



2024 **ANNUAL REPORT**



Acknowledging Our Past. Building a Bold Future.

ABOUT YWCA CANADA

YWCA Canada is the country's oldest and largest gender equity organization. Since 1873, we have been a national leader in advocating for the rights of women and girls. A secular, registered charity, we drive systemic change through powerful advocacy, collaboration, and programs that address urgent needs and advance long-term gender equity.

IN CANADA, WE ARE:

- The largest provider of gender-based violence shelters.
- The largest provider of employment and counselling programs for women.
- The second-largest childcare operator.
- Directly impacting the lives of more than 330,000 people each year.
- Offering safe refuge to 1,200 people each night through our shelters.



Our Vision

Empowered women and girls in a safe and equitable society.



Our Mission

Advance gender equity for all women through informed advocacy and strong Member Associations.



Our Federation

YWCA Canada is the coordinating body for the YWCA movement in Canada. YWCA in Canada is made up of 29 independent YWCA associations operating autonomously, while united in a shared mission.



Our Global Movement

YWCA Canada is part of the World YWCA, a global feminist movement of 25 million women and girls in more than 100 countries, advocating for women's rights and empowerment.

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LETTER FROM THE NATIONAL CEO AND BOARD CHAIR



**ALINE
NIZIGAMA**

National CEO, YWCA Canada



**DENISE
CHRISTOPHERSON**

National Board Chair, YWCA Canada

Dear Supporters,

As we reflect on 2024, we express our deep gratitude for your unwavering support. Your commitment to advancing gender equity and social justice fuels our work at YWCA Canada and strengthens this movement.

This past year has been one of assessment, planning, and driving meaningful change. We have been strategizing for the future while strengthening our foundation through the development of a new strategic plan for 2025-2028—one that centers excellence and equity.

Our key 2024 achievements include reaffirming our commitment to reconciliation with the release of our archival research report summary and formal apology to Indigenous communities for YWCA Canada's past involvement in programs offered at residential schools and "Indian hospitals." This marked a crucial step in guiding our path forward in truth-telling and meaningful allyship with Indigenous communities.

We revitalized the Rose Campaign, reigniting critical conversations around gender-based violence and mobilizing action nationwide, amplifying our reach and impact with great success.

We engaged in collaboration across the YWCA movement to unite and inform our upcoming strategic plan. A key priority has been deepening our relations with and among local YWCAs

(what we call our Member Associations), and strengthening our support by providing resources and guidance needed to enhance our collective impact. We also placed a renewed focus on governance, recognizing it as a cornerstone of our strength as a national movement. By fostering values-driven governance rooted in accountability, transparency, and inclusive leadership, we are building a stronger foundation for the work ahead. We also deepened our advocacy efforts, contributing to systemic change to improve the lives of women, girls, and gender diverse people.

The foundation we strengthened in 2024 set the stage for bold action in the year ahead. This work requires incredible dedication from staff and volunteers. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the board volunteers whose tenure ended this past year, Susan Kennard (former Chair) and Beth Lyons (former Vice Chair) for their time and tremendous efforts on the National Board, particularly during the pandemic and difficult transitions.

As we look ahead in 2025, we acknowledge that these are unique and uncertain times, with many of us feeling our hard-fought rights are under threat. This is fueling our resolve to stand with and empower women, girls, and gender diverse people now more than ever. That is our mission and that is what we vow to keep doing. Hope is audacious, and in this moment, it is exactly what we need.

That's why we will continue to amplify our voice, expand our reach, and deepen our impact. With your continued support, we will push forward with hope, courage, and tenacity. Together, we are unstoppable.

Thank you for standing with us.

With gratitude,

Aline Nizigama, National CEO
Denise Christopherson, Board Chair
YWCA Canada

ended our tenure as
Christopherson



Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada presenting Aline Nizigama with the Governor General's King Charles III Coronation Commemoration Medal.



Aline Nizigama speaks at YWCA Canada's Annual Member's Meeting.



Margaret Mitchell, CEO of YWCA USA with Aline Nizigama.

GET TO KNOW OUR CEO

YWCA Canada is proud to have Aline Nizigama as National CEO, now in her second year leading the organization. Since joining in March 2023, Aline has brought dynamic, multilingual leadership grounded in feminist values, community connection, and a deep commitment to advancing equity, inclusion, reconciliation, and anti-racism.

