

YWCA METRO VANCOUVER



# THE NEXT 125

Working Together for a Brighter Future

## THE NEXT 125

We believe in the incredible capacity and resilience of single mothers and their children. With collaboration, inclusion and Reconciliation as our guides, together we can create a safe, healthy, vibrant future where all single mother-led families can thrive.

For nearly 125 years, YWCA Metro Vancouver has led the way with groundbreaking advocacy and innovative programs to meet the changing needs of our communities. Looking ahead to the next century and beyond, we have launched The Next 125, a collective force of women leaders and allies dedicated to creating lasting change for future generations by raising \$10M.









# WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

The Next 125 is a group of passionate women and allies who are transforming our communities through their support of the YWCA with donations of \$25,000 or greater. As visionaries, volunteers, philanthropists and professionals, Next 125 ambassadors share a deep commitment to supporting the most vulnerable women and children across Metro Vancouver. By investing in holistic programs to support single mother-led families, these committed women and allies are building a healthy, inclusive future for everyone.

## The Next 125 Experience

As a Next 125 ambassador, you will belong to a unique group of extraordinary people committed to supporting families in local communities for the next 125 years and beyond.

Intimate gatherings, learning opportunities and volunteer initiatives bring you closer to our work and allow you to share ideas and develop lasting connections.

As a charitable organization, we know that our impact is only as strong as the support we receive. We have bold plans for the next 125 years, but we can't do it without you. Through your support and involvement, Next 125 ambassadors have the opportunity to make a lasting impact on any or all three areas driving our work:

- 1. Helping Women and Families Flourish**
- 2. Creating Safe, Inclusive Communities**
- 3. Building Brighter Futures, For Everyone**















## HELPING WOMEN AND FAMILIES FLOURISH

For more than a century, YWCA Metro Vancouver has worked to strengthen the social fabric of our communities. Nowhere is this more evident than our many programs and services that support vulnerable families, particularly those led by single mothers.

No child should go to school hungry, or carry the burden of watching their mother struggle emotionally and financially. No mother should have to choose between paying the rent and buying food. No family should be alone and isolated, without the supportive arms of a community holding them up. Yet this is the reality for thousands of single mothers across Metro Vancouver, who must make extremely difficult choices as they struggle to make ends meet, care for their children, participate in their communities and pursue opportunities for education and employment. Poverty and growing income inequality affect the ability of low-income families across Metro Vancouver to participate equally in society.

Single mothers and their children are 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.<sup>1</sup> Single mothers, particularly those living in poverty, also experience higher rates of stress, isolation and depression.<sup>2</sup>

BC's growing wealth gap is among the largest in Canada, and our poverty rate is second highest in the country.

Children living in poverty, especially persistent poverty, are at higher risk of health problems, developmental delays and behaviour disorders. They tend to have lower education levels<sup>3</sup> and are more likely to live in poverty as adults.<sup>4</sup> Child poverty also hurts our economy. Impaired development, poorer health and school achievement, greater welfare dependency and other consequences of child poverty are not only costly to individual children, but to our economic and social well-being.<sup>5</sup>



## HELPING WOMEN AND FAMILIES FLOURISH

These issues are even more acute for Indigenous women and families, who are highly impacted by poverty, intergenerational trauma, the residential school system, child welfare and foster care policies. They face persistent systemic discrimination. Indigenous women have lower literacy rates, poorer education outcomes, experience higher unemployment and are in lower paying jobs compared to non-Indigenous women.<sup>6</sup> In Metro Vancouver, Indigenous children are more than twice as likely to live in poverty compared to non-Indigenous children.

The YWCA is committed to the full realization of equality for Canada's Indigenous people and has a long history of working with Indigenous groups to provide holistic, culturally-safe services. Programs like YWCA Crabtree Corner's Books, Bags and Babies teach reading, storytelling, drumming, crafts and other Indigenous traditions to encourage early childhood literacy and a connection to the Indigenous community. The YWCA is committed to advancing Truth and Reconciliation across our programs, services and advocacy efforts. We are currently working with partners to develop an organizational framework to guide this work.

*“Indigenous homelessness is not [simply] defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include: individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships.”<sup>7</sup>*

**Helping women and families flourish** means providing them with the support they need to achieve personal and economic independence. It also means weaving a strong net of inclusion by addressing the systemic barriers faced by single mother-led families, recognizing their lived experiences and improving access to resources.

