



# 2021 Annual Report



# O-YA in 2021

## About O-YA

The Mission of the Osgoode Youth Association is to enrich the quality of life for youth in Grades 2 - 12 in rural south Ottawa. We are dedicated to harnessing our community to deliver a rich variety of programs aimed at social recreation, skill building, leadership, mental health, healthy relationships, physical activity and culture; supporting young people in their development as successful, independent and involved citizens. Mayor Watson calls O-YA the “gold standard of youth centres in Ottawa”! Proud to offer:

Before School Program & After School Homework Club (*Grades 2 - 6*)

Day Camps (*Grades 2 - 6*)

Teen Drop In & Teen Programs (*Grades 7 - 12*)

Teen Leadership & Youth Advisory Committee (*Grades 7 - 12*)

Community Events (*All ages*)

## Partner Agencies & Networks

- The City of Ottawa
- United Way Ottawa
- CHEO's Youth Net
- CHEO's Kids Come First Health Team
- The Ottawa Child & Youth Initiative (OCYI) & The Critical Hours Task Group
- Rural Issues Committee (RIC)
- NROCRC (Nepean, Rideau and Osgoode Community Resource Centre)
- WOCCRC (Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre)
- Orleans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre
- Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre
- South Nepean Satellite Community Health Centre
- YOMA (Youth of Manotick Association)
- ROYMHC (Rural Ottawa Youth Mental Health Collective)
- OVCA (Osgoode Village Community Association)
- OWBA (Osgoode Ward Business Association)
- Ottawa City Councillor George Darouze
- Ottawa Public Health
- Community Development Framework (CDF)
- Ottawa Community Foundation
- Suicide Prevention Network
- Vibration Studios
- Ottawa Police Service
- PLEO (Parents Lifeline of Eastern Ontario)

# Who is O-YA?



## **Board of Directors**

O-YA is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. In 2021, O-YA's Board of Directors included: Jeff Griesbach (Board Chair), Leah Hostetler (Treasurer), Steve Johnson (Director), Lynne Whitehead (Director) and Michelle Colford (Secretary) .

## **Executive Director**

O-YA's Executive Director is Nicole McKerracher. Nicole has been O-YA's Executive Director since March of 2011, and employed at O-YA since 2008. She lives in Osgoode with her husband, 2 teenage sons and rescue German Shepherds Georgia & Nala. Nicole is a graduate of Simon Fraser University with a Psychology major / Criminology Minor and a graduate of the Loyalist College of Arts & Technology's Advertising program. Before coming to O-YA, Nicole was Creative Director of *they integrated* in Belleville, Ontario for 10 years.

## **Program Coordinator**

Carley Scharf has been employed as a Youth Worker at O-YA since 2011, and was a loyal participant and volunteer for years before that! Carley has worked as O-YA's Program Coordinator since 2013. In 2021, Carley also worked on an Osgoode Community Development Framework project for NROCRC (Nepean, Rideau, Osgoode Community Resource Centre).

## **Youth Workers**

The face, heart, soul and personality of O-YA - we are so proud of our fantastic Youth Workers! In 2021, O-YA employed 8 young adults as Youth Workers: Carley Scharf (also O-YA's Program Coordinator), Lindsay Adams, Emily Dozois, Joe Nesrallah, Elliot Desroches, Keegan Kilfoil and Jenna Baker. O-YA also welcomed placement student Carrie Sheldrick from Durham College's Social Service Worker program.

## **Annual Report Photography**

All of the amazing photographs in O-YA's 2021 Annual Report were taken by Youth Worker Emily Dozois, owner of Emily Dozois Photography.



# Volunteers & Participants



## Community Volunteers

In 2021, O-YA was very grateful for the time and talents of **40 volunteers**

## Who Comes to O-YA?

In 2021, **346 unique individuals** visited O-YA. Specifically, O-YA had:

- 22 unique participants registered in our Before Breakfast Club & After School Homework Club
- 15 unique participants attended our Day Programs; such as PD Day, Summer Camp and Winter Break
- 151 participants attended our Teen Programs
- 158 participants attended our Haunted Trail event

# Funding for O-YA

## O-YA's 2021 Financials

In 2021, The Osgoode Youth Association had total revenues of \$274,526 and total expenses of \$294,873.