Born in Burundi (East Africa), Aline's lived experience informs her understanding of systemic barriers and fuels her passion for lasting change. She often speaks about the impact of her mother—a trailblazing entrepreneur whose courage and determination helped shape Aline's commitment to building generational impact through women's empowerment.

With experience across the nonprofit, public, and healthcare sectors, Aline has championed the rights of equity-deserving communities, including francophone, multilingual, Black, Indigenous, and racialized populations. She is a recipient of the Governor General's King Charles III Coronation Commemoration Medal and has been recognized on the Wall of Role Models by the Diversity Advancement Network.

“ —
Aline deeply believes in leading with empathy, integrity, and a collaborative spirit, and strives to guide the YWCA Canada movement with a bold vision and kind heart.

YWCA CANADA IN THE NEWS

YWCA Canada brings critical attention to policies and solutions needed to build a more equitable future. In 2024, we helped shape the national conversation on gender equity through media engagement, television interviews, and a feature in *The Globe and Mail*, and more.



OUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

YWCA Canada's 2024 growth in reach and online engagement isn't just about numbers: it's a testament to the strength, resonance and relevance of our movement. More people are engaging with our message, learning about the work of YWCAs in communities across the country, and taking action.

53,155,860
Media Impressions



511
Media Mentions



7
Television Appearances



140% ↑
Web Traffic

50% ↑
The Feminist Agenda
Newsletter Subscribers

29% ↑
LinkedIn Followers

17% ↑
Instagram Followers

OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

The YWCA movement in Canada is thriving. As the largest women's rights organization in Canada, we are proud of the impactful programming delivered by our 29 local YWCAs.



Over 26,000

women, girls, and gender diverse people reached through gender-based violence prevention or intervention programs.



Nearly 24,000

children and youth attend YWCA childcare, after-school programs and camps annually.



Nearly 13,000

women, girls and gender diverse people access YWCA employment services and programs annually.



Over 6,000

shelter beds operated by YWCAs across Canada.



Over 900

gender-based violence intervention and prevention programs operate nationally.



Over 70,000

young people engage in youth programs every year.



**YWCAs across Canada
employ over 5,000
people, 90% of whom
are women.**

OUR FINANCIALS

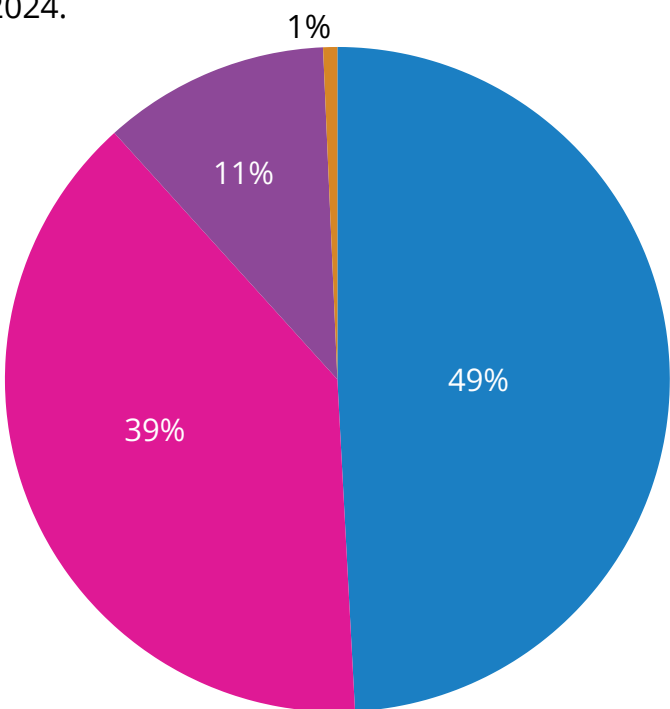
Through careful financial stewardship, we prioritize cost-effectiveness and are continuously optimizing our resources to deliver the greatest impact. Below is YWCA Canada’s financial summary for the year ended December 31, 2024.

We flowed a total of \$811,233 to local YWCAs in 2024.