By helping women and families flourish you will ensure vulnerable single mothers and children have access to the resources and support they need to build better futures.







## HELPING WOMEN AND FAMILIES FLOURISH

At **YWCA Crabtree Corner Community Resource Centre**, vulnerable families access programs that support whole-family health and social inclusion, such as housing, parenting support, early learning and child care, nutritious meals and more.

Giving children the best start can make all the difference in their lives. Our early learning and child care programs, including **Crabtree Corner's Early Learning and Child Care Centre**, provide a stimulating and supportive environment in which children can flourish. The centre's purpose is to create the foundation for a healthy future—for families in our community and for our society as a whole.

YWCA Crabtree Corner provides transitional housing for new or expectant mothers committed to their recovery from substance use. Located in the heart of the Downtown Eastside, **Crabtree Corner Housing** provides wrap-around support to help mothers maintain or regain custody of their babies. One of very few programs of its kind in Canada, it provides a valuable model for transitional housing across other parts of the country.

**YWCA Single Mothers' Support Services** connects women with peer support, resources and information that assist, empower and inform.

The **YWCA Legal Representative** offers free legal education to clients in need. Many women who access our legal services are experiencing violence at home, are dealing with child guardianship issues and do not have family or financial resources available to help them.

Our **FASD Prevention Programs** for both parents and grandparents support children and families impacted by this complex health issue, help reduce stigma and connect families with vital health supports.





## HELPING WOMEN AND FAMILIES FLOURISH

### Bailey's Story

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*“As a single mother of a five month old baby, on my own and on income assistance, the YWCA took me under its wing. With no family in Vancouver, I was so grateful for the support that I found in my Baby & Me Single Mothers' Support Group. From there, I was given access to the Health + Fitness Centre, and later introduced to a program that really changed my life.*

*That program was called Futures in Focus and it was 20 months long. My self-esteem and confidence improved while I participated in workshops with other single mothers determined to get back to work at a living wage for their families.”*







## CREATING SAFE, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

A rapidly growing population, increasing income inequality and lack of affordable housing and child care are hard to miss in Metro Vancouver, but they can also be easy to ignore.

In periods of growth, there is no better time to focus on the health of our communities.

Metro Vancouver has continued to outpace the national growth rate, growing by 6.5% since 2011.<sup>8</sup> The region is a destination for nearly 40,000 additional people each year—or another 1 million people by 2040.<sup>9</sup> As our community grows, so too does its need for the YWCA.

Rising inequality plays a role in the growing demand for programs and services that support single mothers and their children. Of the six largest metropolitan regions in the country, Metro Vancouver has the second lowest median household income, trailing Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa and Toronto.<sup>10</sup> The region also has Canada's third highest rate of income inequality—which has increased by more than twice the national average since 1982.<sup>11</sup>

A growing population and increasing income inequality also means more demand for affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income families—a demand not currently being met by the region.<sup>12</sup>

The need for safe, affordable housing is particularly acute for single mother-led families, who face high levels of housing insecurity.<sup>13</sup> Single mothers living in poverty also contend with multiple, complex barriers as they struggle to find affordable housing and child care, and pay for transportation, food, health care and other necessities.

### What does community mean?

A safe and affordable home, free from violence.

Access to high quality early learning and child care.

Gathering together in a welcoming space to share a healthy meal.

Breaking the isolation caused by violence to connect with trusted supports.

Bringing local partners together to collaborate and amplify our impact.

Meaningful action on inclusion, Reconciliation, equity and access.



## CREATING SAFE, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Too many single mothers are just one crisis away— car trouble, a sick child, a court date—from losing their jobs or being evicted from their homes.

Increasing affordable housing stock for families in core housing need has, and will continue to be, a core strategic focus for the YWCA. This commitment is also critical to ensuring our communities remain safe and inclusive.

We continue to see lengthy waiting lists for our housing communities and second-stage transition houses, longer crisis stays at YWCA Beatty and increasing numbers of individuals and families accessing our food programs. The wait list for YWCA housing averages nearly 1,100 families from month to month.

Homelessness continues to be an urgent issue across Metro Vancouver. Marginalized groups such as women with children and Indigenous peoples, are particularly vulnerable to violence and exploitation, with few options for safe, appropriate housing.

