, the program brought together youth and Elders to build bundles, tell stories, and connect.

2 more cohorts are planned for 2021!



Building our bundles – rattle and smudge feathers

Our Helpline reaches youth through support of service providers, educators, and youth spaces across Ontario.

32,832
Unique Website Visitors

676
posters distributed

3,705
cards distributed

676
We're Here reports distributed

The background is a teal color with a repeating pattern of pink, curved, wavy lines. A large white circle is positioned in the bottom-left corner, partially overlapping the teal background.

**Staying
Connected**

Staying Connected



#Dare2Imagine Pride Campaign

Every year, LGBT YouthLine uses the opportunity of Pride season to recognize the resilience and adaptivity of 2SLGBTQ+ youth, celebrate the joys of 2SLGBTQ+ existence and community, and reflect on the continued barriers to security and well-being for those impacted by transphobia, homophobia, and intersecting marginalization.

This Pride season was different. We were at home, we were connecting virtually, we were protecting our communities by practicing social distancing, and as a result, our celebrations of queerness and communities looked different than what we were used to.

In 2020, we wanted folks to #Dare2Imagine a world that is better, safer, and more affirming for 2SLGBTQ+ youth. During Pride, we invited everyone to #Dare2Imagine a new normal that protects, supports, and celebrates 2SLGBTQ+ youth.

To encourage connection, we ran a 30-day photo challenge that celebrates who we are as a 2SLGBTQ+ community.

Our 2020 Pride campaign encouraged people to #Dare2Imagine:

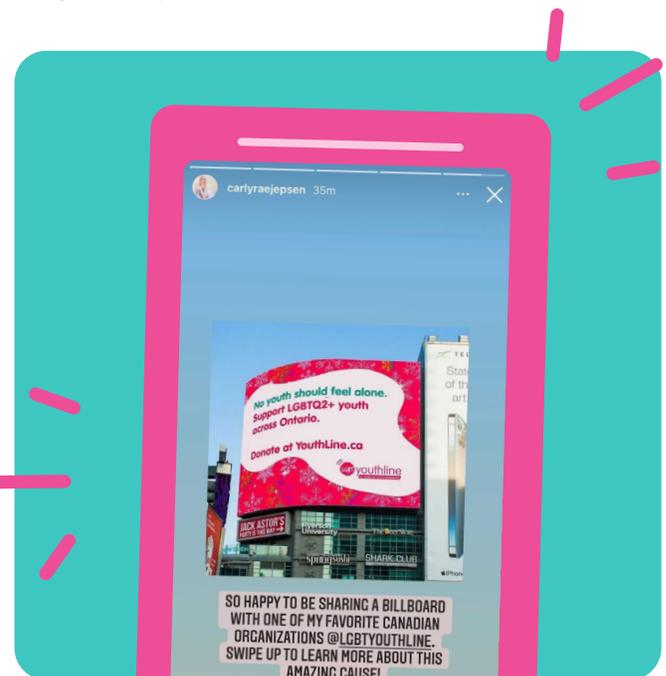
- The spaces and places that 2SLGBTQ+ youth are part of
- The places we dream of
- And the future we want to have, and continue to create

Snail Mail for the Holidays

During this year of isolation, we were always looking for ways to connect with each other and our communities. The holidays were no different – what should be a time of joy and celebration can often already be isolating and difficult for 2SLGBTQ+ folks.

To support connection during the holiday season, we commissioned three 2SLGBTQ+ youth artists – Aneel, Beena, and Lilah – to create holiday cards, which were offered to our youth volunteers, staff, board, and BFFs (monthly donors).

In December, our team was also thrilled to be invited to share a billboard at Yonge and Dundas Square with Carly Rae Jepsen!



Support Our Growing Team

Unique challenges arose as we entered the pandemic and had to shift to a completely virtual working and service model. To accommodate our changing needs and growth at YouthLine, we expanded our team by hiring staff to support our operations.

