



BUILDING BETTER FUTURES
for women and their families

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2018



INTRODUCTION

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY FOR

Single mothers and their children

We recognize that breaking the cycle of poverty means addressing the poverty of women. Single mothers and their children remain the poorest families in BC – they have the most difficulty finding affordable housing and are among the most likely to go hungry. Without access to child care, affordable housing and opportunities for meaningful employment, single mothers are unlikely to achieve personal and economic independence and may find themselves trapped in poverty or unhealthy relationships.

The YWCA's advocacy and holistic, integrated services—anchored in the three fundamentals of housing, early learning and child care, and employment—help lift these families out of poverty, provide the best start for children and create new opportunities for education, employment and leadership. These challenges are especially acute for Aboriginal women and children and we remain committed to the full realization of equality for Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

Vision

Achieving women's equality.

Mission

To touch lives and build better futures for women and their families through advocacy and integrated services that foster economic independence, wellness and equal opportunities.

YWCA STRATEGIC THEMES 2016 – 2018

SAFETY + WELLNESS



Freedom from violence: women and their children live safely, free from violence, and the sexualization of girls and women—and hyper-masculinization of boys and men—are not tolerated in society.



Safe, affordable housing: single mothers and their children have a range of safe, affordable housing options and are supported to build successful and independent lives.



Healthy, active living: all people are supported to engage in healthy, active living, have access to nutritious food for themselves and their families and have opportunities to serve their communities.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES



Best start for children: rates of developmentally vulnerable and poor children will decline, and all families have access to high-quality, affordable, culturally appropriate early learning and child care.



Healthy choices for youth: young people have opportunities to develop positive social and emotional skills and healthy relationships and are meaningfully engaged with their communities.



Support for families: all families have opportunities for meaningful employment, are supported to reconcile the demands of work and home, and women and men share equally in domestic and care responsibilities.

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE



Opportunities for education, work and leadership: people across our communities have opportunities to achieve personal and economic independence, to develop their potential and to participate fully in society, according to their abilities and aspirations.



Accountable, sustainable YWCA: an organization that is accountable to our members, employees, donors and communities, committed to measurable results and positioned for long-term sustainability.



OUR 2016-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN AT A GLANCE

RANGE: SHORT-TERM 0-2 YRS

MID-TERM 2-5 YRS

LONG-TERM 5-10 YRS

ADVOCACY PLANS	RANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise public awareness of the inappropriate sexualization of girls and women in contemporary media 	Short- to mid-term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with governments and community partners to implement policy and procedure reforms to better serve mothers without legal status in Canada 	Short- to mid-term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted engagement of business, community and government leaders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build support for a new culturally appropriate family policy framework to support the generation raising young children - Build understanding of the economic cost/benefit of public investment in the early years - Promote an integrated vision of early learning and child care that demonstrates the value of play-based learning, culturally appropriate care, qualified educators and a seamless day for children 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build awareness and understanding of the importance of early social and emotional development to lifelong health and success 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate advocacy messages (housing, women's safety, work/life balance and support for single mothers) into YWCA materials and CEO speaking opportunities 	Ongoing

CORE SERVICE AREA	STRATEGIES	RANGE
■ Crabtree Corner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with clients, supporters and peer organizations to expand YWCA services offered in the Downtown Eastside 	Short-term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the case coordination model implemented to assist staff with complex client issues 	Short-term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities to advance recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report 	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate programs to ensure that they continue to meet the many needs of clients 	Ongoing
■ Early Learning and Child Care Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the Pyramid Model at Crabtree Corner and Emma's. Implement the model at our other child care centres when feasible 	Short-term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate parents, YWCA supporters and government officials about the true cost and benefits of quality care 	Short- to mid-term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate parents and community partners about the benefits of play-based learning 	Short- to mid-term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness about the Heart/Mind Index and work with partners to develop resources for parents and educators that reflect this emerging body of knowledge 	Mid-term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate new ways to utilize our child care centres that may improve our service to families while reducing our deficit. 	Mid-term

CORE SERVICE AREA	STRATEGIES	RANGE
■ Employment Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve key performance measures in all contracts • Establish partnerships for future procurement • Create WorkBC programs for specialized populations • Execute new and diversified marketing initiatives • Seek new and diversified funding sources for all employment programs • Strengthen connections with the business community 	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Short-term</p> <p>Short-term</p> <p>Short-term</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
■ Health + Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on member growth through individual and corporate group business • Focus on member retention through excellent customer service • Provide personalized services to meet the needs of members and the community 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
■ Hotel and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the development of housing projects currently in process (YWCA Cause We Care House, Fire Hall Housing, Como Lake Mews, Onni CentreView project) • Undertake Hotel/Residence expansion as market conditions or funding opportunities warrant • Explore new opportunities to develop housing for single mothers • Build partnerships with housing providers to improve access for single mothers and at-risk women 	<p>Short- to mid-term</p> <p>Mid- to long-term</p> <p>Mid- to long-term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
■ International Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in YWCA Honduras project • Provide support to the Serbian Apatin Women's Centre • Explore opportunities to share YWCA Metro Vancouver best practices in other countries 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
■ Mentorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on mentee recruitment and engagement for Aboriginal Mentorship Program • Implement new mentorship initiatives as funding and partnership opportunities arise 	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
■ Single Mothers' Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore use of technology to expand program delivery • Build funder support for Fraser Valley-based services • Focus on diverse programming to support personal and economic independence 	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Short-term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
■ Youth Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and implement technology-based options for service delivery when feasible • Focus on volunteer facilitator and mentor recruitment • Evaluate and update volunteer requirements and program components as required • Build funder support to expand programs across Metro Vancouver 	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Short- to mid-term</p> <p>Short- to mid-term</p> <p>Mid-term</p>

ACCOUNTABLE, SUSTAINABLE YWCA	OPERATING PLANS	RANGE
 Engaging Donor Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capital campaigns for the Fire Hall and Onni CentreView housing communities • Undertake endowment campaign when circumstances are appropriate • Build endowment through legacy gifts • Increase major gifts from individuals and corporations • Identify funding opportunities for youth and mental health issues 	Short- to mid-term Mid- to long-term Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
 Ensuring Financial Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capital reserve through operating surpluses and undesignated bequests • Focus on revenue diversification • Explore opportunities for new social enterprise activities • Monitor investment performance and alignment of investment policy • Ensure annual balanced budgets 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
 Managing Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop risk appetite and tolerance statements for the organization • Build a culture of risk awareness among employees, integrating risk management into daily activities and processes • Annually review the organization's risk matrix, including the capital project risk matrices • Test the organization's Business Continuity Plan 	Short-term Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
 Measuring Impact and Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new Balanced Scorecards as new programs are undertaken • Continue to refine and track program measures and client impacts and successes 	Ongoing Ongoing
 Our People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to enhance employee organizational diversity, knowledge and skills • Conduct periodic employee engagement surveys and ensure follow-up and action based on feedback received • Focus on paying at the 50th percentile of the market • Focus on offering professional and leadership development opportunities 	Short- to mid-term Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
 Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve Gold LEED certification for the YWCA Cause We Care House and Fire Hall projects • Select environmentally sustainable products and suppliers as a priority • Promote sustainability efforts through educational awareness initiatives • Ensure reserve endowment funds are invested through socially responsible investment screens • Develop/nurture the rooftop garden to meet our harvest goal of one tonne per year 	Short-term Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
 Telling Our Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive digital content strategy • Build an internal culture of story-sharing to enhance profile and donor support • Include advocacy messages in YWCA communication materials as appropriate 	Short- to mid-term Ongoing Ongoing
 Volunteer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new strategies to engage skilled volunteers, young professionals and youth • Launch Volunteer Impact database • Explore new opportunities for corporate and group volunteerism, while ensuring that the needs of the YWCA are met • Develop strategies to link the impact of volunteerism to YWCA strategic goals and objectives and how it helps to make a difference in the community 	Short- to mid-term Short- to mid-term Ongoing Ongoing



2016-2018 ADVOCACY OPERATING STRATEGIES

Raise public awareness of the inappropriate sexualization of girls and women in contemporary media.