On average, a woman will leave an abusive relationship seven times before she leaves for good.

But when she has access to the right supports—housing, employment, child care and counselling—that number can be significantly reduced. **YWCA Munroe House**, Canada's first second-stage transition house, supports women who have experienced abuse to regain confidence and independence. In 2017, 92% of Munroe House residents did not return to their previous living situations and were able to move on with their lives.







## CREATING SAFE, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Creating safe communities also means addressing violence against women, a systemic social problem that transcends class, culture and socio-economic status. Each year in BC, more than 30,000 women and children affected by domestic violence are referred to violence-against-women counselling and outreach programs, and more than 18,000 women and children access transition houses and safe houses to escape violence or abuse.<sup>14</sup>

The YWCA's Violence Prevention and PEACE Program for Children and Teens Experiencing Violence, and our second-stage transition houses for women and their children leaving abusive situations, provide the stability and support to help families heal from the trauma of abuse so they can rebuild their lives.

Safety and inclusivity are interconnected, and we are deeply committed to fostering economic and social inclusion across Metro Vancouver.

The YWCA has long delivered programming for people of all backgrounds and deeply upholds the importance of inclusion. Through initiatives like our Mothers Without Legal Status in Canada project, we support immigrant women who would otherwise not have the resources to care for their children as they were prevented from accessing many basic supports due to their immigration status.

We are also seeing increasing need from newcomers across our other programs and services, such as violence prevention, mentorship, employment and early learning and child care.

**Creating Safe, Inclusive Communities** means that you will help provide families with affordable homes, food security, safety from violence and a resilient and supportive network.

## CREATING SAFE, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Bailey's Story, continued

The power of a strong network

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*“When Futures in Focus started to slow down I joined another program called Next Step Mentorship at the YWCA. It was for people who graduated post-secondary within the last five years. It was through this program that I discovered the true power of networking!”*

*Soon after completing the program, I was offered a job through my network in the field of Career Development Practice. My case manager at the YWCA Vancouver South Office was very supportive during my transition to working 30 hours per week.”*





## CREATING SAFE, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

**YWCA St. Georges Housing** is our second housing initiative in North Vancouver. To be completed in 2020, it will provide 14 homes for single mother-led families in need of safe, affordable housing. Families will benefit from community partnerships and connection to the nearby YWCA Cheshá7min-a7txw housing community. We give thanks to the Squamish Nation for helping us name YWCA Cheshá7min-a7txw (the mothering room). This name recognizes the Coast Salish peoples and their traditional, ancestral and unceded territory.

**The Next 125 Housing Development Fund** will support vital new housing for single mothers and their children.

**YWCA Crabtree Corner** Drop-in Breakfast and Hot Lunch programs provide healthy meals in a safe space for women and children in the Downtown Eastside. Serving as a low-barrier entry point to other holistic YWCA programs, demand for nutritious meals is increasing as families struggle to meet basic needs.

The **YWCA Violence Prevention** program provides individual and group support for women experiencing intimate partner violence, including one-to-one support, referrals, resources and information about the cycle and effects of abuse. The program is open to all women who experience violence in their relationships.





## **BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES, FOR EVERYONE**

We have come a long way towards achieving women's equality, but our work is far from finished. A growing population, rising inequality, high housing costs, an aging population, advancing technologies, increasing global competition and climate change will continue to impact our communities at the local level.<sup>15</sup>

No one knows what the future holds, but we do know how we can best support the community on our way there. We can ensure the youth of tomorrow have access to meaningful support programs to help carry them through the challenging transition to adolescence—a time when complex issues of self-esteem, mental health and sexualization make them even more vulnerable. We can increase capacity for emergency stays at YWCA Beatty for families in urgent need of a temporary place to call home. We can feed tomorrow's leaders by growing fresh produce in our Rooftop Food Garden. Above all, we can invest in the YWCA Endowment Fund to prepare for future needs we cannot yet foresee.

Since 1897, YWCA Metro Vancouver has remained accountable to our members, donors and communities, committed to measurable results and positioned for long-term sustainability. The YWCA's culture of cautious fiscal management, careful analysis of growth opportunities and diversified revenue streams, including our social enterprises, have allowed us to succeed despite a continually changing economic environment.