### O-YA's 2021 Income:

- **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS); \$58,902**
- **City of Ottawa** (Renewable Recreation Funding; \$38,383 & Councillor Darouze Christmas Events; \$500); **\$38,883**
- **O-YA's Revenue Generating Programs; \$34,576**
- **Ottawa Community Foundation** (Gallery C. & World Kitchen); **\$16,970**
- **United Way** (After School Club funding); **\$15,000**
- **EDSC** (Canada Summer Jobs); **\$15,594**
- **O-YA Community Donations; \$6,445**
- **Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries** (After School Homework Club); **\$19,360**
- **Innoweave** (Rural Ottawa Youth Mental Health Collective); **\$57,728**
- **NROCRC** (rural youth mental health counsellor); **\$6,069**
- **Bell Let's Talk; \$2,400**
- **Fundriasing; \$2,249**
- **Rentals; \$350**

### O-YA's 2021 Expenses:

- **Staffing; \$184,868**
- **ROYMHC Launch Grant; \$48,979**
- **Program Supplies; \$26,412**
- **Office Administration & Auditing Fees; \$21,188**
- **Renovation and depreciation; \$5,694**
- **Fundraising, mileage & volunteer reward; \$5,468**
- **Insurance; \$2,261**



**Soft Cream Candy**

**5 Apps for Self-Care**

**These Spiky Acupressure Ring "Self-Care" Fidget Spinners - Like**

**Stained Glass Candle Holder**

**Step 1: Cut craft tissue paper into squares**

**Step 2: Add glue to part of your glass**

**Step 3: Add tissue squares onto the votive glass**

**Step 4: Allow the candle to dry, then add a tea light**

**YOU NEED THIS TOGETHER!**

**Q-YA**

**Let's get bright!**

**AVOCADO**

# O-YA 2021 Programs & Events

## COVID-19

COVID-19 wasn't done with O-YA in 2021!

From Red Level lockdowns with Stay at Home Orders in January to Orange Level restrictions in February (where only our Before and After School programs could operate on a reduced capacity), back to Red in March a White Level Emergency Break and more Stay at Home Orders in April - June and lockdown restrictions all summer to a partial re-opening in September O-YA saw it all in 2021.

Programs at times felt like an slippery bouncing ball; opening, closing, opening with restrictions and then closing again. Program revenues were down in some categories, but up in others. Public health restrictions changed, changed again, modified - and for the first time, vaccines were mandated for staff, volunteers and participants. It was a struggle to keep up with what was allowed, what was safe and what O-YA felt provided the best environment for staff, volunteers and participants.

Throughout it all, O-YA staff were the glue that held everything together. We are all getting tired of the word pivoting, but this is exactly what they did - time and time again. Can't host teen program in person? No problem, we can host creative, unique and engaging programs virtually (that were looked to as a best practice from many partner agencies). Before and After School programs closed for months on end? No problem, we can make and share YouTube videos, deliver activity kits and share Carley's much loved homemade baking with our students through countless porch deliveries. Opening programs, but 1,000 measures in place? No problem, we can figure this out. Re-opening Teen Drop In after months of closures and not sure how many participants we might get? No problem, we'll run a Friday Dinner series - and sell out almost every single night. We have learned and grown as a team during 2021, and are going into 2022 stronger than ever!

## Programs for Youth in Grades 2 - 6

### **Before School Program**

*Daily during the school year from 6:30 am - bus pick up; In Person (when possible)*

### **After School Homework Club**

**(Funded in part by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries)**

*Daily during the school year from 2:45 pm - 5:30 pm. In Person (when possible)*

Fantastic research based programming that focuses on homework help, physical activity, healthy eating, positive relationships and FUN! In 2021, O-YA's After School program had capacity limits of 10 - 12 participants to comply with physical distancing restrictions. Students were assigned their own desks and most indoor activities were done from those desks, with individual supply bins and no sharing of supplies or food. Feature activities included lots of outdoor free time, creative group games that we could play with physical distancing like Pool Noodle Tag, healthy snack, homework time with assistance from volunteers and Youth Workers, crafts, wellness activities and 'Mindful Mondays' led by Lindsay.

### **Pokemon Go**

*October & November 2021 (Grades 2 - 6) In person*

O-YA called participants to come to O-YA to play Pokémon GO with other kids in Osgoode, chat about Pokémon, bring their cards, colouring pages and EVERYTHING Pokémon. O-YA is a gym, with two near by poke stops and we've got free Wi-Fi! Participant could hang out with other Pokémon GO players, participate in raids, battles and trades. Youth were also invited to bring their Pokémon cards to show off, however O-YA had a strict no trading policy.

