**Welcome To O-YA**

Thank you for volunteering with O-YA! Your time and talents are MUCH appreciated, and we truly hope that you find your volunteer work at O-YA to be an interesting and rewarding experience.

This Volunteer Handbook was written to answer any questions you may have concerning O-YA and its Volunteer Policies. Please read it thoroughly. The Executive Director will respond to any questions you may have about it. This Volunteer Handbook may be consulted at any time on O-YA's website. The policies stated in this Handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of O-YA.

We wish you the best of luck and great success in your volunteer position, and hope that your relationship with O-YA will be a rewarding experience.

**Disclaimer**

All parts of this document are supplementary to applicable federal and provincial legislation. In the event of conflict, legislation shall prevail.

**O-YA History**

In 2001, a group of community minded rural residents lead by CROP (Citizens Restoring Osgoode Parks) began the process of building a youth centre that would target the needs of rural youth. CROP's vision was to establish a community based youth and family centre offering assistance to families and barrier-free access by teens to a safe gathering place, and a rich array of activities and services supporting their development as successful, independent adults and involved citizens.

For the next 5 years, the youth group met on Thursday nights in a small room in the Osgoode arena. The enthusiasm and participation of these youth was the deciding factor in searching out a new home and making O-YA a hub in the rural area. In February 2006, O-YA opened its doors in the newly refurbished old Fire Hall. It was a mission fraught with many battles, but the vision of O-YA withstood any objection and the job slated to be a half a million dollars was accomplished for $85,000. Over 300 volunteers participated in this project, and O-YA is now a shining example of how community collaboration and one vision can become a reality.

**About O-YA in 2012**

The Osgoode Youth Association (O-YA) is a non-profit youth centre located in the rural south Ottawa Village of Osgoode, Ontario.

O-YA provides unique, smart and fun programs, services and events for 7 - 18 year olds with a focus on healthy lifestyles (healthy eating & nutrition, physical fitness and mental health), adventure, education, leadership, skill building and community. O-YA's programs, events and services include a Teen Drop In for ages 11 - 18, the b.side youth cafe for ages 11 - 18, After School Homework Club, PD Day, Summer & March Break Camps for ages 7 - 12, fantastic all ages community events and community building fundraisers. O-YA is a safe and welcoming space where rural youth can feel a sense of belonging, enjoy socialization and experience opportunities otherwise available only in suburban and urban areas. We also offer a rewarding volunteer experience with fantastic opportunities for about 50 volunteers every year and employ many local young adults as Youth Workers.

The Osgoode Youth Association is a big part of what makes Osgoode a youth friendly place to live and raise a family.  
  
**O-YA is proud to offer:**  
  
Teen Drop In hours 4 - 5 days per week (ages 11 - 18)

The b.side youth cafe on Thursdays (ages 11 - 18)  
After School Homework Club (ages 7 - 12)  
PD Day, March Break and Summer Camps (ages 7 - 12)  
FUN Community Events (like the TEAMCOOK-OFF competition) open to all ages  
Fabulous Youth Workers (O-YA employs several local young adults)  
Wellness & Skills Workshops (like photography, mental health, yoga and more)  
Adventure! (such as our Kayak Expedition Day and Field Trips)  
Healthy Eating & Nutrition Education (for both Teens & Adults)  
Physical Fitness (like a Cross Country Ski and Learn to Run 5K Training Programs)  
Community Building Fundraisers (such as the 'Goode Run and the TEAMCOOK-OFF)  
Rewarding Volunteer Experience (Fantastic opportunities for almost 100 volunteers every year)  
Leadership Training (Summer Leadership Camps and more)

**O-YA Mission**

The Mission of the Osgoode Youth Association is to enrich the quality of life for youth ages 7 - 18 living in Osgoode Ward. We are dedicated to harnessing the immediate and wider community in delivering a rich variety of programs and services aimed at prevention, education and recreation; supporting young people in their development as successful, independent adults and involved citizens.

**O-YA Vision**

O-YA envisions every young person in Osgoode Village having access to programs and resources suited to their individual needs. Our teens will enjoy a safe place to gather and opportunities that contribute to their health, enjoyment and well being. In turn, youth will participate constructively in both the local and global community, ultimately growing to become contributing, successful adults. The Osgoode Youth Association will evolved as a community life source engaging in broad-based support and participation.