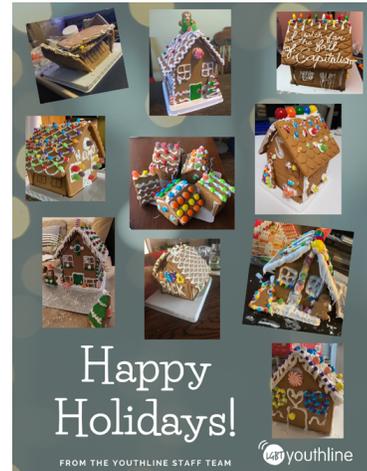
We sought systems and technical solutions to increase internal communications, create a Virtual Service Room, and manage our Leadership Programs completely online. With the addition of an Operations Coordinator, we were able to prioritize these needs, creating internal processes and structures to better support our growing HelpLine and Leadership Programs.

We also knew that we needed to find ways to connect with and support our staff, volunteers, and Board members at a time when nobody could meet up in person.

Some ways included:

- Two rounds of COVID-relief funding made available for volunteers in March, 2020 and December, 2020
- Mailing care packages to staff, volunteers, and Board members
- Creating internet and space setup stipends for staff
- Creating an access fund for volunteers to support virtual volunteering

As of September 2021, our Operations Team has three staff members who continue to figure out ways to better support, show up, and create community for the YouthLine team, which is now across Ontario.



2020 Holiday Staff Social - Nailed It!
GingerBread Making Competition



**Who
Supported
Us**



Very special thanks to our 71 Monthly Donors that provide us with a reliable stream of funding throughout the year.

Third Party events offer a fun way for individuals, groups and organizations to show your love and raise funds for us. While the lockdown made it hard for in-person fundraisers, many businesses and individuals still found creative ways to support us <3



A 100K Day (Travis Vandevenne)
@wokerabbitbeads
Andrew Townsend's Fundraiser
Bark Out Loud
Elizabeth Pang
In Honour of Mary Martin's True Colours Scarf

Friends of the Wedderspoon Family
Heather Li
Wedding Gifts
Jennifer Zalev's Fundraiser
Juliana Rock & the Strong Brew Hamsters
Marshalls Hamilton
National Coming Out Day Fundraising

mini mioche Retail Inc.
Minto Pride Committee
St. Patty's Virtual Trivia Night Proceeds
Rachel Fitzmaurice
Spinco Hamilton

Thank you also to all the individuals who hosted Birthdays or other events on Facebook – these funds contributed \$15,369 last year!

#Dare2Workshops

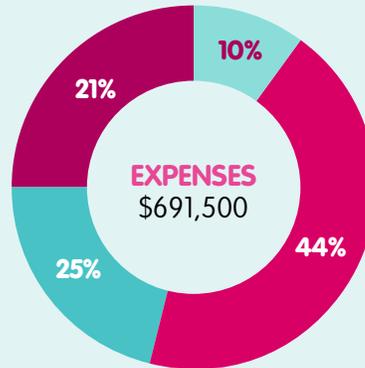
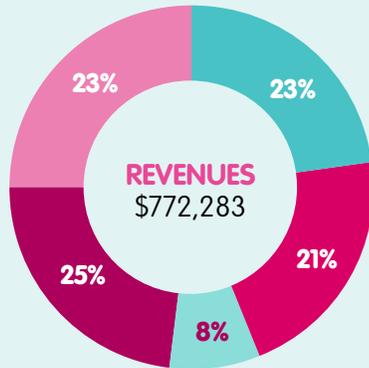
In 2020, we said goodbye to Craftathon, YouthLine's annual fundraiser where participants raised funds and attended a full day of crafting in central Toronto. To close off the event, we hosted a virtual craftathon in May 2020 with a small group of avid Craftathon attendees.

To meet the changing needs of YouthLine and our communities, we launched a pilot initiative called #Dare2Workshops, a series of entry-level workshops designed to teach the basics of a specific skill.

6 workshops held:



Financial Summary



- **Corporations & Foundations:** \$174,517
- **Provincial Funding:** \$158,640
- **City Funding:** \$65,314
- **Federal Grants:** \$178,350
- **Donations & Fundraising:** \$195,462

- **Programs & Volunteers:** \$62,865
- **Program-related Salaries:** \$305,659
- **Provincial Project:** \$146,714
- **Admin, Finance, & Governance:** \$176,262

Visit youthline.ca/reports for 2020/21 audit.