Short- to mid-term

Work with governments and community partners to implement policy and procedure reforms to better serve mothers without legal status in Canada.

Short- to mid-term

Targeted engagement of business, community and government leaders to:

- Build support for a new culturally appropriate family policy framework to support the generation raising young children.
- Build understanding of the economic cost/benefit of public investment in the early years.
- Promote an integrated vision of early learning and child care that demonstrates the value of play-based learning, culturally appropriate care, qualified educators and a seamless day for children.

Ongoing

Build awareness and understanding of the importance of early social and emotional development to lifelong health and success. **Ongoing**

Integrate advocacy messages (housing, women's safety, work/life balance and support for single mothers) into YWCA materials and CEO speaking opportunities. **Ongoing**

ADVANCING SOCIAL CHANGE

YWCA Metro Vancouver is committed to advocating for social change to promote the full realization of women's equality. Our work addresses the systemic causes of poverty and social inequality and the specific challenges faced by single mothers. This section outlines key advocacy issues and strategies.

As always, our advocacy positions are grounded in our front-line service delivery and informed by current research. We will continue to collaborate with partners such as the University of British Columbia's Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), United Way of the Lower Mainland and women's equality organizations. We will also help to advance the advocacy work of YWCA Canada and its member agencies.

“Today only 67.5% of BC children arrive at kindergarten meeting all the developmental benchmarks they need to thrive both now and in the future; 32.5% are developmentally vulnerable.”

As the pace of change in our society accelerates, driven by technological innovation in a global economy, our strategies must relate women's equality to prosperity broadly defined as economic, environmental, social and political well-being.

A strategic and sustained approach to advocacy is fundamental to promoting positive, systemic social change. By allocating resources to advocacy, we will be positioned to expand our influence on key issues and respond to new opportunities as they arise.

FAMILY POLICY AND UNIVERSAL EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

The YWCA has consistently advocated for public investment to build a national system of affordable early learning and child care that is accessible to all children. This is fundamental to our mission and will continue to be a key advocacy focus. Our goals are to support the healthy development of children, build a strong economy and achieve women's equality.

Today only 67.5% of BC children arrive at kindergarten meeting all the developmental benchmarks they need to thrive both now and in the future; 32.5% are developmentally vulnerable. This means that nearly one in three children is at risk of failing to develop into the healthy, well-educated, innovative and productively employed adults we need to secure our long-term economic sustainability.

Yet, a compelling body of research confirms that high-quality early learning and child care “sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health” (Margaret McCain and Fraser Mustard, *Early Years Study: Reversing the Real Brain Drain*, 1998). The period from birth to six years is the most rapid period of brain development with maximum refinement in social and emotional functioning, language, cognition, vision and hearing.

Numerous studies demonstrate that such investment also generates significant economic benefits. Nobel laureate and University of Chicago economist James Heckman concludes, based on his study of neuroscience, that “investment in the pre-school years raises the productivity of schooling and training” and attributes broader benefits to individuals and society through better health outcomes and reduced crime (James Heckman, *The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children*, 2004).

A 2012 study of Quebec’s universal child care program, first introduced in 1997, found that in 2008 alone, their \$7/day program allowed nearly 70,000 more mothers to hold jobs and resulted in a 1.7% increase to Quebec’s GDP (Pierre Fortin et al., *The Impact of Quebec’s Universal Low Fee Childcare Program on Female Labour Force Participation, Domestic Income and Government Budgets*, 2012).

Sadly, Canada has become a country in which it is far harder to raise a young family. UNICEF and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development rank Canada among the very worst industrialized countries when it comes to investing in families with preschool-aged children. Our country’s economy has doubled since the mid 1970s, yet the reality for parents with preschool-aged children is a decline in the standard of living. These families struggle with stagnant incomes, the rising cost of housing and lack of time to participate in family and community activities. The YWCA will work to advance a new family policy vision that will enable these families to earn a living while raising their children.

The YWCA supports a comprehensive policy framework that is built on a foundation of scientific evidence about the importance of the early years. This framework includes three major policy thrusts: benefits for all new parents in the first 18 months of their children’s lives; high-quality, accessible child care services for all who need them; and flexible working hours to allow parents to balance the demands of work and home life.

While there are significant costs associated with implementing this vision, analysis demonstrates that it will reap spectacular economic returns. Over 60 years, the benefits will outweigh the costs by more than 6 to 1, with a substantial portion of costs recovered in the short and middle terms through productivity gains from increased labour supply—especially among women; productivity gains from reduced absenteeism and improved work/life balance; child welfare and health savings and reductions in crime and expenditures on the justice system.

The YWCA is pleased to collaborate with community partners such as Vancouver Foundation, United Way of the Lower Mainland, the YMCA of Greater Vancouver and various Boards of Trade to support the Generation Squeeze Campaign, which aims to advance policy change to address the needs of young families.

We know that a long-term commitment is required to realize this new policy vision. We will continue to carry the message that this vision—providing comprehensive and high-quality early learning and care services, nested within a new family policy framework for the 21st century—is the key to leveling the field for all women and children, positioning BC as a leader in the global knowledge-based economy and achieving BC’s goals as they relate to literacy, healthy living and supporting children and families with diverse needs.

WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY

The stock of human capital is key to BC’s long-term success but the discourse on how best to address its shortage has also largely ignored the fact that many BC women are under-employed in part-time roles or positions that do not fully utilize their education and experience. More women than men now have university degrees, yet public policy and prevailing social norms still discourage many from assuming a full and equal role in society.

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

-  Freedom from violence
-  Safe, affordable housing
-  Healthy, active living
-  Best start for children
-  Healthy choices for youth
-  Support for families
-  Opportunities for education, work and leadership
-  Accountable, sustainable YWCA



In terms of women's equality, we see that Canadian women enjoy a measure of freedom and legal equality not experienced by most women in many countries around the world. Yet, in recent decades, there has been little progress towards gender equality on key social indicators and even a backwards trend on some. Although women now comprise half the paid labour force there has been no change in the gender earnings gap. Women working full time still earn just 81 cents for every dollar earned by men, and numerous studies confirm that women still carry a disproportionate share of unpaid work—housework and child and elder care.

We have long believed that the first female executives would lead the way for other women to assume these roles, but statistics show that the path of senior leadership is one that too few women are able to follow. Work/life conflict and lack of quality early learning and child care are key reasons why women are struggling with and, in many cases, forgoing these roles.



