

Shine On  Hamilton
Burlington
Brantford

Igniting Potential to Save Lives

YEAR TWO

170 YEARS

Igniting Potential Since 1856

2025 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



Message from the Chair, Board of Directors and President & CEO

Moments That Matter Life-saving work across our communities.

A young person stands a little taller after finding their voice. A parent finds stability when everything feels uncertain. An older adult walks into a room and is known by name.

In these moments, lives move from overwhelmed to supported, from isolated to connected. This is what removing barriers looks like. Quiet, personal, and life-saving.

In 2025, we deepened our commitment to The Y Saves Lives campaign. In its second year, this work focused on helping people overcome barriers to health, connection, and opportunity. Across Hamilton, Burlington, Brantford, Haliburton and Indigenous Communities, we saw what becomes possible when access is real and support is there when needed.

We continued to grow and build for the future. At YMCA Wanakita, ground was broken on the Wayne Perkins Leadership Centre, a project that will serve generations. In community, we expanded Back on Track by the YMCA in Hamilton (formerly the Alternative Suspension program), and opening a new Beyond the Bell® program in partnership with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, creating opportunities for children and youth to learn, connect, and thrive.

In Hamilton, we secured a \$25 million federal investment to support the future Hamilton Downtown Family YMCA. We are also advancing recovery through the opening of a new transitional housing program on the third floor of the Men's Residence. This

renewed approach to transitional housing brings coordinated, wraparound supports to those who need them most. We also prepared to open new doors across the city, including a child care centre on Arrowsmith Road, creating spaces where families can learn, work, and belong.

Growth matters because people need places to go and the services we provide in those places make a lasting impact on the lives of the people we serve.

This year marked a shift in how we understand that impact. We strengthened how we measure what matters, focusing on resilience in young people and a sense of belonging in seniors. We are learning not only how many people we reach, but what changes because they came through our doors.

Early signs are clear: when young people stay connected, confidence grows, and when seniors feel part of a community, health and well-being follow.

Guiding this work is our Strategic Plan 2024–2028, with a clear focus on young people, employees, and seniors – our Y.E.S. priorities. Every day, it comes to life through our staff, whose care, skill, and commitment create spaces where people feel welcomed, supported, and safe, often in moments that carry life-saving impact. This work is strengthened by community partners, volunteers, donors, and elected representatives across our regions, whose support helps expand access and deepen impact where it is needed most.

As we look ahead, our focus is simple: stay close to the people and communities we serve; strengthen what works; respond to what's needed; and, keep showing up in the moments that matter most.

There is more to build, more to learn, and more to do – together.



Paul Gibel

Paul Gibel
Chair, Board of Directors



Manny Figueiredo

Manny Figueiredo
President & CEO

BACK ROW (Left to Right):
Nicole Wagner, Marie-Claude Evangelista,
Manny Figueiredo, Phil Reddon, Rochelle Reid

FRONT ROW (Left to Right):
Alyssa Lai, Paul Gibel, Yohana Otite

*Not pictured: Rogerio Fonseca, Bailie
Kinrade, Danielle Law, Grace Mater,
Scott Rasmussen*

Officers of the Board of Directors

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Retired, Partner Grant Thornton

Marie-Claude Evangelista, Vice Chair
Vice-President, Strategic Initiatives
and Product Management,
Fairstone Bank

Yohana Otite, Vice Chair
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Equity Hamilton-Wentworth
District School Board

Alyssa Lai, Past Chair
Strategic Communications Professional

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Professor, Psychology and
Youth and Children's Studies,
Wilfrid Laurier University

Grace Mater
General Manager,
City of Hamilton

Scott Rasmussen
President, MedSpace Canada

Phil Reddon
Managing Partner,
Covington Capital Corporation

Rochelle Reid
Chief Health Equity Officer,
Hamilton Health Sciences

Dr. Nicole Wagner
Faculty member, DeGroote School
of Business, McMaster University

Demonstrating Our Impact

Putting Strategy Into Action Through the Annual Operating Plan

Annual Operating Plan (AOP) translates our 2024–2028 Strategic Plan into measurable action. It guides what programs we offer, how we allocate resources, and how we assess whether our work is creating meaningful change in people’s lives.

In 2025, the AOP sharpened our focus on three community-wide priorities, known as our Y.E.S. priorities:

Young People – Our Legacy and Future

Employees – Our Source of Sustainable Energy


Seniors – Our Commitment to Lifelong Health

Across all three priorities, we track not only how many people we reach, but also how our programs contribute to real outcomes.

