



2024/25

ANNUAL REPORT



YWCA
NWT

Rooted in Truth. Mission Driven.

ABOUT YWCA NWT

YWCA NWT is the largest non-profit social services provider in the Northwest Territories. Since 1966, we have worked with women and families to move them from crisis to stability, advocated for gender equity, and created safer northern communities.

IN THE NWT, WE...

- Impact the lives of more than 4,000 people across the territory
- Are the largest provider of licensed childcare, offering 225 spaces in 11 age-specific programs in five schools
- Are the only non-profit organization providing transitional and emergency housing to families
- Help to build economic security, promote personal wellness and create opportunities for women and families
- Provide integrated, culturally-safe, wraparound support to break the cycle of violence and homelessness
- Advocate for supports to eliminate family violence and to support survivors of violence



VISION

Equality for women and girls in a safe Northern society.

MISSION

We build safe and equitable communities where women, girls and families can realize their full potential.

CONNECT WITH US!



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



JULIE GREEN

**Board Chair
YWCA NWT**

The role of the YWCA NWT board is to provide high level direction for the organization and to support the staff in implementation of its decisions. We appreciate our Executive Director and the rest of the staff who worked hard to provide excellent programming to our clients in housing, gender-based violence and for children and youth. Our management group has done excellent work on reconciliation with Indigenous people. Following an apology for historic harms experienced by clients in our programs, staff have created a reconciliation plan to implement recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls Commission (MMIWG), which we have already started to implement.

We offer a wealth of services to women, children and families, and we always want to do more. We particularly thank the staff who tried to establish a day care on Haener Drive last fall, and who are now working with the Government of the

Northwest Territories to launch a day care on 48th Street. We understand the importance of providing quality, affordable day care to families, particularly that service which assists with women's independence. We are proud that we were able to expand our family support services by combining two programs into the Family Resource Centre at a new location, where staff assist families who are at the beginning of their parenting journey.

A mostly new board of directors kicked governance into high gear last fall. The new directors include me, Rami Kaur, Lorraine Mizariri, Lynn Napier, Aida Nciri, Stacey Sundberg, and Kate Wedzin who joined returning members Kathy Spooner and Rose Jiang. Thanks to the directors who departed for their service to the YWCA NWT board. The new members activated the various board subcommittees, including Finance and Advocacy. We have been working together with staff on a five-year strategic plan, that will be launched this fall.

Thanks again to staff, funders, partners and other YWCA affiliates for their commitment and passion to improve the lives of women, children and families.

Sincerely,

**Julie Green
Board Chair
YWCA NWT**

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



HAWA DUMBUYA-SESAY

**Executive Director
YWCA NWT**

This past year has been one of transformation, resilience, and deepened commitment to the communities we serve, marked by our ongoing efforts to acknowledge our past, confront difficult truths, and take meaningful steps toward reconciliation. As we reflect on the work of 2024–25, I am incredibly proud of what our team, partners, and supporters have accomplished together—often under challenging and uncertain conditions.

One of the most significant moments of the year was the public release of the preliminary report on YWCA Canada's historical involvement in Residential Schools and Indian Hospitals. The report named YWCA NWT as one of the providers of residential services for young women, marking a difficult but necessary moment of accountability. This acknowledgment has deepened our commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action and strengthened our resolve to deliver programs that are

Indigenous-driven, culturally grounded and safe for those most impacted by colonial violence. In response, we formalized our reconciliation efforts through a new TRC Action Plan and welcomed an in-house Elder to guide this journey, alongside Indigenous partners and community Elders.

Our housing and shelter programs continued to provide critical safety and support to women and families across the Northwest Territories. From Alison McAteer House in Yellowknife, our Independent Legal Advice and Representation Program for survivors to our community safe homes, our focus has remained clear: to offer trauma-informed, wraparound services that honour the dignity and strength of survivors. This year, we also advocated for housing as a human right at the Legislative Assembly, demonstrating our continued leadership in addressing systemic housing gaps in the North.

We expanded supports for families by integrating the Family Connections program into our Family Centre, delivering more comprehensive services to pregnant women and new parents. Our Girls and Dudes Clubs empowered youth through inclusive, gender-responsive programming, while our afterschool and drop-in programs provided safe, enriching spaces for children.

Advocacy remained central to our work. Whether offering input on legislative reform, pressing for adequate shelter funding, or joining national partners like YWCA Canada and Women's Shelters Canada to advance gender equity, we continued to amplify the voices of those most impacted by violence, poverty, and injustice.

The strength of our organization lies in our people—our dedicated staff, board, funders, and community partners. Thank you for believing in our mission and for standing with us as we build a more just and equitable future for women, children, and families in the North.

In solidarity,

**Hawa Dumbuya-Sesay
Executive Director
YWCA NWT**

OUR IMPACT: 2024/25

We are proud of the work we do to support women and families throughout the Northwest Territories, and the positive impact we have across the territory.

This past year, **more than 4,000 people** were positively impacted through YWCA NWT's work.