The YWCA understands the economic and social benefits that will result from supporting the best-educated generation of women in our history to use their skills and education fully, while assisting women at the lower end of the income spectrum to enhance their employability. We will continue to raise awareness of the economic importance of women's engagement in the economy, and advocate for reforms to facilitate full participation.

WORK/LIFE BALANCE AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES

At the YWCA, we understand that work/life conflict is a societal issue, requiring a systemic response. Most families today need two incomes to manage and frequently both partners are under pressure to work increasingly longer hours.

We know that both women and men are affected by role overload, but research shows that it is women who are affected to a greater degree. Although an increasing number of men are playing a more active role at home, women still carry a disproportionate share of responsibility for unpaid work.

Surveys show that half of female executives would change jobs to achieve better balance and that flexibility is valued over salary. Flexibility is also emerging as a major concern for students and young graduates.

The YWCA will continue to encourage broader acceptance of family-friendly workplace practices, offering expertise to organizations seeking to improve productivity, retention and the working environment. We will also advocate for changes that address the imbalance in unpaid care, such as universal early learning and child care, and pensions or parental leave reforms that encourage men to play a stronger role in the domestic sphere.

WOMEN'S SAFETY AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Violence against women is a systemic social problem that transcends class, culture and socio-economic conditions. In the absence of supports that enable women to live autonomously—early education and child care, housing, training and legal aid—many women return repeatedly to abusive partners.

We know that violence against women by intimate partners is a key factor that drives women into welfare dependency. It also has long-term, intergenerational implications since children who witness abuse are much more likely to be aggressive.



Sadly, there has been no positive movement on rates of violence against women in recent years and we will continue to develop new services that assist women leaving violence to build personal and economic independence.

The sexualization of girls and women in contemporary media is of increasing concern. Evidence suggests that women are three times more likely than men to be portrayed as sexually provocative in advertising and magazines and are frequently featured as decorative objects rather than as active users or consumers of products. As well, a variety of sources confirm a trend towards increasing sexualization of female athletes comparable to their overall increasing visibility, while male athletes are rarely depicted as sexual objects. Most disturbing are the examples that permeate contemporary culture of the inappropriate imposition of sexuality on young girls.

It is well accepted that such sexualization can contribute to low self-esteem, body dissatisfaction, eating disorders and depression and can impair the ability of both women and men to establish healthy relationships. It is also linked to societal tolerance of sexual violence and exploitation of girls and women. The corresponding hyper-masculinization of men and boys is equally troubling, resulting in similar negative effects, as well as difficulties expressing emotions and acting out violently.

The YWCA will continue to raise awareness about the implications of violence in society and of inappropriate sexualization and hyper-masculinization. We will advocate for reforms and supports that enable women to make a successful transition to economic independence and ensure their safety. We will also continue to educate youth about the behaviours and attitudes that are fundamental to healthy relationships.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

In June 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its findings along with 94 recommendations for reforms to public policy and investment from all in transforming the lives of Aboriginal peoples and their relationship with Canada. The YWCA has had long experience providing culturally appropriate service to Aboriginal peoples through YWCA Crabtree Corner and other programs, and also engaging Aboriginal peoples in our volunteer base and labour force. We remain committed to supporting the full realization of equality for Canada's Aboriginal people and will collaborate with Aboriginal and community partners to advance key recommendations of the report.

SAFE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Vancouver remains Canada's least affordable city for housing. With limited rental stock suitable for families—and little new rental construction—the need for affordable family housing has never been greater. This problem is particularly acute for single mothers. At the YWCA, we continue to see lengthy waiting lists for our housing communities and longer crisis stays at the YWCA Hotel/Residence.

The YWCA believes that we must address the root causes of poverty and social inequality by providing single mothers and their children with services such as affordable housing and quality early learning and child care.

We will continue to promote understanding of the importance of housing to creating a healthy society, advocate for greater investment in social and affordable housing options by the senior levels of government and explore creative approaches to increase affordable housing stock.

FACT: In 2014, 461 low-income single mothers and children made their home in one of seven YWCA housing communities: Semlin Gardens, Fraser Gardens, Munroe House, Crabtree Corner Housing, Como Lake Gardens, Alder Gardens and Arbour House.

HEWAY

CRABTREE
CORNER



SUPPORT FOR SINGLE MOTHERS

Canada ranks 23rd among 34 OECD countries in income inequality, and BC's wealth gap is among the largest in Canada. BC also has the highest poverty rate in Canada.

Single mothers and their children remain the poorest families in BC—they have the most difficulty finding affordable housing, the least chance of owning their own homes and are among the most likely to go hungry. This is a common experience for many YWCA clients.

Research documents what single mothers and the YWCA have known for some time—the poverty in which many single mothers and their children live is not a result of poor personal choices, but rather a combination of factors, including lack of child care and housing, low minimum wage, challenges accessing funding for education, as well as the challenge of balancing parental and work responsibilities.

We welcomed the Province's recent "Single Parents Employment Initiative," which provides enhanced access to training and supports, but we also recognize that broader systemic change is required to significantly reduce poverty and reap the benefits in reduced crime, increased educational attainment and improved physical and mental health for BC citizens.

The YWCA has a special role to play in advocating on behalf of single mothers to reduce the barriers to their full participation in education, employment and economic independence.

LEGAL EDUCATOR AND MOTHERS WITHOUT STATUS

Many YWCA clients need support in addressing legal issues such as applying for Legal Aid, Protection Orders, child guardianship and access to, and eligibility for, income assistance or social housing. The YWCA provides this assistance on an individual basis and educates staff, volunteers and clients through ongoing workshops on a range of relevant topics.

We will work to implement the recommendations in the Mothers Without Legal Status in Canada report. Commissioned by YWCA Metro Vancouver and funded by the Law Foundation of British Columbia, this report examined the circumstances for women—most of whom have fled their relationships because of abuse—whose ex-partners cancelled their in-country sponsorship, leaving them without permanent Canadian residency status. While trying to rebuild their lives and adapt to a new country, these women are truly in limbo—unable to legally work, yet unable to leave Canada and take their children with them due to family court orders.

We made significant progress in 2012 when the provincial government enacted changes to the Income Assistance Regulation that provides women who can substantiate abuse with access to income assistance. However, work remains to be done on other recommendations, in particular changes to federal policy that will fast-track residency status for these women, enabling them to work.

We will collaborate with local and national organizations, and our counterparts in government to eliminate the unfair circumstances these women face. We will also continue to educate service providers on how best to advocate for women in this situation.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE

The rapid pace of technological advancement offers enormous potential for both positive and negative effects on our society and economy. A 2013 Oxford study, *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are Jobs to Computerization*, revealed that over the next two decades, up to 47% of traditional jobs in the US economy could be lost due to computerization, transforming current social and economic structures and reinforcing and exacerbating global trends in income inequality.

Also of concern to the YWCA is the effect this technological advancement could have on women in the workforce. Could restructuring of the labour force uproot the professional advancements women have made in recent decades—squeezing women out of the workforce in a manner similar to the post-WWII era?

It is interesting that Canadian women, 24 to 35, now hold nearly 60% of degrees in science and technology, comprise the majority of internet and social media users and are the leading consumers of internet-enabled devices. Yet, we see a decline in the number of women working in this growing sector of the economy. Again, this is for reasons the YWCA has long understood: work/life conflict, lack of quality child care and the absence of mentors and champions committed to workplace gender equality.