Long-term sustainability is more important than ever. We need to take the greatest strides in our history to continue to expand our reach, increase our capacity and strengthen the impact of our services and advocacy work.

This means leveraging the success of YWCA Beatty, a social enterprise hotel and residence that provides approximately \$1 million in funding each year to YWCA community programs. Expanding YWCA Beatty with a new tower in 2020, will help us mitigate the ebb and flow of economic uncertainty, while serving a growing population, including newcomers to Canada.



## **BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES, FOR EVERYONE**

Bailey's Story, continued

Securing meaningful employment

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*“Through networking, informational interviews and the wrap-around support from the YWCA, I was able to find a job that is the perfect fit! I plan to apply to the YWCA Single Mothers Housing that is being built in my neighborhood next year so that I can give back and create a strong, loving community for single mothers like me.”*

## **BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES, FOR EVERYONE**

Growing our endowment fund allows us to respond to emerging community needs, while upholding our commitment to fiscal responsibility. You can leave a legacy for future generations by contributing to or establishing a named Endowment at the YWCA.

Our commitment to creating a brighter future for everyone means investing in the next generation. The YWCA has a long history of supporting youth in our communities, helping them gain the skills and confidence they need to achieve their full potential. The YWCA's after-school programs for girls and boys teach youth about healthy relationships, address sexualization and hypermasculinity, foster leadership skills and support positive mental health.

From attaining Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certifications for our new housing communities to cutting greenhouse gas and carbon emissions at our hotel, the YWCA remains committed to becoming a more sustainable organization. Our Rooftop Food Garden is a model of sustainable development in the heart of Downtown Vancouver, yielding more than one ton of fresh produce each year to supplement our food programs in the Downtown Eastside and throughout our housing communities.

Supporting **Brighter Futures, For Everyone** means that for years to come, you will help people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities and identities have a sense of belonging, feel safe and supported and find more opportunities to flourish.





## BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES, FOR EVERYONE

We are expanding **YWCA Beatty**, our budget hotel and residence, by adding 65 rooms to support our social enterprise revenue as well as to provide emergency stays for community members in need of urgent housing.

The **YWCA Endowment** has been established by the Board and management as a strategic organizational priority and will provide a lasting source of revenue to support YWCA programs for the next 125 years and beyond.

The **YWCA's Rooftop Food Garden** has been providing fresh produce to YWCA single mothers and their children since 2006. From kale to kiwis, this project is an example of our sustainability efforts at work, and an important way to nourish families in need.