Our Reach at a Glance 2025

These figures reflect the scale of the YMCA’s role as a community anchor, providing inclusive access to health, learning, leadership, and connection.

 **95,026** Community Members Engaged in Programs and Services

 **33,535** Enabled Access (through free, subsidized programming)

 **18,881** Participants from Priority Communities



From Reach to Results: Measuring Our Impact

Historically, YMCA impact reporting focused primarily on participation—how many people accessed programs or services. While reach remains essential, it does not tell the full story.

In 2025, we continued to evolve our approach by pairing participation data with outcome measurement, supported by clear Theories of Action that explain how our programs are expected to make a difference over time.

This shift allows us to:

- Strengthen programs using evidence, not assumptions
- Track progress consistently across the Association
- Hold ourselves accountable for outcomes, not just activity

Young People – Building Resilience

In 2025, we moved beyond tracking participation to measuring resilience as a core developmental outcome for young people.

Using a validated assessment tool, we began evaluating how YMCA programs help youth build confidence, coping skills, and the ability to adapt to challenges. Early results — including measurable resilience gains among participants in the YMCA Wanakita Student Counsellor Leadership Program — highlight the impact of programs rooted in strong relationships and sustained leadership development.

Employees – Strengthening Recognition and Well-Being

Through the YMCA WorkWell Employee Experience Survey, we tracked two core indicators: recognition and overall organizational health.

In 2025, the recognition score increased to **70**, from 69 in 2024. Overall organizational health remained steady at **77**, firmly within the healthy range. These results help us better understand how employees experience leadership, appreciation, and support, and directly guide actions to strengthen recognition practices, people-leader capability, and consistency across the Association.

Seniors – Fostering Belonging

For seniors, our outcome focus is belonging — feeling connected, valued, and included in YMCA programs and community life. In 2025, we used the YMCA Member Experience Survey to assess this through two key indicators: connection and feeling celebrated.

Results showed a connection score of **89** (strong range), and a celebration score of **79** (within the healthy range). These findings show that seniors feel a strong sense of connection to the YMCA community, with opportunity to continue strengthening recognition and opportunities for celebration.

Together, these measures deepen our understanding of healthy aging, recognizing that well-being is shaped not only by physical activity, but also by connection, belonging and quality of life.

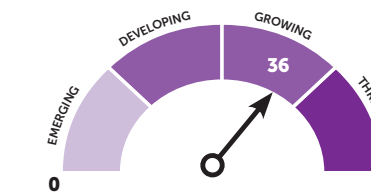
A Closer Look: Resilience at YMCA Wanakita

At YMCA Wanakita, we don’t just offer youth development—we measure it.

In 2025, participants in the Student Counsellor (SC) Leadership Program completed the Resilience Scale for Children™ at the beginning and end of their program experience, allowing us to track growth in resilience over time.

What we learned:

- 98 Student Counsellors completed both surveys
- Average resilience scores increased from **34.9** to **35.9**, moving from the developing to growing range
- Youth returning for a second year experienced the strongest gains, reinforcing the value of sustained leadership pathways



These results show that when young people take on real responsibility, build strong relationships, and grow through progressive leadership opportunities, resilience follows.

Why This Matters

By combining community reach with focused measurement, the YMCA strengthens accountability, improves programs, and ensures meaningful impact.

The Annual Operating Plan (AOP) uses insights to enhance delivery across locations and communities, serving as a bridge between vision and evidence — ensuring impact that is wide-reaching, meaningful, measurable, and lasting.

YMCA Beyond the Bell®

Creating Belonging, Building Confidence, and Closing the Achievement Gap

YMCA Beyond the Bell® is a donor-funded out-of-school program designed to close the achievement gap by supporting children's academic growth, social-emotional well-being, and confidence.

From September 2024 to September 2025, Beyond the Bell served **281** children and youth across Hamilton, Burlington, Brantford, Six Nations of the Grand River, and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation through after-school and summer programming. The program provides safe, structured spaces where children can build literacy and numeracy skills, participate in creative and physical activities, and strengthen their peer relationships.