The YWCA will also work to better understand the effects of technological innovation on the economy, the labour force and the physical and social development of children and youth. We will work to ensure that our program delivery and advocacy efforts reflect this changing reality and are geared to support optimal outcomes.

ACCOUNTABLE, SUSTAINABLE YWCA

The YWCA has managed effectively despite a turbulent economic environment in recent years, due to diversified revenues and a culture of prudent fiscal management. The organization has continued to achieve solid financial results, while implementing new initiatives in response to critical community needs.

While the economic picture has stabilized, there remains considerable uncertainty about the future performance of the local and global economy. A combination of factors—challenges in European economies, a slowdown of China's economy, a forestry sector in transition, the high cost of housing and a weak export base—all indicate that economic recovery will continue to be slow and the job market will lag.

Here in BC, our low birth rate and aging population compound concerns about long-term competitiveness, generating new financial and human resource challenges for the YWCA, while increasing demand for our services. We expect the years ahead to bring greater retrenchment in government funding at all levels and increased competition in fundraising. Strong emphasis on short- and long-term financial strategy will continue to be critical.

The increasing diversity of Metro Vancouver's population is reflected in our client base and will continue to be an important factor in the local economy. We are proud to employ a highly diverse workforce, providing services that reflect the needs of our program participants and position the YWCA to compete effectively in the labour market.

We will work to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of the YWCA through prudent fiscal management, revenue diversification and disciplined analysis of growth opportunities. Our goals are to expand our reach and profile, increase our capacity and strengthen the impact of our services and advocacy work.

CRABTREE CORNER COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

Crabtree Corner is unique in its approach to holistic service delivery. We offer a rich array of programs to our clients and their children, including transition housing, early learning and child care and supports related to food and nutrition, parenting, Aboriginal infant development, literacy, violence prevention, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and community resources and referrals. We are also proud to house and partner with Sheway, a pregnancy outreach initiative that provides medical and social services to pregnant and parenting women who have substance use issues.

FACT: Last year, we served more than 32,000 nutritious meals at YWCA Crabtree Corner Community Resource Centre in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

At Crabtree Corner, more than 60% of clients identify as Aboriginal. Among them are many Aboriginal grandparents responsible for raising their grandchildren at a time when they are ill-prepared physically, financially and psychologically. We also serve women and children from Chinese, Vietnamese, Iranian, Latin American, African, Korean and European backgrounds.

More than half of Crabtree Corner clients have not completed high school and of these 30% have not had any high school education. Many of these clients have a deep mistrust of the school system because of their experiences with residential schools and other colonial policies. As a result, some families do not support their children to attend school regularly. The 94 recommendations released by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address Canada's residential school legacy is an opportunity for Crabtree Corner and the YWCA to better understand the impacts of colonialism and to identify strategies to work more closely with our Aboriginal clients to right these wrongs and contribute to establishing and maintaining respectful relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in BC.

Without education and skills, it is extremely challenging for women to move out of poverty. Understandably, with 90% of Crabtree Corner clients living significantly below the poverty line, stress due to food insecurity, housing, mental health, violence and substance use issues is significant. Therefore we strive to support women without judgment, helping them to feel empowered and take control of their lives.

YWCA Crabtree Corner employs a peer support model of service delivery. Many Crabtree Corner employees are women who have overcome challenges similar to those faced by our current clients. These employees are outstanding role models for the women they serve. Their experiences help to reduce barriers for women accessing services at Crabtree Corner.

In 2016, we will open YWCA Cause We Care House, a partnership with the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Public Library. This facility will house a new *néca?mat ct* Strathcona Branch Library, 21 units of housing for single mothers and their children and program space to complement our existing Crabtree Corner services.

2016-2018 CRABTREE CORNER OPERATING STRATEGIES

Work with clients, supporters and peer organizations to expand YWCA services offered in the Downtown Eastside. **Short-term**

Assess the case coordination model implemented to assist staff with complex client issues. **Short-term**

Identify opportunities to advance recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report. **Ongoing**

Evaluate programs to ensure that they continue to meet the many needs of clients. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

-  Freedom from violence
-  Safe, affordable housing
-  Healthy, active living
-  Best start for children
-  Support for families

FACT: It is widely accepted that there is a strong link between play and learning. Play teaches children how to problem-solve, make friends, express themselves, decode social behaviours and recognize letters and numbers. All of these skills form the foundation of a love of learning.



EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

High-quality affordable early learning and child care is a top priority for families across Metro Vancouver and the YWCA strives to fulfill this need. In all of our facilities, we endeavor to provide culturally appropriate care.

We currently operate four licensed facilities for children under six:

- Emma's Early Learning and Child Care Centre supports teen mothers;
- Citygate Early Learning and Child Care Centre prepares children for kindergarten;
- Leslie Diamond Early Learning and Child Care Centre serves working families in Downtown Vancouver; and
- Crabtree Corner Early Learning and Child Care Centre offers short-term care in Vancouver's downtown eastside.

The YWCA employs a “play-based” approach to supporting the optimal learning and development of young children. There is considerable evidence which suggests children who engage in quality play experiences are more likely to have well-developed memory skills, language development and the ability to regulate their behaviour—promoting confidence, school adjustment and academic learning. We will continue to work to educate parents and community partners about the benefits of play-based learning.

The YWCA also has an interest in building understanding about the Heart/Mind Index, a population-level snapshot of the social and emotional development of children in BC. Children with strong social and emotional skills are less aggressive, can handle difficult emotions and have lower levels of emotional distress—key predictors of social competence in adulthood. This emerging body of knowledge offers important potential to develop resources for parents and educators that support the optimal development of young children.

The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children has now been implemented at our Crabtree Corner and Emma's Early Learning and Child Care Centres. The Pyramid Model focuses on teaching children the social, emotional and communications skills needed to engage in positive interactions. We will continue to monitor this program at Crabtree Corner and Emma's, and look for opportunities to implement it at our other centres.

We recognize that technology is playing an increasing role in the lives of all people, including infants, toddlers and preschool children. We will work to better understand the impact of technology on child development, particularly in the early years.

We remain committed to providing quality care delivered by qualified, professional employees who are compensated appropriately, but parent fees and government funding do not cover the full cost. The shortfall must be funded by the YWCA through our mission-related social enterprises and through committed donors such as United Way of the Lower Mainland and Vancity. We remain committed to educating public officials, parents and the broader community about the true cost of quality early learning and child care.

The YWCA will continue to advocate for public investment to support an integrated system and a new family policy framework that reflects the needs of contemporary society.