Revenue:

- Donations and Funding from Government, Corporate, Foundations and Individuals - \$2,338,715
- Local YWCA Affiliation Fees - \$1,862,401
- Investment Income - \$524,155
- Other Income - \$32,722

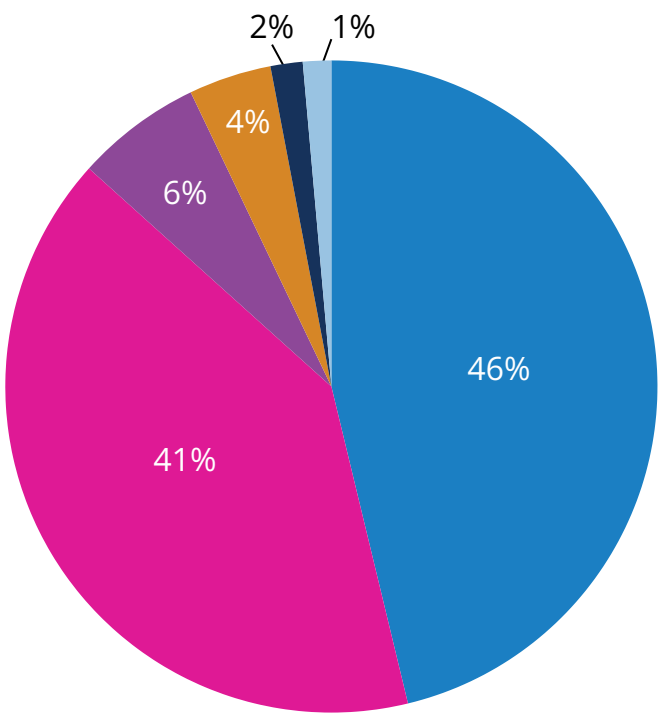
Total: \$4,757,993



Expenses:

- Core Operations - \$2,144,660
- National Projects and Programs - \$1,875,943
- Strategic Initiatives - \$289,632
- Member Support - \$190,347
- World YWCA Program Fees - \$73,890
- National Communications and Advocacy - \$65,096

Total: \$4,639,568



OUR ENGAGEMENT

At the national office, we serve as the coordinating body for the powerful YWCA movement in Canada—strengthening connection, sharing knowledge, and supporting 29 local YWCAs to lead meaningful change in their communities. In 2024, we brought together staff and board members through three national, in-person meetings.

- 1 In partnership with YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg, we hosted the annual YWCA CEO/ED Meeting. We networked, shared knowledge, and attendees left inspired by the stories behind the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, beautifully shared by Matthew Cutler, the Museum's Vice-President of Exhibitions. At this gathering, one of our national committees launched the revamping YWCA Canada's standardization program.
- 2 Our 2024 Annual Members Meeting titled *Nurturing Community. Envisioning our Future*, was co-hosted by YWCA Muskoka and provided space for powerful conversations that paved the way for renewed focus on governance, truth and reconciliation, and antiracism. We were honoured to have the opening remarks by Elder Stephanie Williams Sandy from the Chippewas of Rama First Nation, and a touching keynote and performance by Tanya Aglukark (Tagaq) award-winning Inuk throat singer, artist, and best-selling author.
- 3 Our fall One Movement Meeting (OMM) with YWCA Regina aligned with the opening of the Kikaskihtânaw Centre, YWCA Regina's newly launched centre for women and families. Our gathering included a Sweat Ceremony and Feast in Fort Qu'Appelle to guide the release of YWCA Canada's formal apology for our historical involvement in the Residential School system and "Indian Hospitals." This was an important moment of reflection, healing, and collective commitment to truth-based reconciliation.



YWCA staff and volunteers, YWCA Annual Members Meeting.

Throughout the year, we strengthened peer learning and connection through staff networks focused on advocacy, gender-based violence, communications, fundraising, youth programming, property services, and housing development. These networks foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and collective growth. Our work is supported by the new Resource Hub, our intranet designed to centralize tools, policies, updates, and learning across the federation.



