



Youth Services Bureau Community SleepOUTs in support of programs for Ottawa's homeless & at-risk youth

Youth Services Bureau Overview:

The Youth Service's Bureau of Ottawa (YSB) is our city's leading youth-centred non-profit organization, serving more than 3,000 youth and their families each month in the areas of youth homelessness and housing solutions, mental health, justice, and employment. YSB's services are offered at no cost through 20 sites across Ottawa, and support young people 12 and older – along with their families – as they resolve complex issues. YSB operates the only youth shelters in Ottawa, making it a crucial lifeline for the many homeless youth that find themselves in crisis and living on the streets. YSB also operates three long-term housing apartments to support youth as they gain further independence.

Community SleepOUTs for YSB

The YSB's **Community SleepOUT** is a unique opportunity for your community, school, church or other group to hold a fundraising event in support of youth housing programs in Ottawa. Community leaders will organize their own version of our signature SleepOUT event, fundraise, and spend a night outside at the location of their choice (possibilities include a park, community centre, school gym, or other central space). All funds raised from these incredible events will go to support YSB's programs and services that directly benefit and house homeless and at-risk youth in our community.

The annual YSB SleepOUT for Youth is an experiential fundraiser unlike any other in the Ottawa area. For six years in a row, hundreds of young community leaders, along with philanthropic corporate teams have slept outside for one night in cold conditions, in late Fall, to raise money and awareness around the issue of youth homelessness. In 2017, fundraisers and community leaders just like you helped us surpass our ambitious fundraising goal of **\$250,000!** Did you miss our most recent SleepOUT and want to join the movement? Maybe you had so much fun and want to host your own? For the first time ever, you can!

The goal for the 2018 SleepOUT movement is to have 1,000 individuals take part overall. This is a symbolic number, reflecting the more than 1,000 young people who find themselves homeless in Ottawa each year. To help realize this goal, we are proud to introduce our Community SleepOUT! By hosting your very own SleepOUT, you're helping to end youth homelessness in Ottawa once and for all.

Funds raised from the Community SleepOUT events support youth accessing programs and services in our youth shelters and long-term housing apartments. It's also important to know that YSB is building a new supportive housing residence on Riverside Drive set to begin construction in Spring 2018. This new 39-unit residence will offer once-homeless and high-risk youth, aged 16-24, housing and complete wrap around support. It will also make available services that have been proven to contribute to a young person's ability to break the cycle of chronic homelessness.

Groups interested in holding a Community SleepOUT would, for the most part, take care of logistics such as securing a space, recruiting participants, organizing food and developing the program and YSB would recognize this commitment by offering:

- **Community SleepOUT support**
 - **Use of our online, peer-to-peer, fundraising tool to facilitate digital donations to teams at each community event**
 - **Limited support by YSB Events Coordinator in organizing and overseeing a one-of-a-kind experiential SleepOUT event for interested groups (either on a suitable community centre space, City of Ottawa park, school gym, or private property).**
 - **YSB could arrange to send a speaker to the community event and help organize other activities to make the evening educational, personally meaningful, and fun.**
 - **YSB can create a teamwork activity where participants can help YSB's shelter youth directly, such as putting together essential supplies bags for the youth we serve (shelter residents or through the drop-in centre).**
- **special recognition at the official 2018 SleepOUT at Lansdowne Stadium during the evening's main stage program (Thursday, December 6, 2018)**
- **Community Leader Partner logo featured on the SleepOUT website.**
- **An organized tour of YSB's Youth Drop-In Centre or youth shelter for interested participants.**

About the Community SleepOUT

Who: Community SleepOUT events are planned and organized by individuals, school or church groups, clubs or associations, corporations or any other interested group in Ottawa.

What: A Community SleepOUT is just like YSB's flagship event in the fall except it is planned and run by you! Find a location, get your team together, arrange some refreshments and entertainment, raise funds and have fun! Build fundraising momentum for your Community SleepOUT by running supporting events to hype up your target donors and build team spirit with fellow sleepers. Here are some popular ideas or check out this [A-Z Fundraising article](#):

- Anything-a-thon (dance, spin, walk, etc.)
- Bake sale
- Fashion show
- Trivia night
- Coffee house
- Scavenger hunt
- Picnic
- Silent Auction
- Games night
- Magic show
- BBQ
- Paint-in night
- Car wash
- Pancake breakfast
- The possibilities are endless so get creative!

When: The Community SleepOUT can take place anytime, but if your event will be held outside, make sure to plan it for a time when the weather will not be too harsh to sleep in a tent and sleeping bag. For best results, start planning as early as possible and spread the word!

Where: A Community SleepOUT can be held in any space with enough capacity for your sleepers. Consider your local community centre, school gym or park (make sure to check if you will need a permit) or even a team member's backyard or cottage. Decide if your event will be rain-or-shine and develop a bad weather back-up plan, if needed.

Why: You want to contribute to helping young people in Ottawa. Maybe you've had a meaningful experience with YSB or have heard about the important work we do and want to support Ottawa's homeless and at-risk youth. See the "Why fundraise" tab for more details.

Planning the Community SleepOUT

Identify your Audience – Who are you going to ask to join your team? Who is most likely to SleepOUT with you? Who can you ask for support or sponsorships? Who will you approach as a donor?

Set a Fundraising goal – It can be very motivating to work toward a goal as a team. Set your target and brainstorm different ways to reach it. Encourage your team members to actively fundraise. Consider 'big impact' ways to maximize fundraising: hosting a bake sale, selling raffle tickets for a cool prize, operating a car wash, etc! These are fun ways to get your whole team involved! Consider an incentive or challenge to donors, when you reach a certain dollar amount. If you succeed in reaching the goal, be sure to follow through with the challenge and send photos to your donors (and post on social media) if possible.