2016-2018 EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE OPERATING STRATEGIES

Monitor the Pyramid Model at Crabtree Corner and Emma's. Implement the model at our other child care centres when feasible. **Short-term**

Educate parents, YWCA supporters and government officials about the true cost and benefits of quality care. **Short- to mid-term**

Educate parents and community partners about the benefits of play-based learning. **Short- to mid-term**

Raise awareness about the Heart/Mind Index and work with partners to develop resources for parents and educators that reflect this emerging body of knowledge. **Mid-term**

Investigate new ways to utilize our child care centres that may improve our service to families while reducing our deficit. **Mid-term**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

-  Healthy, active living
-  Best start for children
-  Support for families

2016-2018 EMPLOYMENT SERVICES OPERATING STRATEGIES

Achieve key performance measures in all contracts.
Short-term

Establish partnerships for future procurement.
Short-term

Create WorkBC programs for specialized populations.
Short-term

Execute new and diversified marketing initiatives.
Short-term

Seek new and diversified funding sources for all employment programs.
Ongoing

Strengthen connections with the business community.
Ongoing

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

-  Healthy choices for youth
-  Support for families
-  Opportunities for education, work and leadership

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



The YWCA is one of the largest and most respected employment service providers in Metro Vancouver. Our innovative programs encourage single mothers, youth, immigrants, professionals, persons with disabilities and others with barriers to employment to secure meaningful work.

Since April 2012, we have been the contract holder for three WorkBC Employment Services Centres (ESCs) across Vancouver. We also partner with Family Services of Greater Vancouver to operate the Career Zone Youth ESC and with Back in Motion to serve program participants in Newton, Port Coquitlam and Coquitlam. As contract holders, we are responsible for all client payments, service partnerships, services and supports previously administered by the government. As this contract concludes in 2017, we will be building capacity, creating partnerships and preparing for future procurement.

The FOCUS@WORK program for women, the Futures In Focus program for single mothers of young children, and the Strive program for youth transitioning out of the foster care system, reflect our focus on vulnerable women, children and youth. These programs provide special supports to people with barriers to employment, assisting them to create stability in their lives.

YWCA clients facing barriers require more intensive, longer supports to make a successful and sustained connection with the labour market. Through partnerships with diverse service providers and training institutions, and a proven track record of serving specialized populations, the YWCA will continue to meet the needs of this unique client base.

We will assess new initiatives based on alignment with our mission, existing programs and impact on the proportion of government funding in the organization's operating budget.

HEALTH + FITNESS



The YWCA Health + Fitness Centre is a revenue generating, co-ed fitness facility that provides members with services that are consistent with the YWCA's core values. Our 30,000 square-foot facility provides personalized services, more than 60 group fitness classes, a UV-purified pool and the latest in cardio and weight training equipment.

With a strong emphasis on customer service and member retention, we continue to build on current strategies to create a solid membership base.

“It’s about dedication and commitment. I feel so much more motivated now. Exercise really does pick up your spirits!”

JOANNE, HEALTH + FITNESS MEMBER

Our classes provide members with the latest in the fitness industry while registered programs and clinics are designed to meet their specific needs. We continue to build our individual and corporate business clientele, linking our Health + Fitness services with our advocacy on workplace wellness and work/life balance.

2016-2018 HEALTH + FITNESS OPERATING STRATEGIES

Focus on member growth through individual and corporate group business. **Ongoing**

Focus on member retention through excellent customer service. **Ongoing**

Provide personalized services to meet the needs of members and the community. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

-  Healthy, active living
-  Accountable, sustainable YWCA

2016-2018 HOTEL AND HOUSING OPERATING STRATEGIES

Complete the development of housing projects currently in process (YWCA Cause We Care House, Fire Hall Housing, Como Lake Mews, Onni CentreView project).
Short- to mid-term

Undertake Hotel/Residence expansion as market conditions or funding opportunities warrant.
Mid- to long-term

Explore new opportunities to develop housing for single mothers. **Mid- to long-term**

Build partnerships with housing providers to improve access for single mothers and at-risk women.
Ongoing

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

-  Freedom from violence
-  Safe, affordable housing
-  Best start for children
-  Accountable, sustainable YWCA

HOTEL AND HOUSING

Vancouver remains the least affordable location for housing in Canada and in recent years, there has been limited new construction of rental accommodation suitable for families. Our focus at the YWCA is to provide safe and affordable housing to single mothers and their children—we know that this is fundamental to their physical and mental health and their ability to build successful and independent lives.

We currently operate:

- Munroe House and Arbour House, second-stage transition houses for women and their children who have experienced or witnessed abuse;
- Four housing communities for single mothers: Semlin Gardens, Como Lake Gardens, Fraser Gardens and Alder Gardens;
- Crabtree Corner Housing, specialized housing for pregnant women and new mothers committed to overcoming addictions;
- Homelessness Prevention Program, which provides portable rent subsidies to women fleeing abuse, youth at risk, Aboriginal families and people who are leaving hospitals or correctional facilities.

Plans are underway to develop four new housing projects:

- YWCA Cause We Care House will provide 21 units of housing and related services for single mothers and their children. This project is being developed in partnership with the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Public Library (VPL) and will be co-located with a full-service náca?mat ct Strathcona Branch of the VPL;
- Redevelopment of Fire Hall No. 5, in Champlain Heights, in partnership with the City of Vancouver will provide 31 units of mixed transitional housing and below-market rental housing;
- Como Lake Mews, a partnership with the City of Coquitlam and Beedie Living, will provide seven townhouses for single mothers and their children;
- Nine units of housing for single mothers will be developed as part of the Onni CentreView project in North Vancouver.

FACT: In 2014, 55% of room nights at the YWCA Hotel were subsidized for people in need of emergency or temporary shelter.

We continue to see long waiting lists for all YWCA housing communities and longer crisis and residential stays at the Hotel/Residence. Our long-term strategy involves developing more housing for single mothers and their children throughout Metro Vancouver.

The YWCA Hotel/Residence is a mission-related social enterprise that generates revenue to sustain our community service work while providing more than 30,000 room nights of subsidized accommodation annually to women in crisis, families in transition, students, seniors and refugees.

The YWCA Hotel/Residence is located on land owned by the YWCA and current zoning will allow for a 70-room addition to be constructed above the existing main-floor platform. We will assess the feasibility of developing phase two of the Hotel/Residence.

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

Our international work is undertaken primarily through the International Cooperation Committee (ICC) of YWCA Canada with support from the World YWCA office.

“I am deeply grateful to you for the warm welcome you extended to us at Crabtree Corner Community Resource Centre, where we spent a very fruitful time.”

FUMIKO HAYASHI, MAYOR OF YOKOHAMA, JAPAN

We are currently working with the YWCA of Honduras to strengthen leadership and build organizational capacity, emphasizing advocacy and good governance. We continue to support the growth of the Apatin Women’s Centre in Serbia by providing training based on our programs, and will help to establish a mentorship program for young women in Belgrade, Serbia, this year.

We continue to host senior delegates from various countries who wish to develop programs based on Canadian models.

MENTORSHIP

Since 1991, the YWCA High School Mentorship Program has assisted almost 2,500 female high school students by matching them with professional women in one-to-one mentoring relationships. Through mentorship, the participants explore their career interests, develop life skills and receive support transitioning into young adulthood. The program also organizes an annual Green Choice Career Forum, open to any high school girl living in Metro Vancouver, that provides an opportunity to learn about environmental career options.

The YWCA Aboriginal Mentorship Program offers group mentoring opportunities to young Aboriginal women using an intergenerational and peer mentorship model. Young Aboriginal women celebrate their culture, build a community of support and learn about issues such as safety, intergenerational resiliency, self-esteem and gender and systemic power dynamics.