# O-YA Programs & Events Cont.

## **Day Camps**

*Winter Break, PA Days and Summer Camp (1 week in each of July and August); In person*  
Outdoor play, physical activity, group games, crafts, cooking, free time, themed activities and much more.

## **Programs for Youth in Grades 7 - 12**

### **Teen Drop In**

*Tuesdays and Thursdays (5:30 pm - 9 pm) and Fridays (5:30 pm - 10 pm); In Person*  
A safe and welcoming space for local teens to relax, meet friends, socialize and benefit from the mentorship of O-YA Youth Workers. Teen Drop In in 2021 was a combination of virtual and limited capacity in person programming with COVID-19 restrictions and mandates in place.

### **Youth Mental Health Counsellor**

**(In partnership with Nepean, Rideau, Osgoode Community Resource Centre ; NROCRC)**

*Started March 11, 2021*

Through a grant from United Way, NROCRC was able to hire a youth mental health counsellor (Tara Taylor) to serve youth ages 12 - 18 in NROCRC's rural catchment area. Although this service was initially planned to take place in person, COVID-19 had other plans for us. Tara's counselling appointments were conducted virtually, although clients were able to use the renovated counselling room at O-YA for their virtual appointments. This program was very successful! Counselling appointments were generally full, and we ended 2021 with a small Waiting List. Tara was also able to attend several virtual O-YA programs that featured mental health / wellness as a support. These were great relationship building opportunities for Tara and our rural youth - several appointments were booked directly as a result of this partnership. This program was funded through United Way until February 2022. At the time of writing this Annual Report, NROCRC received a new grant from Ottawa Community Foundation to continue a rural youth mental health counselling service for an additional 6 months - at which time we will re-apply for United Way funding.

### **Baking Zoom**

*April & June 2021*

This virtual program was so popular, we hosted it twice! Participants were invited to hang out Thursday evenings with O-YA Youth Workers Carley, Jenna and Emily and bake some sweet treats. Youth Workers porch delivered ingredients to program participants for each week. In the first round, we baked: Classic Banana Bread, Cinnamon Roll Cake, The Best Brownies, Mini Oreo Cheesecakes and M&M Cookies. In the second round, we baked: Blueberry Muffins, S'mores Cookie Bars, Cherry Cheesecake and Cinnamon Bread.

### **Subscription Boxes**

*April, May & June 2021*

While O-YA was closed for in-person programs due to the Ontario Stay at Home Order, we brought some of the O-YA fun to participants! When Kids & Teens signed up for one of Subscription Boxes, O-YA staff will porch deliver a box full of surprises right to their porches every 2 weeks.

Subscription Boxes for Kids included: stickers, 2 craft activities, 1 outdoor activity, a challenge card, a fitness calendar, Carley's homemade baking and the chance to find flat peter!

Subscription Box for Teens included: self-care activity, fitness calendar, a craft and a cool treat you can't easily get from Osgoode.



# O-YA Programs & Events Cont.

## **Virtual Paint Nite**

*May 2021; virtual*

O-YA porch delivered canvases and paint for participants to virtually participate in 2 Paint Nites in May of 2021.

## **Gallery C.**

**(Funded by Ottawa Community Foundation)**

*January - June, 2021; virtual and in person (outdoors)*

Teaching rural Ottawa youth Mixed Media Painting, Cartooning, Basic Photography Skills, Enhancing Photos Through Photoshop and an Introduction to Special Effects makeup / Body Art.

## **Rocket League E-Sports Tournament**

*May, June & July, 2021; Virtual*

Esports are organized, multiplayer video game competitions, played individually or as part of a team. O-YA's first e-sports event was played in teams of 3. The game O-YA teams played is called Rocket League, which is a free online multiplayer vehicular soccer video game developed and published by Psyonix. Described as "soccer, but with rocket-powered cars," Rocket League involves two teams that use rocket-powered vehicles to hit a ball into their opponent's goal and score points over the course of a match.

## **Fitness & Fuel**

*June 2021; virtual*

Participants were invited to join O-YA for our newest health and fitness program where we focused on enhancing our physical health through nutrition and exercise. Each week O-YA staff porch dropped off ingredients to create quick homemade sports drinks and snacks and then spent 30 - 45 minutes doing a combination of weight lifting and cardio training. Weekly topics included: Homemade Gatorade & Blueberry Yogurt Protein Bites, Lemon and Hibiscus Sports Drink & Homemade Energy Balls, Coconut Lime Sports Drink & Homemade Protein Granola and Orange Twist Sports Drink & Apple Protein Bars.