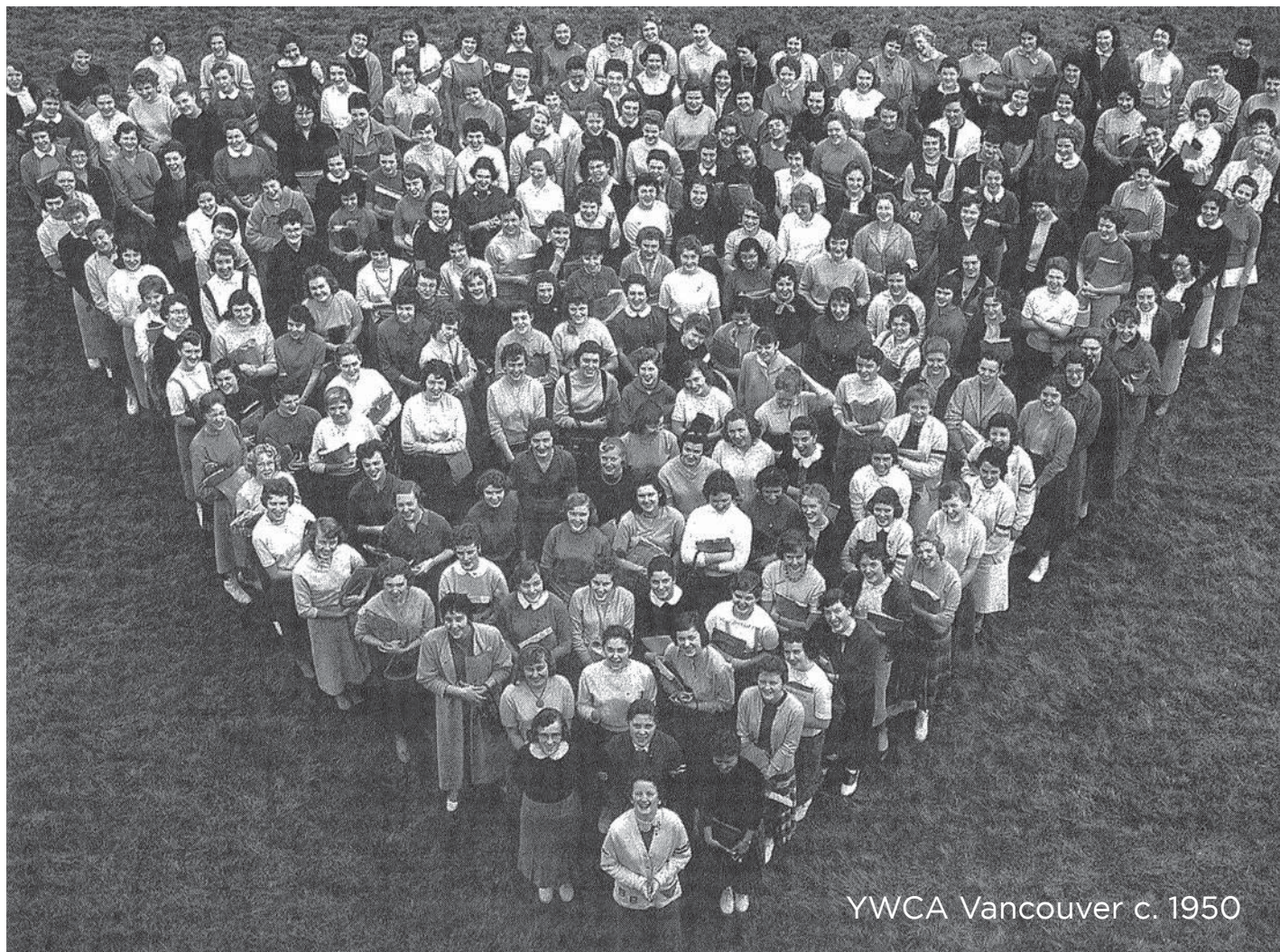
Our after-school **YWCA Youth Education Programs** are a meaningful way to support Grade 7 students as they manage the transition to high school. With a focus on healthy relationships, mental health and growth mindsets, you can empower youth today and make an impact on tomorrow's leaders.

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## PERSONAL PASSION

We believe in the incredible capacity and resilience of single mothers and their children—and we know you feel the same way. With each passing decade, the YWCA continues to pave the way by filling gaps in society and addressing urgent community needs. If there is a specific focus of our work that you feel especially passionate about supporting, we would be pleased to direct your Next 125 contribution to that area.





## THE FIRST 125

The YWCA opened its doors in 1897 to provide housing and services to women coming to Vancouver in search of education or employment. It was founded by two groups of women who saw young, single women migrating to the city, often penniless and friendless. They believed in providing practical assistance. The Women's Improvement League and the Anglican Girl's Friendly Society joined together to become the YWCA of Vancouver.

Since our inception, the YWCA has continued to evolve to meet the changing needs of our communities. We initiated much-loved programs for teens like Hi-Y and Big Sisters, multicultural programs like MOSAIC and work training programs to support the increasing numbers of newcomers to Vancouver. In the early years, the YWCA also established support programs for new mothers, whether married or single, maintained housing communities (particularly during and after the war) and, more recently, for low-income single mothers and their children and those leaving abusive relationships.



## THE FIRST 125

The YWCA also has a long history in the Chinatown/Strathcona community, dating back to 1938, when we established a club at the Chinese United Church, and later moved to a permanent location on Pender Street. Until it closed in 1977, the “Pender Y” was a focal point for local Chinese youth and offered programs for girls and boys, with sports, drama clubs, leadership development and translation services.

In 1997, a Pender Y reunion was held as part of the YWCA's 100th Anniversary. The reunion brought together many of those who had been part of the Pender Y community. During this event, it was noted that “The Pender Y didn't just happen. It was a deliberate move by the YWCA. In the very same way that it operates today, the YWCA was constantly seeking out community needs and immediately moving in to fill gaps. It saw the lack of community facilities in the Chinatown area and opened the Pender Y.”<sup>16</sup>

With each passing decade, we continued to support the underserved—mainly women and children—with innovative programs and advocacy to address the root causes of inequality.