Set a date – Start planning early. Check your local events calendar to make sure your SleepOUT doesn't conflict with any other big functions or holidays. Confirm the venue and leave enough time to get any special permits or licenses you may need.

Event logistics – Have questions about how to get your SleepOUT started? Interested in having a guest speaker from YSB? Interested in incorporating a story from a youth who has benefitted from YSB's services? We can help with that! Email the YSB Foundation's Tim Lamothe, Community Engagement Coordinator, at TLamothe@ysb.ca or Adriana Johnston, Events Coordinator, at adrianajohnston@ysb.ca

We're here to help!

Promote your Community SleepOUT and start FUNDRAISING!

The YSB Foundation can help you fundraise through the use of a personal fundraising web page. It's easy to create and is the simplest and most effective way to let people know you're participating in a SleepOUT and that you want their financial support.

Simply email the link to your fundraising page to family and friends to get the word out about the important cause you're supporting. It's quick and easy!

Consider going door-to-door in your neighbourhood - visit your neighbours and tell them why you're sleeping out - it's one of the most effective ways to collect donations. You can collect cash or cheques and remit them to YSB at a later date. If you choose to go this route, make sure to collect your donors' full names and addresses on this pledge sheet so we can send them a tax receipt.

Put up posters in your area - get the word out and raise funds indirectly by putting the SleepOUT poster up around your neighbourhood. Asking permission to hang posters in stores, on community boards, and around your home, work and school is a great place to start.

Word-of-mouth - tell everyone you know and talk about your event every chance you get!

Facebook Event Page - use FB to invite friends and family to the event and to donate to your personal fundraising page. Post the link to your fundraising page in your status and tell people why you need their financial support - make it compelling! Update the event page frequently and include progress on your fundraising goal. Take photos at your SleepOUT and post them in real time and after the fact. Remember to thank your sponsors, donors and participants.

Twitter - use a hashtag and let YSB's staff know what it is so we can retweet.

Encourage your attendees to post photos and use the hashtag when posting about their experience on social media.

Instagram - use a hashtag and post tons of pictures from your SleepOUT!

Better yet, add a link to your fundraising page in your Insta bio for a few weeks leading up to your SleepOUT! Direct your followers there to support you!

Youtube - consider making a video to post after your SleepOUT. It can be a great vehicle to thank everyone involved and make announcements to your audience.

YSB on Social Media

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)

If you want to share some information with your supporters about how their contributions will help, feel free to use any of these **YSB facts**:

- Every \$50 raised provides a critical hour of counseling to a young person
- Every \$65 gives a hungry youth a week of hot, nutritious meals
- Every \$100 lets us prepare a start-up kit for a youth leaving the shelter
- Every dollar raised helps give a young person the courage to leave an abusive relationship
- Every dollar raised helps give a young person the confidence to return to school or pursue a job

You may also want to share this YSB [video](#) about youth homelessness.

Have fun! You are making an important difference in the lives of young people in Ottawa by holding your Community SleepOUT.

Once you're done, let us know how it went! Send photos, videos and testimonials to the YSB Foundation's Events Coordinator Adriana Johnston at adrianajohnston@ysb.ca. Submit your proceeds to the YSB Foundation within two weeks (2675 Queensview Dr) and remember if you collected cash or cheques from anyone, make sure to include your donors' full names and addresses on this pledge sheet so we can send them a tax receipt.

Post your fundraising total and a few photos of the event on social media and send it to your community newspaper. And don't forget to thank all your event participants with an email or a card.

Why Fundraise

Funds raised from the Community SleepOUT events support youth accessing programs and services in our youth shelters and long-term housing apartments. It's also important to know that YSB is building a new supportive housing residence on Riverside Drive set to begin construction in Spring 2018. This new 39-unit residence will offer once-homeless and high-risk youth, aged 16-24, housing and complete wrap around support. It will also make available services that have been proven to contribute to a young person's ability to break the cycle of chronic homelessness.

For youth like Paige

She came to YSB as a shy, quiet young woman, anxious and distrustful. She stayed in our Young Women's Emergency Shelter where she got around-the-clock support and guidance. She built her confidence, gained life skills, completed high school, and began to trust others. Fast forward a few years and Paige is now in the middle of her second year of University - on a full scholarship.



Paige was just 17 years old when she came to YSB's Emergency Youth Shelter. Her parents had struggled with severe mental health issues and, from a young age, she had been a victim of abuse. Afraid, unsure, and alone, she chose to reach out to YSB for help. Who would have known that a young woman like Paige could completely turn her life around with the right help!

Funds raised at YSB's Community SleepOUT events go directly to our Youth Housing Services including the Young Women's Shelter. Your fundraising efforts will directly contribute to helping young people like Paige each and every day. Together, we are able to ensure that youth in our community have the resources they need to transition to happy and healthy adulthoods.

We'd like to extend our sincere thanks for your fundraising so far - these gifts benefit young men and women who are working hard to create better futures for themselves, despite the many obstacles they may be facing. For at-risk youth, a better tomorrow is within reach, and you help make this possible.



YSB's Community SleepOUT events raise critical funds to support Ottawa's only youth emergency shelters and programming to give at-risk youth a brighter future.

More than 24% of shelter users in Ottawa are under the age of 17, and we can all agree that the streets are no place for a young person. Many are also dealing with the effects of trauma, mental health issues, poverty, and addiction. Your dollars will provide homeless youth a renewed sense of hope for their future!

For many of our community's youth, home is simply not a safe, nurturing, loving environment. And, with youth being the fastest growing segment of this population, the need for solutions to youth homelessness is critical.

Thank you for your consideration, and for being a champion of YSB's work with youth in our community.

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