## **World Kitchen**

**(Funded by Ottawa Community Foundation)**

*July & August 2021; virtual*

O-YA was very excited to host our brand new World Kitchen program where youth in Grades 7 - 12 learned to cook exciting dishes from Italy, Russia, Austria, Thailand, England and Argentina. O-YA Youth Workers porch delivered all the ingredients needed for participants to make a delicious and unique dinner - AND serve dinner to their family as well! Each week, we also had great discussions about our theme country and learned a little bit about that region and culture. The dishes we made together included: Italy (Homemade Pasta & Sauce), Russia (Beef and Onion Piroshki), Austria (Apple Strudel), Thailand (Pad Thai), England (Oven Baked Fish & Chips) and Argentina (Beef & Chorizo Empanadas).

## **Summer Programming**

*Summer 2021; virtual and in person (outdoors)*

The summer of 2021 consisted of a combination of Stay at Home Orders and Lockdown restrictions, which prevented most in-person programming. Instead of closing completely, O-YA Youth Workers got creative and designed a whole summer of popular virtual programming. This included: Summer DIY, e-sports tournament, Minecraft Building Challenge, Day of Discovery, Baking Party, Learn Something New and Virtual Teen Hangout. Once restrictions lifted a bit, and some in person gathering (outdoors) was allowed, O-YA added a series of Patio Parties and Park Pop Up events in Osgoode and Greely Skateparks.

# O-YA Programs & Events Cont.

## **Happy Minds**

*Thursday October 21, 28, November 4, 11, 18, 25, 2021; virtual*

**(Made possible by a partnership with NROCRC and funding from rural CDF funding)**

Happy Minds was a 6 week program for youth in Grades 7 - 12. Each evening included a special snack, a workshop and a fun activity. Workshops included: Understanding Mental Illness & Stigma, Stress and Anxiety, Positive Lifestyles, Confidence Building, Media & Body Image, Healthy Relationships and Helping Someone With Mental Health Concerns. NROCRC's rural Ottawa youth mental health counsellor was able to be an integral part of this program, which helped youth participants for a relationship with their local counsellor.

## **Haunted Trail**

*October 2021; in person outdoors*

O-YA's Haunted Trail was back in 2021! Planned and run by O-YA's Youth Advisory Committee, Haunted Trail was a guided spooky walk down Osgoode's Multiuse Pathway (with lots of scary adventures along the way!). Participant's experience began around a crackling fire bowl in the Skatepark at O-YA. Then, they were led down the trail and into Taylor Park with hair-raising frights and delights along the way. Guests (of all ages) could register individually or as a group (of up to 10 participants per time slot).

## **Gift of DIY**

*December 2, 9 & 16, 2021; in person with restrictions*

A three week series of Christmas DIY's! Project included: making Christmas farmhouse sign and Christmas ornaments, making gifts out of mason jars and gifts that can go in mason jars and making no bake recipes to share with loved ones.

## **Renovated Youth Mental Health Counsellor Room**

In order to make space for the youth mental health counsellor mentioned above, O-YA converted our back boardroom into a comfortable and welcoming youth mental health counsellor room. In 2021, rural youth were asked what aspects of a mental health counsellor would most help them get the mental health support they need. They are looking for 1) privacy, 2) a comfortable and welcoming space, 3) no cost to clients, 4) professional mental health assessment, 5) located close to where rural youth live, 6) access without parent consent and 7) in person services.

We think O-YA's new counselling service checks all the boxes! The counselling room is private (there are curtains and / or shutters on all the windows) and the door to access counselling is at the side of O-YA (you do not have to walk through programs to get to your appointment). We worked hard to make this space as comfortable and welcoming as possible (check out the pictures below, we hope you'll agree!), the service is free for rural Ottawa youth, Tara can provide a professional mental health assessment, we are located in a rural Ottawa village and youth can make counselling appointments without parent consent. COVID is interfering with our ability to offer in person services at the moment - but they are coming when it's safe to do so!

## **'Made with Love' Mason Jar Fundraiser**

You read above how O-YA created the perfect rural youth mental health counselling room for in person counselling sessions. To help cover the cost of transforming O-YA's boardroom into a counselling room, O-YA hosted a virtual fundraiser. We felt like the joy of knowing donations helped cover the cost of O-YA's youth mental health counselling room was a great reward! But, we wanted to make donating even more special. Youth in the Osgoode Ward community custom painted unique and beautiful designs onto mason jars. With every \$30 donation, O-YA delivered one of these special pieces of functional art right to people's doorsteps.