## THE NEXT 125

Today, Metro Vancouver looks to the YWCA for the leadership that comes from more than a century of helping women and families realize their full potential. And while we continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of our communities, we remain committed to our vision of achieving women's equality.

As we prepare to celebrate our 125th Anniversary, we see this milestone as an opportunity to reflect on our history and dream big about what the future holds.

In the next 125 years, we will be unwavering in our commitment to build on the work we began in 1897. Each year, the YWCA touches the lives of approximately 45,000 people through our 45 programs and services in 58 locations across Metro Vancouver. Our holistic, integrated programs and services help lift women and families out of poverty, provide the best start for children and create new opportunities for education, employment and leadership.

As Metro Vancouver grows and evolves, so too do its needs. The YWCA is committed to growing with our community. Together we can raise \$10M to help meet the needs of women and families for the next 125 years and beyond.

With your help, we will continue to work toward positive social change to improve the lives of women and families throughout Metro Vancouver. Join us in our efforts to lift up single mothers and their children. With collaboration, inclusion and Reconciliation as our guides, together we can create a safe, healthy, vibrant future where all single mother-led families can thrive.

The future needs us now.



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Klein, Seth et. al., “Long Overdue: Why BC Needs a Poverty Reduction Plan,” Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Crosier, T., et al., “Mental health problems among single and partnered mothers. The role of financial hardship and social support,” *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 42(1), 6th ser., 6-13, 2007, accessed October 2017, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17203237>.

<sup>3</sup> Frenette, Marc, “Why Are Youth from Lower-income Families Less Likely to Attend University? Evidence from Academic Abilities, Parental Influences, and Financial Constraints,” *Statistics Canada Business and Labour Market Analysis*, February 2007, accessed January 2018, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.531.6041&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Dominique Fleury, “Low-Income Children,” *Perspectives on Labour and Income* 9, 5 Ottawa, Statistics Canada, May 2008, 1.

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF Canada, “UNICEF Report Card 10: Measuring Child Poverty, A Canadian Companion”, 2012, accessed January 2018, [http://www.unicef.ca/sites/default/files/imce\\_uploads/DISCOVER/OUR%20WORK/ADVOCACY/DOMESTIC/RESEARCH%20AND%20POLICY/DOCS/canadian\\_companion\\_fa.pdf](http://www.unicef.ca/sites/default/files/imce_uploads/DISCOVER/OUR%20WORK/ADVOCACY/DOMESTIC/RESEARCH%20AND%20POLICY/DOCS/canadian_companion_fa.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Arriagada, Paula, “Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report,” *Statistics Canada*, February 2016, accessed November 2017, <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14313-eng.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness, 2012, <http://www.homelesshub.ca/IndigenousHomelessness>.

<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada, 2017, Greater Vancouver, RD [Census division], British Columbia and British Columbia [Province] (table). *Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001*. Ottawa, released September 13, 2017, accessed October 2017, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>.

<sup>9</sup> Metro Vancouver Regional Affordable Housing Strategy, August 2015, Page 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Page 8.

<sup>11</sup> Fong, Francis, *Income Inequality in Canada: The Urban Gap*, July 2017.

<sup>12</sup> Metro Vancouver Regional Affordable Housing Strategy, August 2015, Page 14.

<sup>13</sup> Klein, Seth et. al., “Long Overdue: Why BC Needs a Poverty Reduction Plan”, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> BC Coroners Service Death Review Panel: A Review of Intimate Partner Violence Deaths 2010-2015, November, 2016, Page 8, accessed October 23, 2017, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/death-investigation/death-review-panel/intimate-partner-violence2010-2015.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Business Council of British Columbia, *BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity*, 2013, 8-11.

<sup>16</sup> *The Pender Y...Where Would You Be Without It*, Pender Y Reunion, YWCA Metro Vancouver, 1997.







535 Hornby Street  
Vancouver, BC V6C 2E8

tel 604 895 5763  
fax 604 684 9171

[ywcavan.org/next125](http://ywcavan.org/next125)

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**NEXT  
125**

*YWCA Metro Vancouver is a registered charity providing a range of integrated services for women and their families, and those seeking to improve the quality of their lives. From early learning and child care to housing, health and fitness, employment services and leadership, YWCA Metro Vancouver touches lives in our communities.*