Beyond the Bell's impact is rooted in strong community partnerships. Collaborations with school communities, libraries, post-secondary institutions, arts organizations, and local agencies bring new opportunities directly into program spaces. Literacy initiatives, math enrichment, chess clubs, arts and dance workshops, and culturally responsive programming reflect a shared commitment to ensuring learning is engaging, inclusive, and meaningful. These partnerships not only expand what children experience day-to-day, but help ensure programming reflects the unique strengths and needs of each community it serves.

At the heart of Beyond the Bell are the relationships between children, educators, and families. Program staff create environments where children feel safe to try, fail, and grow. One parent shared the difference they've seen since their child joined: "We have noticed a lot of positive

behaviour changes in our child since he started with Beyond the Bell. He is happier at home, has lots of stories to tell us about the program, and finally has made some friends in the program, which has been really hard for him to do in school. He loves the staff members and I think that they have been a great influence on him."

"I saw quiet children find their voices, and reluctant readers discover joy in stories."

Creative initiatives also bring learning to life. At Six Nations of the Grand River I.L. Thomas, the Reading Fruit Tree Initiative turned literacy into a shared, visible journey. As children read, retold stories, and expressed ideas through art, each milestone added leaves, fruit, sunshine, or rain to a growing classroom tree. The activity fostered confidence and connection, helping children see their progress, and celebrate each other. An educator shared: "I saw quiet children find their voices, and reluctant readers discover joy in stories." — Christopher Torti, Area Supervisor, YMCA Beyond the Bell®

As Beyond the Bell continues to grow, its purpose remains clear: to remove barriers, ignite potential, and ensure children feel seen, supported, and capable. Through strong partnerships, compassionate educators, and a community that believes in young people, Beyond the Bell is helping children build skills and confidence that lasts well beyond the school bell.



YMCA Beyond the Bell Reading Fruit Tree Initiative

281 children and youth served

Beyond the Bell after-school and summer programs

September 2024 – September 2025

YMCA BEYOND THE BELL LOCATIONS

Adelaide Hoodless Elementary School - Hamilton

Bennetto Elementary School - Hamilton

Cathy Weaver Elementary School - Hamilton

Emily C General Elementary School Six Nations of the Grand River - Ohsweken

I.L. Thomas Elementary School Six Nations of the Grand River - Ohsweken

Lloyd S. King Elementary School Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation - Hagersville

Princess Elizabeth Public School - Brantford

Queen Victoria Elementary School - Hamilton

St Lawrence Catholic School - Hamilton

St Patrick Catholic School - Hamilton



Tiger Cats visit to Beyond the Bell - July 2025

From Our Community



From Newcomer to Mentor

When Elham arrived in Canada from Afghanistan in 2023, he was navigating a new country, culture, and education system — all while trying to find a sense of belonging. Shortly after arriving, Elham connected with YMCA Settlement Services and joined the Youth of Tomorrow program, where he began exploring career pathways and building confidence.

Through the YMCA, Elham found more than programs — he found community. He became a volunteer and later a mentor with the Cooking for a Cause program, supporting families staying at the Mark Preece Family House. The experience helped him manage stress, build leadership skills, and give back to others facing difficult moments.

“The YMCA helps newcomers build a life. If I was on my own, I don’t think I would have discovered a lot of things in Hamilton, or made the friends that I have,” Elham shared. “It all comes from the YMCA.”



Building Belonging Through Child Care Leadership

More than a decade ago, Nishi joined the YMCA with a simple passion for working with children. After returning to Canada and re-entering the workforce, she began her journey in YMCA Child Care as a part-time assistant, driven by a desire to make a difference.

Over time, Nishi deepened her skills through formal training, earning her Early Childhood Educator certification and steadily advancing through leadership roles. Today, she serves as Manager of Pedagogy, where she supports and mentors child care staff across the Association.

“But to truly make a difference in their lives is something special.”

For Nishi, the impact of her work is deeply personal. She recalls families who found reassurance, trust, and belonging through YMCA care — and children who continue to carry those relationships forward.

“It’s one thing to love working with children,” Nishi shared. “But to truly make a difference in their lives is something special.”

Through her leadership, Nishi is helping ensure YMCA Child Care remains a place where both children and educators can grow, feel supported, and belong.



Discovering Confidence Outdoors

When students visit YMCA Wanakita’s Outdoor Centre, many are experiencing nature — and themselves — in new ways. For Grade 8 teacher Catherine Higgins, bringing her class to Wanakita was about creating equal access to experiences that can change lives.

“...Wanakita was the highlight of their year.”

