



STRONG KIDS

YMCA
Strong Kids
Campaign



YMCA



Strong KIDS

At the YMCA, we believe by giving people the support they need, they can overcome challenges and find a brighter future through better health. But we also know it takes a community effort.

By working together we can build a stronger, safer, more vital community for everyone.

Over the years the Y's holistic approach to not only our physical health, but emotional, economic and social well being has helped thousands of families and individuals of all ages, at every stage of life.

People living on a low income face more barriers to good health and well being. These obstacles can be surmounted if they have access to the programs and services they need. Together, through our 'Strong Kids Campaign', we can ensure everyone, no matter what their circumstances, can benefit from a YMCA opportunity.

In 2007, 27% of Lambton, Kent & Huron County's children lived in families with household incomes that fell below the poverty line...19% of seniors lived in poverty.

- Ipsos Reid

Our goal in 2010 is to build support for children, youth, adults, seniors and families in our communities who otherwise would not be able to participate in all the YMCA has to offer.

Funds raised from our Annual 'Strong Kids Campaign' provide financial assistance to individuals in need and support YMCA programs that strengthen the community where the funds were raised.



BUILD Strong KIDS

Together we can nurture self-esteem, support values and create smiles:

- \$400 gives a child with limited opportunities the chance to experience two weeks at a YMCA Summer Camp.
- \$650 allows a brother and a sister to join a school-age child care program for a month.
- \$665 means two young teens can spend a year getting fit and more active.

Your donation could also support programs such as the YMCA Resource House Breakfast Club, or Youth Recreation and Sports Program.

Experiences until age six have the most important influence of any time in the life cycle. Positive stimulation early in life improves learning, behaviour and health in adulthood.

- Public Health Agency of Canada



Strong YOUTH

Together we can build confidence, foster resiliency and nurture positive identity:

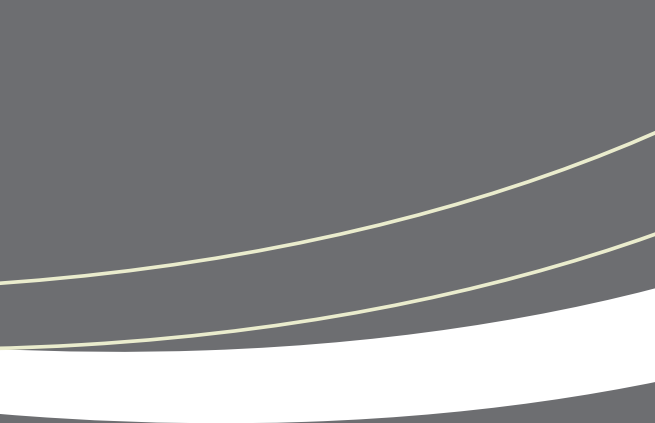
- \$100 provides the opportunity for youth in Guatemala to participate in one of five sports and recreation programs as part of YMCA International Development initiatives.
- \$300 helps to prepare a youth to enter the workforce through a series of life skill workshops.
- \$250 allows 2 youth to participate in our youth recreation and sports program (YRASP), learn valuable skills, and be more active. At publication date, more than 100 youth are currently on the waiting list to participate.
- \$500 provides breakfast for a week to 90 local children located who use the services provided by the YMCA Resource Houses.

Your donation also supports youth-oriented programs and initiatives such as the YMCA Power of Peace event and employment preparedness programs.

The YMCA provides positive experiences and strong adult role models that help young people learn how to make the right choices. At our membership centres youth participate in sports leagues, teen activities and leadership development programs, - healthy alternatives to 'just hanging out' or engaging in risky behaviour.

Our YMCA REACH & READY programs also provide leadership and employment training to develop a sense of responsibility and prepare youth to enter the workforce. Our language and settlement programs target groups at risk, by easing adjustment difficulties for new immigrant youth and their families, by matching them with Canadian families, and providing numerous settlement supports. Through our YMCA Power of Peace Programs, young people learn more about diversity, global issues and the importance of taking action. Internationally, we support youth at the YMCA of Guatemala in education and recreation programs.