**O-YA's Governance Structure**

O-YA is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. O-YA's staff management, funding, daily operations and business management are the responsibility of the Executive Director. Most O-YA programming is organized by the Program Coordinator.

**O-YA Funding**

As a non-profit charity, O-YA's funding comes from many sources. These include: The United Way, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport, HRSDC's Canada Summer Jobs program, Rural Summer Jobs program, City of Ottawa, the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport, Osgoode Foodland, donations from community members, participant fees, b.side cafe revenue, O-YA fundraisers (ie: The Goode Run), donations from community fundraisers (ie: TEAMCOOK Pumpkin Giveaway, Osgoode Family Ball Tournament, Scrhoomfest Men's Night) and centre rental fees.

**General Volunteer Rules**

O-YA does not have an exhaustive list of volunteer rules. We have already outlined guidelines for appropriate conduct and attitudes, and expect you to check with the Executive Director if you are uncertain about engaging in any activity.

Cell Phones at O-YA

Please do not use your cell phone (to text, make / receive calls or use the Internet, etc.) while you are out 'on the floor' during a volunteer shift at O-YA. If you need to use your phone or answer a call / text, please do so only in the Youth Worker office.

Acceptable Activities While Working

The following activities are NOT acceptable while you are volunteering at O-YA:

* Reading a personal book
* Doing homework
* Extended or repeated talking on the phone (you may make / receive personal calls at O-YA, but please keep them brief)
* Cell phone use (please see above)
* Using the computer(s) for non-work related activities
* Bringing / using a personal laptop (unless you are doing O-YA work related activities)

All of these activities prevent you from what you are volunteering to do, which is interact with our participants. If you happen to be volunteering for part of a shift where there are no participants, please find something productive to do (such as organize the storage room, help clean up the Youth Worker office, organize a kitchen cupboard, organize book shelves, generate some programming ideas, etc.)

Smoking in the Workplace

O-YA is dedicated to providing a healthy, comfortable and productive work environment for our employees and volunteers.

Second-hand smoke is a known health hazard and will be treated in the same manner as any other health hazard, i.e., removal from the workplace so as not to place employees at risk. This goal can be achieved only through efforts to protect non-smokers and to help smokers adjust to restrictions on smoking.

Smoking will not be permitted in the workplace or on City of Ottawa or O-YA property.

The success of this policy will depend upon the thoughtfulness, consideration and co-operation of smokers and non-smokers. All employees share in the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing the policy. Any conflicts should be brought to your supervisor's attention and, if necessary, referred to the Executive Director for a final decision. In all cases, the right of the non-smoker to protect his or her health and comfort will take precedence over an employee's desire to smoke.

People who violate the smoking policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Substance Abuse

O-YA recognizes that substance abuse is a danger to the health and safety of its employees, volunteers and the public, and will try to ensure that the hazard is removed from the workplace.

Alcoholand illegal drugs are not permitted on O-YA property. Employees or volunteers under the influence of drugs or alcohol at work will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Employees or volunteers who report to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be sent home immediately. Alert your supervisor when you are taking any legitimate prescription or over-the-counter medication, and make your supervisor aware of any possible side effects that may hamper your performance, so that your work assignments may be adjusted.

Weather Days and The After School Homework Club

During the winter months, if there is an 'Inclement Weather' day for Ottawa-Carleton School Board Schools, O-YA's After School Homework Club will not run. If you have an After School volunteer shift scheduled on an Inclement Weather Day, that shift will be cancelled.

**Volunteer Conduct**

Absenteeism & Tardiness

O-YA expects all volunteers to assume responsibility for their attendance and promptness.

In the event that you will not be able to volunteer on a day / time that you have agreed to, please contact the Executive Director as soon as possible by phone at 613-826-0726 (please leave a message if the phone is not answered) or email at o-yacentre@rogers.com

**Confidentiality of Information**

Confidential information about O-YA, its customers, clients, suppliers, volunteers or employees should not be divulged to anyone other than persons who are authorized to receive such information. This policy applies to all O-YA employees, temporary employees and volunteers. When you are in doubt as to whether certain information is confidential, seek management approval before disclosing it to anyone.