In 2014 we launched the NextStep Mentorship program—an initiative that targets unemployed individuals who have graduated from post-secondary institutions within the last two to five years and are unable to transition successfully to employment. A research component will measure the effectiveness of our multi-dimensional mentorship intervention model to support attachment to the labour market.

2016-2018 INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OPERATING STRATEGIES

Participate in YWCA Honduras project. **Ongoing**

Provide support to the Serbian Apatin Women’s Centre. **Ongoing**

Explore opportunities to share YWCA Metro Vancouver’s best practices in other countries. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:



Support for families

2016-2018 MENTORSHIP OPERATING STRATEGIES

Focus on mentee recruitment and engagement for the Aboriginal Mentorship Program. **Short-term**

Implement new mentorship initiatives as funding and partnership opportunities arise. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:



Healthy choices for youth



Opportunities for education, work and leadership



*“THIS IS WHAT I’VE
WANTED ALL MY LIFE...*

*to go to school, to study, to work.
But I never had the chance. I’m
so thankful to the YWCA for
making this happen for me.”*

- ALISHA, FUTURES IN FOCUS CLIENT

SINGLE MOTHERS' SUPPORT SERVICES



Working in partnership with community agencies, YWCA Single Mothers' Support Services provides culturally appropriate group support, information, and referrals to community services for women who are dealing with the challenges of parenting alone.

We support our client's goals related to enhancing their economic independence—an approach that is yielding tangible results like new jobs, career and educational planning and training opportunities. We also provide them with the emotional support they require to be healthy and productive. By helping these women to achieve financial and emotional security, we know their children will also have a better chance to thrive.

Besides weekly support groups, the program offers:

- Short term one-to-one support and community services referrals
- Three family events
- Workshops and a conference
- A quarterly E-newsletter

We currently operate 14 support groups in Vancouver, Burnaby, the Tri-Cities, Surrey, Aldergrove, Maple Ridge and Abbotsford. The six new support groups in the Fraser Valley, established in fall 2012, through a partnership between Coast Capital Savings, Envision Financial and Vancity, are operating at capacity. Strong partnerships in these communities is key to the groups' success. A priority will be to build community and funder support to keep these groups in operation.

2016-2018 SINGLE MOTHERS' SERVICES OPERATING STRATEGIES

Explore use of technology to expand program delivery. **Short-term**

Build funder support for Fraser Valley-based services. **Short-term**

Focus on diverse programming to support personal and economic independence. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

-  Freedom from violence
-  Support for families

2016-2018 YOUTH EDUCATION OPERATING STRATEGIES

Explore and implement technology-based options for service delivery when feasible. **Short-term**

Focus on volunteer facilitator and mentor recruitment. **Short- to mid-term**

Evaluate and update volunteer requirements and program components as required. **Short- to mid-term**

Build funder support to expand programs across Metro Vancouver. **Mid-term**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

-  Healthy choices for youth
-  Opportunities for education, work and leadership

FACT: In 2014, 635 girls, boys and teens participated in YWCA youth programs

YOUTH EDUCATION



YWCA Metro Vancouver is committed to supporting youth as they make the challenging transition from childhood to adulthood. Welcome to My Life™, Boys 4 Real™, and That's Just Me build on our long history and solid reputation for providing innovative and supportive programs.

Girls and boys in Grade 7 participate in eight after-school sessions, each focusing on a different theme and then work together on a community project designed to address issues in their schools or the wider community.

Youth examine issues of gender while helping define attitudes and behaviours that are fundamental to healthy relationships. An understanding of healthy relationships is key to the prevention of violence against women.

Last year, in partnership with the Surrey School District, we piloted Being Me, a program similar to That's Just Me, that focuses on promoting mindfulness and reducing anxiety among Grade 7 girls.

The programs are facilitated by university/college students who receive between 16 and 22 hours of facilitation training from YWCA staff. These facilitators are supported by Wisdom Champions™—mature female and male volunteers who serve as mentors. Grade 10, 11 and 12 students serve as high school mentors for the Grade 7 participants, creating a unique, intergenerational mentoring framework.

Since inception, and in partnership with the Vancouver School Board and the Surrey School District, more than 150 programs have been delivered to more than 2,000 participants, most of whom are from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds.

We also offer an annual conference for high school students to learn about critical thinking and media literacy regarding sexualization of girls, hyper-masculinization of boys and internet safety.

To support the growth of our youth education programs, we are working to build new partnerships with post-secondary institutions and corporate and community organizations.

ENGAGING DONOR SUPPORT



To ensure the YWCA's long-term financial viability in an increasingly competitive fundraising environment, we employ a diversified fund development strategy that includes monthly giving, direct mail, major gifts, legacy giving, gifts-in-kind, special events and a thrift shop. Since 1991, membership in the YWCA Inner Circle has more than tripled, providing significant undesignated funding for programming.

Priorities for 2016 include identifying donors for our FOCUS@WORK and Futures In Focus employment programs for women and the Strive program that supports youth ages 17-24 who are transitioning or have transitioned out of foster care. The Strive program provides basic life and employability skills to help youth successfully transition into their adult lives.

In addition to raising funds for annual operations, we are regularly engaged in capital campaigns to support the growth of our housing portfolio. In 2016, we will continue capital campaigns to fund new projects in Vancouver, Coquitlam and North Vancouver.

We will continue to emphasize major gifts and legacy giving as the key elements in our fund development strategy and we remain interested in undertaking an endowment campaign when economic circumstances are appropriate and volunteer leadership can be recruited.

The YWCA also operates the YWCA Thrift Shop and offers various special events, including the YWCA Women of Distinction Awards which recognizes the achievements of exceptional women and organizations.

We are proud to have been accredited under Imagine Canada's Standards Program and remain committed to full transparency and accountability in our financial reporting and donor relationships.

2016-2018 FUND DEVELOPMENT OPERATING STRATEGIES

Build capital campaigns for the Fire Hall and Onni CentreView housing communities.
Short- to mid-term

Undertake endowment campaign when circumstances are appropriate.
Mid- to long-term

Build endowment through legacy gifts. **Ongoing**

Increase major gifts from individuals and corporations.
Ongoing

Identify funding opportunities for youth and mental health issues. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:



Accountable, sustainable
YWCA

2016-2018 FINANCE OPERATING STRATEGIES

Build capital reserve through operating surpluses and undesignated bequests. **Ongoing**

Focus on revenue diversification. **Ongoing**

Explore opportunities for new social enterprise activities. **Ongoing**

Monitor investment performance and alignment of investment policy. **Ongoing**

Ensure annual balanced budgets. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:



Accountable, sustainable
YWCA

ENSURING FINANCIAL HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY



Long-term reserves are critical to ensuring the stability and sustainability of the organization. The YWCA continues to grow its reserves while diversifying its funding to build a strong financial base. We work to ensure that the YWCA achieves balanced budgets and is not dependent on any one source of funding, which, if lost, could seriously impact the organization.

The YWCA has assets in land and buildings appraised at close to \$76 million. The contribution target to our capital reserve is reviewed every year. This contribution is required to maintain and appropriately replace our physical infrastructure. We build our capital reserve primarily through contributions from operating surpluses and, to a lesser extent, through a portion of undesignated bequests and planned gifts, within the parameters established by Board policy.