1. YWCA Canada
2. YMCA-YWCA Winnipeg, MB
3. YMCA-YWCA Vancouver Island, BC
4. YWCA Agvik Nunavut
5. YWCA Banff, AB
6. YWCA Westman, MB
7. YW Calgary, AB
8. YWCA Cambridge, ON
9. YWCA Durham, ON
10. YWCA Edmonton, AB
11. YWCA Halifax, NS
12. YWCA Hamilton, ON
13. YWCA Kitchener-Waterloo, ON
14. YWCA Lethbridge & District, AB
15. YWCA Metro Vancouver, BC

16. YWCA Moncton, NB
17. Y des femmes de Montréal, QC
18. Community YWCA Muskoka, ON
19. YWCA Niagara Region, ON
20. YWCA Northwest Territories, NWT
21. YWCA Peterborough Haliburton, ON
22. YWCA Prince Albert, SK
23. YWCA Québec, QC
24. YWCA Regina, SK
25. YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin, ON
26. YWCA St. John's, NL
27. YWCA Saskatoon, SK
28. YWCA Sudbury, ON
29. YWCA Thompson, MB
30. YWCA Toronto, ON



OUR COMMITMENT TO TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

In 2024, YWCA Canada advanced our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation with a formal apology for our historical involvement in the Residential School system and “Indian Hospitals.” Alongside the apology, we released a Truth and Reconciliation Statement and a Summary Report outlining past actions and our commitments to healing, accountability, and redress. This work was done in close collaboration with Indigenous Elders and community organizations, whose guidance was instrumental in shaping our approach.

We also created a new leadership role: Senior Manager of Equity, Reconciliation, and Anti-Racism (ERA), to working alongside the National Director, Indigenous Relations to help build a national ERA framework.



Jessica Gordon, Kerry Benjoe, Aly Bear, and Margaret Kisikaw Piyesis at the YWCA Canada One Movement Meeting.

As part of this ongoing work, we launched the Reconciliation, Accountability, and Inclusion Strategy (RAIS) Survey—a national initiative to assess how local YWCAs are responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action and the 231 Calls for Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This survey will guide a coordinated, measurable path forward.

YWCA Canada continued to lead conversations on reconciliation, including a presentation at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. We are committed to sustained action grounded in Indigenous leadership and with guidance from Indigenous Elders.

“*Recognizing the harm caused by our organization’s past actions, we are committed to ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities to ensure our reconciliation efforts are meaningful and sustained.*”



YWCA Indigenous Circle Members.

ADVANCING OUR MISSION

In 2024, YWCA Canada advanced impactful national programs, initiatives, and campaigns. Through capacity-building, public education, and community engagement, we responded to emerging needs and worked alongside local YWCAs and partners to drive systemic change.

Our work is grounded in six drivers of impact.

1. Ending Gender-Based Violence

Ending gender-based violence is at the heart of YWCA Canada's mission. We work to shape a future where women, girls, and gender diverse people can live free from violence.



In commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the tragic mass femicide at École Polytechnique in Montreal, YWCA Canada re-launched **The Rose Campaign**, a nationwide initiative to end violence against women, girls, and gender diverse people. This revitalized campaign drew national attention and engagement, mobilizing local YWCAs, community partners, and corporate sponsors to raise awareness and drive action.

Our **YWCA Anti-Gender-Based Violence (AGBV) Staff Network** supports over 1,000 frontline workers from local YWCAs and other feminist organizations across the country. This network offers resources, capacity-building opportunities, and professional development rooted in anti-racist, anti-oppressive frameworks—helping to strengthen local impact and build safer, more inclusive communities. To support collaboration and knowledge-sharing within the network, we also launched a virtual hub called the AGBV Staff Network Centre.

We completed **Not Online. Not on Campus.**, a national initiative designed to improve support for survivors of gender-based violence within post-secondary institutions. The project, informed by consultations with students, staff, and community partners, identified key gaps in campus response, particularly in smaller institutions. In response, we developed practical tools and training resources to support compassionate, informed responses to disclosures of sexual and tech-facilitated violence.

- 173% increase in donations from 2023.
- 600% increase in social media followers.

- Project resources reached 450 staff.
- 100 participants engaged in training sessions.

With generous funding from The Shoppers Foundation for Women's Health, we developed **When Abuse Doesn't Bruise**, a national initiative focused on identifying the less visible signs of gender-based violence. Prioritizing communities facing systemic barriers, this trauma-informed training will equip YWCA staff with tools to better recognize and respond to hidden forms of abuse. Informed by research and the expertise of staff within our movement, the virtual training will launch nationally in Fall 2025.

2. Providing Safe and Stable Housing

As the largest provider of housing to women, families and gender diverse folks fleeing violence or facing homelessness, we continued to advocate for more housing funding.