Many students had never spent extended time outdoors. With the support of YMCA financial assistance, every student was able to participate. At Wanakita, students built confidence, formed friendships, and discovered new strengths away from screens and classroom walls.

“They were leaders. There’s just something transformative about being outside, having that freedom to move, to take on physical challenges, and to connect with each other without phones or screens. The kids were happy, exhausted, and they all said Wanakita was the highlight of their year.”



Cognitive Groove: Research-Driven Healthy Aging in Action

In 2025, Cognitive Groove continued to grow as a signature YMCA LiveWell Health Management program at our YMCA — bringing research-informed approaches to healthy aging into the community.

Developed in partnership with the GERAS Centre for Aging Research at Hamilton Health Sciences and McMaster University, Cognitive Groove (formerly GERAS Dance) combines music, movement, and cognitive stimulation to support brain health, mobility, and social connection for older adults. Delivered through YMCA sites, the program makes evidence-based supports accessible, engaging, and joyful.

In 2025, Cognitive Groove was featured in peer-reviewed research published in the *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, highlighting positive outcomes related to mobility and independence among older adults participating in community-based programs. That same year, a large clinical trial led by GERAS and researchers at McMaster University launched, reinforcing the YMCA’s role as a trusted community partner in applied aging research.

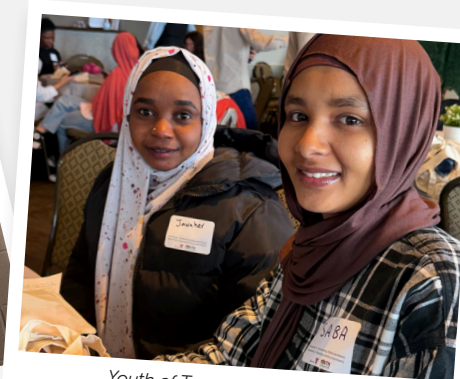
Through LiveWell and cognitive health initiatives like Cognitive Groove, the YMCA continues to translate research into action, supporting older adults to stay active, connected, and thriving.



2025: Moments That Shine



Hockey Helps the Homeless



Youth of Tomorrow Conference



Opening Men's Transitional Housing Program



The Long Walk Home



Government of Canada Announces Funding



Wayne Perkins Leadership Centre



YMCA Handball Courts

Employee Recognition Event

Mar 3
Annual YMCA employee milestone recognition event.

Opening of YMCA Employment Services – Hamilton East

Apr 1
YMCA Employment Services opens a new location in East Hamilton.

Hockey Helps the Homeless Hamilton/Burlington – Inaugural Tournament

Apr 11
Inaugural Hamilton/Burlington Hockey Helps the Homeless Tournament raises \$95,000 for Youth in Transitions & Men's Residence.

Youth of Tomorrow Conference

May 1
Youth from across our communities come together for learning, leadership, and inspiration.

Community Impact Event

May 7
A celebration of community, connection, and the collective impact of YMCA and partners across Brantford and region.

Opening of New Men's Transitional Housing Program

Jun 27
Opening of a new men's transitional housing program on the third floor of the Men's Residence, along with a new Community Room. Funded by the City of Hamilton and delivered in partnership with St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, Mission Services and Shelter Health Network.

YMCA Arrowsmith – Construction Begins

Aug
Construction begins on YMCA Arrowsmith Child Care Centre expanded new centre with 54 spaces.

The Long Walk Home

Sept 5-6
Two-day, 72 km walk raising funds for YMCA Men's Residence.

YMCA Back on Track Program Expansion

Sept
The YMCA Back on Track program expands with the opening of a new East Hamilton location.

Seniors Active Living Fair

Oct 21
An event supporting healthy aging, connection, and well-being for older adults in the Flamborough community.

Government of Canada Announces Funding

Nov 7
Government of Canada announces up to \$25 million through the Build Communities Strong Fund for the new Hamilton Downtown Family YMCA.

38th Annual YMCA Peace Medal Breakfast

Nov 18
YMCA hosts annual Peace Medal Breakfast, featuring keynote speaker Dr. Jody Carrington.

Seniors Active Living Fair

Nov 19
Older adults and community partners gather in Burlington to promote active living and connection.

Queen's Park Advocacy Day

Dec 3
YMCA leaders and advocates visit Queen's Park to champion community well-being and social impact.