The YWCA has an investment portfolio of more than \$6.7 million, with the funds invested in socially screened instruments and managed in accordance with the YWCA's Investment Policy. This portfolio's long-term growth and security is critical to our operations.

We continue to explore opportunities to develop new social enterprise activities, with the potential to increase the YWCA's discretionary revenues. Any new venture must be carefully analyzed to balance opportunities, risks, challenges and capacity.

Consistent with risk management objectives, the YWCA has established a rolling plan to continually review controls within the finance and accounting functions and complete regular reports on the adequacy of these controls.

MANAGING RISK

Risk management is fundamental to the YWCA's governance, planning, budgeting and compliance framework. It is an integrated part of all activities and processes, including strategic and business planning, operational performance and all organizational and program objectives.

An organizational risk management plan is in place, and relevant risk appetite and tolerance statements are being developed. The plan identifies the strategic, operating, compliance, environmental and reputational risks that are inherent to the activities of the YWCA and may expose the organization to loss. It also identifies the controls and systems required to manage these risks.

The YWCA's risk management plan emphasizes the value of on-going employee communication and training to build a culture of awareness and vigilance.

A key element in the risk management plan is a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) that will limit losses and ensure critical business operations can continue in the event of a disruption or loss of a critical service (e.g. power loss, telecommunications breakdown), a physical catastrophe (e.g. earthquake, fire) or a pandemic. The BCP enables us to manage our essential business operations while providing an acceptable level of service to clients and protecting the health and safety of employees, volunteers and the people we serve.

MEASURING IMPACT AND RESULTS

The Balanced Scorecard Performance Measurement System is a tool for the YWCA to communicate with stakeholders about the program outcomes and performance drivers through which we achieve our mission and strategic objectives.

The Balanced Scorecard strikes a balance among four financial and non-financial perspectives: serve the client, run the business, learn and grow and be financially healthy. The YWCA recognizes the importance of balancing these components to effectively implement organizational strategy.

A key feature of our approach involves defining measures of success for each of our programs, thus enabling us to demonstrate positive changes in our clients' lives.

Our goals are to:

- Identify and improve upon the factors that are fundamental to client progress;
- Ensure organizational resources are targeted to best effect; and
- Demonstrate to donors and supporters the impact of their contributions.

The Balanced Scorecard system reflects objectives in our strategic and operating plans, allowing us to focus on those measures that are most critical to achieving success.

2016-2018 RISK MANAGEMENT OPERATING STRATEGIES

Develop risk appetite and tolerance statements for the organization. **Short-term**

Build a culture of risk awareness among employees, integrating risk management into daily activities and processes. **Ongoing**

Annually review the organization's risk matrix, including the capital project risk matrices. **Ongoing**

Test the organization's Business Continuity Plan. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

 Accountable, sustainable YWCA

2016-2018 BALANCED SCORECARD OPERATING STRATEGIES

Develop new Balanced Scorecards as new programs are undertaken. **Ongoing**

Continue to refine and track program measures and client impacts and successes. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

 Accountable, sustainable YWCA

2016-2018 HUMAN RESOURCES OPERATING STRATEGIES

Continue to enhance employee organizational diversity, knowledge and skills.
Short- to mid-term

Conduct periodic employee engagement surveys and ensure follow-up and action based on feedback received.
Ongoing

Focus on paying at the 50th percentile of the market.
Ongoing

Focus on offering professional and leadership development opportunities.
Ongoing

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:



Accountable, sustainable YWCA

FACT: The YWCA was named one of Aon Hewitt's 2015 Best Small and Medium Employers in Canada.

OUR PEOPLE

The engagement and commitment of our employees is crucial to achieving our mission and delivering excellent services. In today's competitive labour market, recruiting, training and retaining a highly skilled and diverse workforce must remain a top priority for the YWCA. Our success is largely due to satisfying work that makes a difference in the community, an exceptional culture and our workplace practices, which ensure respect for employees, create a family-friendly environment and facilitate work/life balance.

Overall, employees are highly engaged with the organization, consistently saying positive things about the YWCA and striving to achieve the organization's strategic goals and objectives. Participation in the 2014 Aon Hewitt Employee Opinion Survey ranks the YWCA as one of the top 50 small and medium sized companies to work for in Canada. This is further evidenced with employees indicating that they want to stay with the YWCA and a retention rate of 90% in 2014. We will continue to build on and respond to feedback given through the survey to further strengthen the organization.

Our human resources practices are grounded in employee needs and reflect employee input. Our workplace wellness initiatives ensure that employees are physically and mentally fit and receive recognition for their contributions. We communicate frequently using a variety of vehicles to provide organizational updates and to seek input. Managers also recognize that providing support, coaching and recognition is essential.

While research shows that pay is not the main driver of employee satisfaction and engagement, we recognize that competitive total compensation, including benefits and pension, is important. Our compensation philosophy is to pay at the 50th percentile of the market, including all sectors where we compete for labour. In addition, with a workforce consisting of more than 80% women, our defined benefit pension plan provides employees with some financial security as they start to plan for their retirement.

Providing leadership and professional development continues to be a focus for all employees with an emphasis on succession planning and developing high potential employees. Equipping employees with the skills to deal with increasingly complex client issues has been a major focus, including providing workshops to staff and managers on dual diagnosis: mental health and addictions, managing hostile interactions and suicide prevention.

We are also proud to employ a highly diverse workforce, where 40% of our employees identify as being from visible minorities and 5% identify as Aboriginal. This compares favourably with 2006 Census Canada data, which records a national average of 16.2% visible minorities and 3.8% Aboriginal peoples. This allows us to successfully respond to the diversity of our stakeholders and to work more effectively cross-culturally by understanding, appreciating and respecting differences and similarities in beliefs, values and practices within and between cultures.

A tremendous source of pride are those employees who began their involvement with the organization as clients, successfully completed our programs, further developed their skills and education and were ultimately hired by the YWCA. These employees are key contributors to our work and serve as role models for our current clients.

SUSTAINABILITY

At the YWCA, we know that creating a healthy society requires an integrated vision that links our social, economic and physical environments. We are committed to innovation that supports sustainability.

We have made various capital improvements at the YWCA Program Centre and Hotel/Residence, with the goal of saving energy, reducing water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions and achieving operating savings over time.

Educational awareness for staff, volunteers and clients continues to support our reduction efforts. Educational messages are also included in the Eco-Corner section of our monthly staff E-newsletter.

Current purchasing practices aim to select the most economical and environmentally sustainable products and suppliers.

The value we place on sustainability is reflected in the conversion of our ornamental rooftop garden, located at the YWCA Program Centre, to a productive farm garden, providing fresh fruits and vegetables for women and children accessing YWCA programs. The goal is to harvest one tonne per year, as we focus more energy and resources into this project.

The YWCA is also committed to incorporating green principles and practices in capital and operating plans.

TELLING OUR STORY

Through building our reputation and brand, we aim to promote awareness of our work and inspire support for our advocacy and fund development goals. Critical to this is storytelling: highlighting our clients and their individual progress and successes, showing the impact that the YWCA and our supporters, volunteers, donors, funders and partners have on their lives and illustrating how we, as individuals and together, can make a difference in our community.