GROW



The YMCA promotes personal growth, instills positive values and enhances self-esteem in children; qualities that are the building blocks for a successful future. YMCA licensed child care and early learning experiences support school readiness and healthy development. Older children benefit from before-and-after school care that encourages literacy skills, academic success and constructive use of time.



Day camps, sports leagues and recreational programs at our YMCA membership centres provide opportunities for healthy activity, lowering the risk of obesity and other chronic health issues. Through our camp programs, children take part in experiences that develop confidence, build strong relationships and create an appreciation for active living.



Physical activity and recreation play a role in fostering resiliency by creating better interaction with family and peers and the ability to build self-confidence. High self-esteem can buffer young people against adverse influences such as substance abuse and delinquent behaviour.



-Public Health Agency of Canada

Strong FAMILIES

At the YMCA, parents find caring support and resources to help them in their most important job: raising a healthy family. The safe, nurturing environment of our child care programs provide peace of mind for parents who are working, studying or juggling the multiple demands of family life.

Through family drop-ins and support services, they improve parenting skills, learn about community resources and discover paths to better health. Our YMCA programs help parents find meaningful employment, while our membership centres also contribute to strong, healthy families, connecting parents with their children and teens through activities they can all enjoy together.

High levels of family connectedness (where the young person feels cared for and understood) are associated with positive mental health.

-Canadian Institute of Child Health

Together, we can make connections, inspire hope and create better futures:

- \$850 pays for a month of toddler care for a single mother trying to enter the job market.
- \$1,500 gives a local family in need a one-year YMCA family membership so they can build health and togetherness.

Your donation also supports YMCA Community Houses in low-income areas that support children and pre-teens in their development.



STRONG COMMUNITIES

Together we can enhance well-being, counter isolation and improve lives:

- \$300 allows a low-income mother and her newborn to access an aquatics fitness program together for one year.
- \$125 gives an adult recovering from mid-life stroke three months of rehabilitation at the YMCA.
- \$750 provides one year of cardiac rehabilitation among friends for a local senior living alone on one pension.

Your donation can also help subsidize membership fees for programs such as the YMCA Cardiac Rehabilitation Program.

Aging is not synonymous with poor health. Active living and the provision of opportunities for lifelong learning may be particularly important for maintaining health and cognitive capacity in old age.

-Public Health Agency of Canada

YMCA health and wellness programs improve the quality of life for people of all stages and levels of abilities. The benefits are perhaps appreciated even more by those who need help the most: a single parent recovering from a workplace injury, a young mother finding relief from multiple sclerosis at her YMCA Creating Balance class, a grandfather learning how to manage his heart disease through the YMCA Cardiac Rehabilitation program.

A sense of well-being is enhanced through connections made with others in their classes or by volunteering at the YMCA. By reducing the isolation experienced by many in our society, particularly seniors, newcomers and people with disabilities, the YMCA contributes to a vital, healthy community.





BOARD OF DIRECTORS PLEDGE

Our team is aligned and committed to the success of the 2010 YMCA Strong Kids Campaign. We will help to lead the campaign through our personal gifts, and our active participation in the exciting and meaningful YMCA Strong Kids activities across our Association.

We will reach out to our communities as storytellers and ambassadors, seeking their support and investment. Together we will make certain we do all we can to ensure every kid can be a YMCA Strong Kid.

We and the entire Board of Directors commit to building Strong Kids. The children and youth of our community need and deserve the YMCA.

Jim Loyer
Chair-Board of Directors
YMCA of Chatham-Kent

Chris Thomas
Chair-Board of Directors
YMCA of Sarnia-Lambton

The Strong Kids Campaign is a powerful tool for engagement of YMCA volunteers and staff who communicate the story of the YMCA, solicit support for the programs, and lend assistance to those who need it in order to participate and benefit from their YMCA.

In 2010 we have forecast the need to be even greater than in years past. Challenging economic times, unemployment, and increasing pressures on parents, families and kids continue to mount. In challenging times like these our ability to source support for kids and their families becomes a growing priority.

Please make a personal gift to your local YMCA's Strong Kids Campaign today.

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