Update from the Centre

Supporting Positive Development

With summer over and school back into full swing it was a fast summer to remember!

National Self-Improvement Month is an annual designation observed in September, and it’s time to take some time to improve yourself. Set goals to help you on the path to making a better you! Routes Youth Centre knows all about self-improvement where Programming has been designed to help support youth development using multiple approach models like the 5 C’s of Positive Youth Development. Routes helps build connections through a feeling of safety, structure, and belonging; making positive bonds with staff and peers. This happens through regular drop in events, and connections through volunteer partner programs being offered such as the McMaster Athletes. During the summer thanks to your generous donations, our youth got to build upon relationships with peers going on multiple trips such as laser tag, flying squirrel, bowling, and Starlite Drive-In theatre.

Routes continues to support raising youth confidence through one’s sense of self-worth and mastery. Believing in our youth capacity to succeed takes place through exploring weaknesses and turning them into strengths. This happens as youth learn skills through our continuous workshops, and by giving youth a voice in joining such committees like our Youth Council. Our Youth Council is designed to build character through taking on such roles of leadership planning for the future of our centre. If youth are interested in shaping the future community, Youth Council is where it is at.

Youth have been contributing to the centre plus giving back to our community through participating in yearly events like the scrap metal drive and wing night.

Youth have gained competence through social events like positive space, learning self-advocacy and the ability to act effectively in social situations.

We will continue to support our youth in their development so that when they become adults, they will have the tools they need to succeed in today’s society!

Warren Duncan

5 C’s

Of Positive Youth Development

1. **Connection:** A feeling of safety, structure, and belonging; positive bonds with people and social institutions

2. **Confidence:** A sense of self-worth and mastery; having a belief in one’s capacity to succeed.

3. **Character:** Taking responsibility; a sense of independence and individuality; connection to principles and values.

4. **Competence:** The ability to act effectively at school, in social situations, & at work.

5. **Contribution:** Active participation and leadership in a variety of settings; making a difference.
Board’s Corner

It has been an eventful summer at Routes with a number of staffing and board changes.

Jenna Mitchell left us in June to pursue new life adventures in the London area and we wish her well in her career and the completion of her MSW. Jenna served us fabulously as Youth Employment Counsellor, in 2017, and was promoted to the Program Manager role in February 2018. In that capacity, she led the creation of a Cooking Club, the re-establishment of Youth Council and many other creative youth programs.

Jeff Black joined us in February 2018 as our Director. Over the course of Jeff’s tenure, we experienced remarkable increases in youth attendance. As the face of Routes, Jeff quickly established relationships and increased our overall visibility and engagement with existing agencies and partnerships. Jeff left us at the end of September to pursue doctoral studies in social work. We wish him well and look forward to his continued support of Routes in other ways.

In August, we welcomed Warren Duncan as our new Program Manager. Warren has diplomas in Advanced Child & Youth Care and in Music & Arts. Warren’s youth work experience includes counsellor roles at Wesley Urban Ministries, Key-Assets Mississauga, and Brantford’s Recreation Department and an exciting contract as Youth Activities Counsellor with Disney Cruise Lines. Warren is adjusting nicely within the Routes milieu and is already earning the respect of our youth.

In October, we welcome Alicia Gonsalves as our new Director. Alicia is a recent graduate of the Advanced Child & Youth Care program and has the HIGHFIVE Certification for Principles of Healthy Child Development. Alicia’s most recent work experience includes coordinating programs as Assistant Camp Director for Rainbow Programs for Children, Guelph, and Program Facilitator with the Boys and Girls Club, Brantford.

We also welcome Shaila Kumbhare and Caitlin Sutch to our Youth Worker (PT) ranks.

In September, we said farewell to Cheryl Kennedy who has resigned from the board to pursue a teaching role in English as a Second Language.

Looking forward, we will help our staff to move into their new roles and resume our focus on the directions of the strategic plan. We continue to seek new board talent, particularly in the fundraising area.

On September 21st, we had the pleasure to host 17 members of our Patrons Club for a breakfast and focus group discussion. Organized by Janey Piroli to thank Patrons for their ongoing support for Routes, it also served to solicit their input to enhance the donor experience. Feedback indicated that the breakfast achieved its goal, was a welcome social event and fostered a number of constructive suggestions. Many thanks to Colin DeFrance, who provided culinary services.

John van Vliet

SAVE THE DATE

Scrap Metal Drive  - Sat, Oct 19
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Drop off in the parking lot behind the Westoby Arena, 70 Olympic Drive

Family Wing Night - Fri, Oct 25
6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Lions Memorial Community Centre

Annual General Mtg - Mon, Nov 11
7:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Routes Youth Centre