We will continue to build on our online presence to engage new audiences and to be known as a strong voice for issues affecting women. A comprehensive content strategy is necessary to ensure that we are providing useful, usable content that is meaningful to our audiences and promotes two-way engagement.

While social media helps to expand our reach, it also poses new risks, such as brand hijacking and lack of control over content. We will build on our online presence by supporting staff to be YWCA brand ambassadors on social media, while protecting the integrity of the YWCA brand by continuously monitoring and responding to online activity.

The YWCA is proud to employ a workforce that reflects the diverse populations we serve; however, this is not always recognized by the broader community. We will work to ensure that our diversity is reflected strongly in all our communications.

2016-2018 SUSTAINABILITY OPERATING STRATEGIES

Achieve Gold LEED certification for the YWCA Cause We Care House and Fire Hall projects. **Short-term**

Select environmentally sustainable products and suppliers as a priority. **Ongoing**

Promote sustainability efforts through educational awareness initiatives. **Ongoing**

Ensure reserve endowment funds are invested through socially responsible investment screens. **Ongoing**

Develop/nurture the rooftop garden to meet our harvest goal of one tonne per year. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

 Healthy, active living

 Accountable, sustainable YWCA

2016-2018 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING OPERATING STRATEGIES

Develop a comprehensive digital content strategy. **Short to mid-term**

Build an internal culture of story-sharing to enhance profile and donor support. **Ongoing**

Include advocacy messages in YWCA communication materials as appropriate. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:

 Accountable, sustainable YWCA

2016-2018 VOLUNTEER SERVICES OPERATING STRATEGIES

Develop new strategies to engage skilled volunteers, young professionals and youth. **Short-to mid-term**

Launch Volunteer Impact database. **Short-to mid-term**

Explore new opportunities for corporate and group volunteerism, while ensuring that the needs of the YWCA are met. **Ongoing**

Develop strategies to link the impact of volunteerism to YWCA strategic goals and objectives and how it helps to make a difference in the community. **Ongoing**

LINKS TO STRATEGIC THEMES:



Accountable, sustainable YWCA

VOLUNTEER SERVICES



Consistent with worldwide trends, the YWCA is experiencing a significant shift in the interests and expectations of our volunteers. Volunteers are increasingly interested in short-term opportunities that can accommodate their busy schedules and assignments that meet their personal and professional goals.

We aim to discover each volunteer's interests and motivations in order to offer opportunities that meet both their needs and ours.

“Volunteering with the YWCA has provided me a way to give back to the community. It has given me something very special to look forward to on a regular basis!”

FRAN, CRABTREE CORNER VOLUNTEER LIBRARIAN

We also collaborate with companies that are strategically aligned with the YWCA and are seeking opportunities for their employees to contribute to the community, while building skills and team culture.

The YWCA also has a proud history of providing volunteer opportunities to program participants to support them in developing new skills and opening doors to employment.

In 2016, we will continue to place emphasis on linking the work of volunteers to the YWCA's strategic goals and success, and on customizing recognition so that our volunteers feel connected and appreciated. The introduction of a volunteer database will enhance our communication and recognition efforts. We will also create volunteer opportunities for young professionals that enable them to gain skills and knowledge by working with our staff. Our website outlines opportunities to inform and engage these special volunteers.

YWCA CANADA AND WORLD YWCA



FACT: Since its inception in 1897, YWCA Metro Vancouver has worked tirelessly to achieve women's equality.

This operating plan outlines strategies and tactics for the core service areas and operations of YWCA Metro Vancouver. However, it is important to mention our considerable work with YWCA Canada. As one of its larger member agencies, we have consistently taken leadership in a variety of important areas.

Our goals are to:

- Support the leadership development objectives of YWCA Canada by providing support to our peer organizations as appropriate;
- Support the International Cooperation Committee of YWCA Canada by providing expertise, financial aid and advice to international projects as is feasible; and
- Support the World YWCA and member countries around the globe.

Conclusion

YWCA Metro Vancouver's annual strategic planning process provides an excellent framework for planning and implementing major new initiatives. The strategies outlined in this plan position us to build better futures for women and their families and to create a more open and equal society. Combined with the Balanced Scorecard, we have a comprehensive planning and performance measurement system to guide the organization in achieving its desired future.



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PROGRAM LOCATIONS

- 1 YWCA Program Centre
- 1 YWCA Health + Fitness Centre
- 1 Aboriginal Mentorship
- 1 Connect to Success
- 2 Crabtree Corner
- 3 YWCA Thrift Shop

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

- 1 Leslie Diamond EL&C
- 2 Crabtree Corner EL&C
- 4 Emma's EL&C
- 5 Citygate EL&C

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- 1 Job Options - Older Workers
- 1 NextStep Mentorship
- 1 Futures in Focus
- 6 Work BC - Vancouver South
- 7 Work BC - Immigrant Satellite Main
- 8 Work BC - Vancouver Westside
- 9 Strive
- 9 Work BC - Career Zone Youth
- 10 Work BC - North Shore
- 10 Work BC - North Shore Youth
- 10 Job Options - North Shore
- 11 Work BC - Immigrant Satellite North Shore
- 12 FOCUS@Work

HIGH SCHOOL MENTORSHIP

- 13 David Thompson Secondary
- 14 John Oliver Secondary
- 15 Windermere Secondary

- 16 Gladstone Secondary
- 17 Eric Hamber Secondary
- 18 Templeton Secondary
- 19 Sir Charles Tupper Secondary
- 20 King George Secondary
- 21 Burnaby Central Secondary
- 22 Gleneagle Secondary
- 23 Riverside Secondary
- 24 Terry Fox Secondary

HOUSING

- 2 Crabtree Corner Housing
- 25 YWCA Hotel/Residence
- 26 Como Lake Gardens
- 27 Alder Gardens
- 28 Fraser Gardens
- 29 Semlin Gardens

SINGLE MOMS SUPPORT SERVICES

- 1 Downtown Vancouver YWCA Program Centre
- 2 Downtown Eastside YWCA Crabtree Corner
- 30 Riley Park - Little Mountain Neighbourhood House
- 31 West End - Gordon Neighbourhood House
- 32 Kitsilano - St. James Community Square
- 33 Marpole - Marpole Place
- 34 Sunset South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
- 35 East Vancouver - Collingwood Neighbourhood House

- 36 Downtown Abbotsford Abbotsford Community Services
- 37 Langley - Aldergrove Neighbourhood Services
- 38 Metrotown - Burnaby Family Life
- 39 North Burnaby Learning Centre
- 40 Maple Ridge - Family Education and Support Centre
- 41 Newton - Sources Newton Resource Centre
- 42 South Surrey - Sources Women's Place
- 43 Lougheed & Shaughnessy - Tri-Cities East Neighbourhood Centre

YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- 15 Windermere Secondary
- 44 Douglas Elementary
- 45 Sexsmith Elementary
- 46 Henderson Elementary
- 47 Laura Secord Elementary
- 48 Cook Elementary
- 49 Tupper Secondary
- 50 Dickens Elementary
- 51 Sir Sandford Fleming Elementary
- 52 Trudeau Elementary
- 53 Cunningham Elementary
- 54 Selkirk Elementary
- 55 Earl Marriott Secondary
- 56 Clayton Heights Secondary
- 57 Lord Tweetsmuir Secondary
- 58 Guildford Park Secondary