Now in its third year, the **National Emergency Survivor Support (NESS) Fund** continues to provide direct financial support to survivors of gender-based violence and intimate partner violence.

“ —
“I called every single helping agency in the city and social services, and no one knew how they could help us, did not have programs to help us, or was not eligible for assistance. The NESS fund was such an easy application! Within five business days, we received funds to help us get into our own home today.”
 - NESS Fund Recipient

- Distributed \$413,000 through local YWCAs to assist 362 survivors.
- Since 2022, the fund has supported over 1,000 survivors.



3. Achieving Economic Equity

Economic empowerment is a central focus of our work. We actively advocate and raise awareness about closing the gender wage gap, putting more women in leadership and addressing the systemic undervaluing of work in feminized professions.

With support from the RBC Foundation, we surveyed local YWCAs to better understand the scope and impact of our employment services. The findings affirmed the breadth of our employment services: **15 Member Associations offer 65 unique programs**, many of which operate in hybrid or remote formats to reduce barriers to access.

With the majority of programs reporting **completion rates above 76%, and 21 with an average completion rate of 91%**, our employment services play a vital role in supporting women across Canada.

ADVANCING OUR MISSION

This year, YWCA Canada supported the wrap-up of the **Uplift Program**—an upskilling and reskilling initiative led by YWCA Hamilton and delivered in partnership with several Ontario YWCAs to open doors for women and gender diverse people in tech.

- 93% program graduation rate.
- 82% of graduates secure employment, retain jobs, or earn promotions.
- 84 graduates to date.



Dollars & Sense, funded by Employment and Social Development Canada, offers financial literacy and empowerment supports for women, gender diverse people, and survivors of violence. The program includes financial workshops, one-on-one counselling, and access to tax-filing clinics through local YWCAs.

- 710 financial education sessions and 54 tax clinics were delivered.
- 2,000 participants benefited from stronger financial knowledge and support.

4. Championing Childcare and Women's Wellbeing

We are committed to championing childcare and women's wellbeing. In addition to childcare, many local YWCAs also offer community-based programs that prioritize wellness, parenting, fulfilling basic needs, and foster meaningful community connections for all women, girls, and gender diverse individuals.

This year marked a major win with the rollout of the **\$10-a-day childcare program** across much of Canada—an achievement made possible through years of advocacy by feminist organizations. YWCA Canada has long championed affordable, inclusive, and accessible childcare. This is a big win for women and parents in Canada, one that will bolster women's participation in the labour market, boosting their livelihood and the economy.

YWCA Canada **partnered with YMCA Canada on a public opinion survey**

conducted by the Environics Institute. Results showed strong public support for affordable, high-quality childcare as essential social infrastructure. 84% of Canadians agree it should be available to all who need it, recognizing its impact on gender equity, child development, and workforce participation.

Elevating the narratives of women's wellbeing and resilience showcases the profound impact of our work. To this end, YWCA Canada is the happy new national home of **The Shoe Project**, a powerful and creative storytelling initiative that has helped amplify the voices of immigrant and refugee women. The program is now adaptable to YWCA programs and audiences across the country.

5. Empowering Diverse Young Leaders

The YWCA movement has long been fueled by the energy, skills, and passion of young people. We remain committed to engaging and empowering youth as leaders and changemakers.

YWCA Canada concluded its four-year **Block Hate: Building Resilience Against Online Hate Speech initiative** in 2024. Funded by Public Safety Canada's Community Resilience Fund, the project engaged youth, educators, and community members in workshops and knowledge-sharing to build awareness and response strategies around online hate. Youth and survivor voices were central throughout the project, helping to drive a national conversation on digital safety, equity, and accountability.

YWCA Canada's **Leadership Miles program** offers travel and expense bursaries for YWCA staff, volunteers, and board members under 30 to attend national conferences, training, and governance opportunities.

➤ 11 young people attended four events, including two United Nations events.



YWCA Canada Delegates, UNCSW68.

6. Informing and Shaping our Feminist Future

YWCA Canada leads strong, evidence-based advocacy to address the systemic challenges facing women, girls, and gender diverse people.

Our efforts with Women's Shelters Canada helped secure **\$50 million in the federal Fall Economic Statement** to support the construction and renovation of housing for women and families fleeing violence.