All media questions should go through the Executive Director and/or Communications Representative on the Board of Directors

Confidential information pertaining to finances, private business activities and plans of O-YA is considered O-YA's property. Use of such information for personal advantage or private speculation is strictly forbidden.

Confidential information obtained as a result of employment with O-YA may not be used for furthering any private enterprise, or as a means of making personal gains. Use or disclosure of such information can result in civil or criminal penalties, both for the individuals involved and for O-YA.

In the course of any volunteer job, you may become aware of personal and confidential information.

O-YA depends on the maturity and loyalty of each volunteer to keep private any such information and to keep confidential any personal matters discussed. Breach of the duty of confidence is a serious matter and may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

**Personal Belongings**

O-YA values your personal belongings! As a lot of thefts are 'crimes of opportunity' - so let's not give anyone to opportunity to steal from you. Any personal items you bring to O-YA with you must be kept OUT OF SITE in the Youth Worker office. This means that purses, cell phones, wallets, etc. should be stored either in a desk drawer or hidden behind / under the desk. If you are particularly concerned about the safety of your personal belongings, you are welcome to lock things in the cleaning closet between the 2 bathrooms (ask any staff person for assistance).

**Personal Appearance**

O-YA believes that the success of our organization is determined in part by establishing and maintaining a proper business atmosphere. You are, therefore, expected to dress in a manner consistent with the nature of your volunteer work.

Dress Code

O-YA encourages volunteers to dress in a 'nice casual' but professional manner, while still respecting your own individual sense of style. For example, nice yoga pants or jeans and a t-shirt / sweater are appropriate where as PJS's / track / sweat pants are not. Please do not wear clothing that is ripped, torn or stained. Short skirts / shorts and low cut / revealing tops are not acceptable. If you are unclear about what is acceptable attire, please ask the Executive Director for clarification.

Piercings & Tattoos

Staff with visible body piercings (other than in your ears) or tattoos should discuss what is appropriate with the Executive Director.

**Non-Discrimination**

Individuals have the right to be treated with respect in their volunteer workplace. O-YA, in exercising its responsibility as the employer, will endeavor at all times to provide a work environment that supports both productivity and the personal goals, dignity and self-esteem of every person.

O-YA will not itself discriminate, and we will not tolerate discrimination by our employees, against any employee, volunteer or job applicant on the protected grounds of race, colour, religion or creed, sex, age, disability, national origin, language, political belief, criminal record, pregnancy, marital or family status, sexual orientation, or any other ground prescribed by any law that applies to O-YA. "Discrimination" means any action or inaction that differentiates between employees, imposes a disadvantage, or withholds an advantage on the basis of a protected ground. This policy applies to hiring, training, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, leaves of absence, and compensation.

The responsibility for creating and maintaining a positive work and volunteer environment rests with all of us. In addition to avoiding discrimination, O-YA will not, and employees and volunteers should not, condone behaviour in the workplace that is likely to undermine work relationships or productivity. Everyone is expected to recognize and refrain from actions that offend, embarrass or humiliate others, whether deliberate or not.

Management has a responsibility to respond immediately to stop any activity in the workplace that undermines this policy, whether or not there has been a complaint. Employees and volunteers have an equal responsibility not to be frivolous or vindictive in making accusations. Inaction on the part of any individual may result in disciplinary action. Please refer to the "Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure" and "Complaint Resolution Procedure" sections of this manual for more information.

**General, Violence and Sexual Harassment**

All of O-YA's employees, contractors, students, volunteers and visitors are entitled to be treated with dignity, free from harassment based on the protected grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion, age, marital or family status, sexual orientation, disability, or any other ground prescribed by any law that applies to O-YA.

O-YA accepts the obligation to provide a healthy, safe work environment. We recognize that workplace violence is a health and safety issue and we are committed to providing a violence-free environment. In support of this philosophy, it is essential that everyone work in collaboration to recognize, manage and prevent acts of workplace violence.

Violence is any act of aggression, verbal assault, physical assault, or threat in the workplace. Acts of workplace violence will not be tolerated.

"General harassment" is any unwelcome behaviour, conduct or communication directed at an individual that is offensive to that individual and is based on any of the protected grounds. It may be persistent or sporadic and creates an intimidating, offensive or embarrassing work environment.