Breaking Ground on YMCA Wanakita's Wayne Perkins Leadership Centre

Dec 10
Construction begins on a new leadership and learning space at YMCA Wanakita.

Hamilton Downtown Family YMCA Handball Courts Dedication

Dec 18
YMCA handball courts dedicated in honour of the Sam & Roma Mercanti Foundation and The Charity of Hope.

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

AUG

SEPT

OCT

NOV

DEC

2025 Fundraising Report

\$1.1 M
Community Outreach

\$921,488
Wanakita

\$713,407
Enabling Access

\$420,028
Beyond the Bell®

\$471,608
Other

1,809 Donors | \$3.59M

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Investing in Youth Potential: Sam and Roma Mercanti Foundation & Charity of Hope

In December 2025, our YMCA proudly honoured the Sam and Roma Mercanti Foundation and Charity of Hope for their leadership investment in young people, marked by the dedication of two handball courts at the Hamilton Downtown Family YMCA.

Through a \$150,000 pledge over five years, their generosity is strengthening the YMCA's Pathways to Success initiative, helping more young people build resilience, belonging, and confidence during critical moments in their lives.

This support advances three essential programs:

- **Back on Track** by the YMCA, providing a restorative alternative for students temporarily suspended from school
- **Be Wise**, building resilience and mental wellness for youth aged 12–18
- **Enabling Access**, removing financial barriers so youth can participate in YMCA membership and programs

Thanks to this investment, the YMCA is better equipped to evaluate, strengthen, and expand the impact of its youth programs—creating brighter futures for young people and stronger communities for all.



Statement of Financial Position

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Assets		
Current assets	7,500,270	7,830,324
Investments, and LT Receivables	12,255,609	10,773,825
Capital assets	59,648,437	59,953,167
Total Assets	79,404,316	78,557,316
Liabilities		
Current liabilities	16,479,112	16,849,091
LT Liabilities and Deferred capital contributions	36,282,520	36,083,563
Total Liabilities	52,761,632	52,932,654
Net Assets	26,642,684	25,624,662
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	79,404,316	78,557,316

Statement of Operations

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue		
Programs and Services	39,349,403	45,008,531
Donations, Grants and Fundraising	40,361,877	27,347,263
Investment (Loss) Gains	1,316,502	1,913,578
Amortization of Deferred Contributions	1,728,356	1,549,597
Total Revenue	82,756,138	75,818,969
Expenses		
Programs, Service, Compensation, Administration	78,004,858	71,503,529
Interest Costs/Bank Service Charges	144,201	178,038
Amortization of Capital Assets	3,589,057	3,264,695
Total Expenses	81,738,116	74,946,262
Excess Revenue over Expenses	1,018,022	872,707

Financial Highlights

Year Ended December 31, 2025

The report includes selected financial information extracted from statements audited by Deloitte LLP. Complete financial statements are available upon request.

2025 Staff Leadership

SHARED LEADERSHIP TEAM

Manny Figueiredo, President & CEO

Nicki Glowacki, Chief Operating Officer

Derek Bodden, Senior Vice President, Finance & Risk

Patrizia Finucan, Senior Vice President, People, Leadership & Culture

Joel Côté, Senior Vice President, Philanthropy

Shawn McKillop, Senior Vice President, Communications & Digital Transformation

Andy Gruppe, Vice President, Overnight Camp & Outdoor Education

Genevieve Hladysh, Vice President, Health, Fitness and Aquatics & Residence

Dana Liebermann, Vice President, Research, Strategy & Impact Measurement

Lily Lumsden, Vice President, Employment & Immigrant Services

Christina Martin, Vice President, Child Care, Day Camp & Community Outreach

St. John O'Neill, Vice President, Information Technology, Business Administration & Management Information Systems

Jen Stoddart, Manager, Governance & CEO Support, Office of the CEO





GET INVOLVED

The YMCA relies on the financial support of donors and funders who share our vision.

The Y Saves Lives.

[YMCAHBB.CA/Donate](https://ymcahbb.ca/donate)

Charitable Registration #10808 3825 RR0001

OUR VISION

Creating a vibrant and healthy community where everyone thrives, igniting their fullest potential.

OUR MISSION

YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford is a charitable organization that creates spaces to belong and promotes healthy living for people at all stages of life.

OUR VALUES

Caring. Honesty. Inclusion.
Respect. Responsibility.

[YMCAHBB.CA](https://ymcahbb.ca)