# O-YA Community Programs

## Community Programs & Events

### Rural Ottawa Youth Mental Health Collective

#### (funded by Innoweave Youth CI)

Concerns have been raised that youth in rural Ottawa are facing a serious gap in accessible and consistent mental health support, education and service. In order to address these issues, and spearheaded by O-YA, a group of rural Ottawa youth serving agencies are undertaking a Collective Impact project. This group is the Rural Ottawa Youth Mental Health Collective. The Collective's intended long term impact is that: By 2024, 30% of rural Ottawa youth get the mental health support they need. The target population for our project is youth (ages 12 – 24) living in Ottawa's rural Wards (Osgoode, West Carleton, Rideau-Goulbourn & Cumberland) and their circle of care.

The Rural Ottawa Youth Mental Health Collective is comprised of: Osgoode Youth Association (O-YA); backbone organization, Youth of Manotick Association (YOMA), Youth Net; CHEO, Ottawa Child & Youth Initiative (OCYI), Ottawa Police Service, City of Ottawa; Rural Affairs, Youth Mental Health Counselor, Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (WOCRC), Nepean, Rideau, Osgoode Community Resource Centre (NROCRC), South Nepean Satellite Community Health Centre, Orleans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre, Parents Lifeline of Eastern Ontario (PLEO) and Youth with Lived Experience.

In 2021, O-YA was the backbone organization for the ROYMHC's Launch Grant phase. During the Launch Grant phase, The ROYMHC progressed in the following 5 areas:

1. Creating a dedicated ROYMHC resource website. The ROYMHC created, from scratch, two websites (English: [www.ruralottawayouth.ca](http://www.ruralottawayouth.ca) and French: [www.jeunesseruraleottawa.ca](http://www.jeunesseruraleottawa.ca)) containing mental health resources available for rural Ottawa youth. These websites feature our own bespoke gallery of rural Ottawa photography. Both websites include information about Crisis Supports, Help in Your Area (curated mental health resource lists broken down by each of Ottawa's 4 rural serving Wards), Know When to Get Help (created by CHEO's Kids Come First Health Team), Apps to Try, information about our Youth Advisory Council, and general information / history about the ROYMHC.
2. Growing and promoting ROYMHC social media pages. The ROYMHC established two very successful social media platforms as a means of sharing mental health and wellness information and providing mental health resources relevant to and available for rural Ottawa youth. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RuralOttawaYouth> and Instagram: @RuralOttawaYouth.
3. Working with CHEO's Youth Net program to support and grow their existing program of school based mental health workshops to include more rural schools. In the City of Ottawa, there are 23 schools that serve rural students. Prior to the inception of the ROYMHC, Youth Net gave school based presentation on mental health and wellness to just 3 of those schools. With Launch Grant funding, Youth Net was able to increase these presentations to an amazing 16 schools - over 50 rural presentations in total. With the extension of our Launch Grant funding into 2022, Youth Net will be able to reach even more schools during this calendar year and will likely hit very close to all 23.
4. Creating shared evaluations to assess how much impact the above activities have on supporting mental health of rural Ottawa youth. During the Launch Grant phase, ROYMHC created a shared Survey Monkey tool for evaluation partner workshops on mental health and wellness programs. We were able to test this survey during the Launch Grant phase of our project, but are excited to roll it out in full during Execution Grant. As part of the Execution Grant, ROYMHC is also looking forward to repeating our larger survey assessing the mental health support needs of rural Ottawa youth originally administered in 2020. During the Launch Grant phase, ROYMHC also paid close attention to our website and social media analytics.
5. Grow and support the ROYMHC's Youth Advisory Council  
The ROYMHC's Youth Advisory is an integral part of our project's success. Our YAC is comprised of 6 youth (ages 12 - 24) who reside in rural Ottawa and have lived experience of accessing mental health

## O-YA Community Programs, cont.



resources from rural communities. The ROYMHC met monthly during the Launch Grant phase of our project. They were a strong sounding board for our project as we created our website, social media, map of rural Wards, evaluation plan and the process of realizing our full Theory of Change.

In February 2022, the ROYMHC applied to continue our project to the Execution Grant funding phase. The backbone organization functions will be taken over by the Nepean, Rideau, Osgoode Community Resource Centre (NROCRC).