"Sexual harassment" is any offensive sexual comment, gesture, physical contact or demand for sexual favours, real or perceived, that is deliberate and unwelcome, or that should be known to be unwelcome. It creates an intimidating, offensive or embarrassing work environment.

Among the behaviours that may constitute harassment are:

* differential treatment of employees or co-workers based on race, gender, ethnicity, etc.;
* racist or sexist humour;
* pornographic or other offensive materials displayed in the workplace;
* unwanted physical contact;
* a promise of better treatment in return for sexual favours; or
* implied or expressed threats for refusal of a sexual request

This policy applies to all persons and all activities on O-YA's premises, as well as all organization-sanctioned conferences, training seminars, travel and social events. If you feel you are being subjected to harassment, you should: make your objection clearly known to the offender and ask him or her to stop; prepare and maintain a written record of the dates, times, nature of the behavior and any witnesses; and report the behavior to the Executive Director.

O-YA will deal with the complaint, and the identity of the parties and the details of the complaint will be kept confidential.

Preventing harassment is everyone's responsibility. All staff are expected to act against harassment even without a complaint, and employees are expected to express their disapproval if they encounter harassing behavior.

A complainant is free, at any point, to pursue his or her complaint under the appropriate human rights law.

**Attitude & Conduct**

O-YA expects all volunteers to maintain a level of personal conduct that will not reflect negatively on themselves or on the credentials of O-YA. Volunteers whose conduct compromises the integrity of O-YA may face disciplinary measures and the possibility of dismissal.

No volunteer should act in any way that will diminish the credibility of any other volunteer, employee, supplier or other business contacts of O-YA.

O-YA expects all of its volunteers to be courteous at all times and to convey a friendly, approachable image to its participants, suppliers, customers and fellow employees. Whether it is a telephone call or personal meeting, you are O-YA to the person with whom you are conducting business. This same courteous attitude is also expected of you in dealing with your fellow employees.

Yelling, swearing, using insulting or abusive language and fighting are strictly forbidden in all work-related situations.

Social Media Policy

As a condition of volunteer employment, O-YA requires that all volunteers observe the following guidelines when referring to the O-YA’s programs, activities, participants and other employees, in a blog, on a social media outlet (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) or website.

* Volunteers must be respectful in all communications and blogs related to or referencing the

O-YA, its participants and/or other employees.

* Volunteers must not use obscenities, profanity or vulgar language.
* Volunteers must not use blogs or personal web sites to disparage O-YA, programs, participants, and/or other employees of O-YA.
* Volunteers must not use blogs or personal web sites to harass, bully or intimidate other employees, volunteers or program participants. Behaviours that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, colour, or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating or demeaning comments and threats to stalk, haze, or
* physically injure another volunteer, employee or participant.
* Volunteers must not use blogs or personal web sites to discuss engaging in conduct that is prohibited by association policies including, but not limited to, the use of alcohol and drugs, sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, bullying and illegal activities.
* Volunteers must not post pictures of participants, visitors and/or other employees or volunteers on a web site without obtaining their written permission.

The use of O-YA’s name and/or logo is not allowed without written permission from the Executive Director.

Any volunteer found to be in violation of any portion of this Social Media Policy will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination and / or criminal charges.

**Police Records Checks**

Police Record Checks are only required for volunteers over the age of 18 who will be engaging in long-term volunteer work at O-YA. The Executive Director will discuss this process in person with those to whom the policy applies.

Obtaining Police Record Check

The out-of-pocket cost of a Police Record Check is the responsibility of the applicant, but the applicant will be reimbursed on O-YA's next scheduled pay period when a receipt for the cost of the PRC is presented to the Executive Director.

*To apply for a Police Records Check, you must go to any one of the following police stations:*

Kanata (95 Abbeyhill Road); please call for hours

Leitrim (4561 Bank Street); please call for hours

Nepean (245 Greenbank Road); please call for hours

Orleans (3343 St. Joseph Blvd.; at 10th Line); please call for hours

Ottawa (474 Elgin Street); 24 hours a day; 7 days a week

You may visit the following website to obtain an application for a Police Records Check for service with the vulnerable sector, and what pieces of ID you will be required to produce:

*http://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/serving\_ottawa/support\_units/pdf/police\_records\_check.pdf*