Our Funders



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



Women and Gender Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada



Group Donations

\$10,000+

Andree Rhéaume & Robert Fitzhenry Family Foundation
 Dawn Tattle Family Foundation
 Greenrock Charitable Trust
 TikTok
 Wawanesa

\$2,501 - \$5,000

Blackbaud
 Curiosa Inc.
 RBC (Various Branches)
 Society of United Professionals
 Tegan and Sara Foundation

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Accenture Canada
 Amazon Music
 CUPE Local 905
 ITV – Schitt's Creek
 Daddy O Doughnuts & British Baked Goods
 No Fixed Address Inc.
 Rogers
 REDLAB
 Seneca College
 Stantec Architecture Ltd.

Under \$1,000

Ada Support Inc.
 Architech
 Appeeling Ltd.
 Canadian Urban Institute
 Capital One Bank
 Children's Aid Society of Toronto
 Cole-Yoni Card Co.
 Embrace Yoga and Health
 Gowling WLG
 INVIVO Communications Inc
 Laurier Off-Campus University Students (LOCUS)
 Minto Pride Committee
 Nouveau Riche Vintage
 OSSTF District 12
 OSSTF District 21
 Playground Inc.
 The Lowidt Foundation
 Tinderbox
 Veeva
 Wysp Creative (Wysp Social Marketing Inc.)
 Yas Petit Poulet
 Youngs Insurance Brokers Inc.

Thanks you so much to all the individuals and families that donate to us! Your generosity during this difficult year has really allowed us to know our community has our back while we focused on support 2SLGBTQ+ youth.

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 27 years later.

We couldn't do this work without you so THANK YOU for supporting our work <3

We love the messages we get from our donors!

Here's a few...

“

On behalf of my daughter, who came out to me this year. I know that a lot of youth may not have the same support she does at home. Thank you for providing the support line.

”

“

Thank you for all that you do to support LGBTQ+ youth. ~ proud mom of a transgender son.

”

“

I wish this had existed as I was growing up! This is an amazing thing you are all doing.

”

“

Thank you for everything you do. Especially when we cannot come together this year, what you do is even more important. <3

”

Our Team

During a year like no other, we want to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of our Peer Support HelpLine volunteers, who made sure our lines remained open, and our alum, who came back to support the HelpLine when we needed them.

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 of our Peer Support volunteers, Youth Ambassadors, YouthOrganize volunteers, and committee volunteers.

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

Current Staff

Anika Tabovaradan

Program Assistant, Peer Support
Toronto

Caleb Wesley

Program Assistant, Peer Support
Toronto

Gabriel Marie Bacani

Manager, Leadership Programs
Toronto

Krissia Valiente

Administrative Assistant
Toronto

Saadia Khan

Communications Coordinator
Hamilton

Sreya Roy

Coordinator, YouthOrganize
Brampton

Ayan Ali

Coordinator, Peer Support
Ottawa

Dean Bere

Program Assistant, Peer Support
Toronto

Hayley Moody

Manager, Engagement & Partnerships
Owen Sound

Katrina Moffit-Pleasance

Coordinator, PYAP
North Bay

Shivanie Mahabir

Operations Specialist
Brampton

Vale Warren

Operations Coordinator
Toronto

Berkha Gupta

Executive Director
Mississauga

Destiny Pitters

Coordinator, PYAP
Brantford

Jack Lewis

Coordinator, YouthOrganize
Brampton

Minna Frederick

Manager, Peer Support
Toronto

Sierra Savedra

Coordinator, Online Learning
Toronto

Past Employees: Cameo Ferguson, Joan Rupram, Kiyani Booker, Rory Horton, Vincent So

Board of Directors

CURRENT

Aus Bahadur

Co-Chair

Cheyenne Diaz

David Yang

Secretary

Juan Garrido

Co-Chair

Natalie Elisha

Sylvan Tang

Treasurer

Yara Kodersshah

FORMER*

Adanyi Phillip

Adriana Chang

Khadijah Kanji

Markus Harwood-Jones

*Special thanks to Adanyi, Adriana, and Khadijah who are departing from our Board after six years.

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