In collaboration with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, we highlighted urgent housing needs, and our recommendations for **funding the feminist sector** were reflected in the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance's report ahead of Budget 2025.

In March 2024, 20 delegates from YWCAs across Canada attended the **68th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW)** in New York City—the leading global convening on gender equity. We deepened connections with feminist organizations, activists, and policymakers through discussions, interactive sessions and sharing community-based expertise.

At UNCSW, we also hosted an event on the NESS Fund's impact, calling for survivor-centered solutions like direct financial support, safe housing, and more women in political leadership.

OUR BOARD

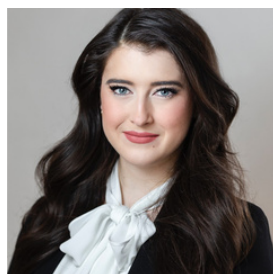
We extend our deepest gratitude to our staff and the YWCA Canada National Board and Senior Leadership Team for their unwavering dedication, leadership, and efforts throughout the year. Your commitment to advancing gender equity, driving meaningful change, and supporting communities across the country is appreciated.



Erum Afsar



Clarice Anderson



Marina Banister



Meghan Cadue
Vice Chair



Denise Christopherson
Chair



Shifrah Gadamsetti
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Renata Huyghebaert



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Vice Chair



Marilyn Loewen Mauritz



Dr. Delores V. Mullings



Dr. Candice Waddell-Henowitch

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Aline Nizigama | National CEO

Amanda Arella | National Director, Public Policy and Advocacy

Natasa Boskovic | National Director, Partnership Development and Employment Strategies

Jessica Gordon | National Director, Indigenous Relations

Brian Katz | National Director, Finance

Raine Liliefeldt | National Director, Membership Engagement

Fiorella Rojas Jaramillo | National Director, People and Culture

Megan Vella | National Director, Fund Development and Partnerships



YWCA Canada staff, including members of the Leadership Team.

OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

YWCA Canada extends sincere thanks to our generous donors and supporters. Your contributions strengthen our collective efforts to advance gender equity for women, girls, and gender diverse people across the country.

While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy in the list below, we apologize for any omissions or errors. Please contact philanthropy@ywcacanada.ca with any discrepancies. As part of our ongoing commitment to donor privacy, beginning in 2025, YWCA Canada will no longer publish the names of individual donors in our annual report.

List of Donors and Sponsors

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 Employment and Social Development Canada
 RBC Foundation
 Shoppers Foundation for Women's Health
 The Slight Family Foundation Aviva Canada
 Canadian National Railway Company
 Jenny Bird Holdings Inc.
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 Torrid Foundation - California Community
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Kaitlin Froehlich



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

In 2024, YWCA Canada began development of a new strategic plan shaped by voices from across the YWCA movement, including board members, frontline staff, and community partners. The strategy includes a renewed vision and mission, and bold goals rooted in feminist leadership, diversity, and decolonial, community-driven change, aligning us with a shared purpose and a stronger foundation for collective impact.

As we look ahead, YWCA Canada remains committed to advancing equity, strengthening local YWCAs, and responding to the urgent needs of women, girls, and gender diverse people. With a federal election on the horizon, we are preparing to advocate boldly for the economic well-being of families and mobilize Canadians to vote for leaders who will do the same. We will also continue the important work of The Rose Campaign to end gender-based violence, while growing our partnerships

with corporate allies and social justice organizations to amplify our collective impact. We have added a new National Director of Communications role to our team to continue to amplify our strong, collective voice.

Our Annual Members Meeting in 2025 brings us together in Quebec City where we will connect, collaborate, and celebrate YWCA Quebec's 150th anniversary.

Guided by our new strategy, we will push for systemic change in a bolder way, build capacity across the movement, and ensure that feminist leadership thrives at every level. Together, we're shaping a future that is safer, more just, more inclusive, and more equitable for all.

For 150 years, we've been at the leading edge of this movement—and we're not slowing down.



THANK YOU

This report reflects the power of our growing movement. None of our achievements would be possible without the support and deep commitment of people like you.

From all of us at YWCA Canada, thank you.



YWCA Staff and Volunteers, One Movement Meeting.



YWCA
C A N A D A

NATIONAL ADVOCACY.
COMMUNITY ACTION.
UNE VOIX NATIONALE.
DES ACTIONS LOCALES.

GET INVOLVED



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