Housed
167 families
(163 children)



127 families (111 children) kept from homelessness by paying outstanding utilities/rental arrears



104 women and 42 children kept safe at family violence shelter

Answered
2,433 calls on emergency crisis line



148 women and Elders protected through an Emergency Protection Order



Provided emergency housing for **35 families**



152 participants in Indigenous Mental Wellness Programming



33 people stayed in community safe homes



30 women (30 children) housed at Lynn's Place who may have otherwise stayed in unsafe situations

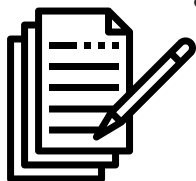
225 licensed childcare spaces, 11 programs, in 5 schools



537 children (aged infant - 6) attended Family Centre programs, with **426 parents and caregivers**



1,226 safe bed nights provided at Alison McAteer House Family Violence Shelter



86 intakes in the Independent Legal Advice & Representation Program (ILAR)



731 professional hours provided to people through ILAR program



108 youth benefitted from empowerment and leadership programs

OUR COMMITMENT TO TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

In 2024, YWCA Canada - the national organization representing 29 member associations across Canada - released a summary report and formal apology to Indigenous communities for their past involvement in programs offered at residential schools and what was then referred to as Indian hospitals. The report outlined past actions and involvement of Canadian YWCA's, along with commitments to healing, accountability and redress. This marked a crucial step in guiding the path forward in truth-telling and building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities. While YWCA NWT was named as one of the service providers to young Indigenous women, primarily through the delivery of recreational activities and housing, it is not clear what involvement YWCA NWT had in these activities.

Even prior to the release of this report, YWCA NWT had made several steps to put the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in place and to take meaningful steps toward reconciliation and to ensure programming is respectful and reflective of the needs of our clients. Targeted actions taken by YWCA NWT include appointing an in-house Elder to guide Indigenous programming, engaging with staff to develop action plans and timelines to put TRC recommendations in place, and ensuring staff are educated about the residential school system, colonization, and the irreparable harms caused to Indigenous Peoples from this painful history.

YWCA NWT is also committed to undertaking further engagement and research to create a plan for reconciliation and redress that is informed by the community.

“Part of our commitment to advancing the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is to better understand, acknowledge and address our organization's historical involvement in colonial practices. By upholding institutions that have broken apart Indigenous families and attempted to eradicate Indigenous cultures, we have caused harm that is too widespread to measure, and we offer an unreserved apology to the individuals, families and communities we harmed by upholding and perpetuating practices of assimilation and colonization. While we cannot change this legacy, our organization is deeply sorry for the YWCA's actions and for the truths that will emerge as we continue to learn about our past. We vow to do better.”

-Hawa Dumbuya-Sesay, Executive Director, YWCA NWT



PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Housing

YWCA NWT is the owner and operator of two residential transitional housing programs: Gotłi Kò and Lynn's Safe Place for Women (Lynn's Place). What makes transitional housing different from ordinary housing is the care and attention provided by family support workers. YWCA NWT staff work with each family to look at issues that may have destabilized their housing in the past such as debt, addictions, physical or mental health issues, family violence, or others and offers in-house wrap-around support to help address root causes that may have led to housing instability in the past. Once stabilized, YWCA NWT works with landlords, women and families to find appropriate housing within the community. Gotłi Kò has four floors, with 21 family units on three floors – three studio units, twelve one-bedroom units, and six two-bedroom units. Half of the units are fully accessible and suit families with a variety of mobility needs. Several housing units are kept open as emergency units. Lynn's Place is a safe housing building for women who need safe housing after leaving a violent relationship or who are ready to find stability. It has 18 suites on three floors with six single units (including two that are wheelchair accessible), 10, two-bedroom units and two, three-bedroom units. Rent is affordable based on CMHC guidelines.

Housing program challenges this past year include increased cost of living and lack of affordable rental units for families, and lack of stable, multi-year funding that makes staff retention challenging. We are also seeing an increase of people coming to YWCA NWT who need intensive support due to major trauma, complex medical or mental health conditions, addictions, and poverty. We continue to advocate for adequate, long-term funding to continue to provide wraparound support for the growing number of people who need our services, so families can thrive.

Indigenous Mental Wellness Program

The Indigenous Mental Wellness Program provided cultural programming and workshops to help improve the mental, spiritual, emotional, psychological and physical health and well-being of participants.



In-house Elder, Darlene Powder, leading a medicine bag workshop

In partnership with Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN), B-Dene Camp, Bows & Arrows Inc and Elders, participants enjoyed various activities that connect or re-connect them with the land, their culture and themselves such as on-the-land outings, healing workshops, medicine bag making, making traditional teas and medicines, cooking, beading classes, sewing classes, making items such as beaver mitts, and others.

The YWCA NWT's in-house Elder, Darlene Powder, also started 'Kokum's Korner' where a Kokum (grandma) reads books to toddlers, followed by activities centred around the book theme. It is a popular program that engages children, parents and caregivers. A sincere Mahsi Cho (thank you) to William Greenland for his assistance, as well as to YKDFN counselors and Elders for sharing their teachings and knowledge.



This is a safe space. A healing space. I feel like I belong.

-Program participant

Shelter from Family Violence

Alison McAteer House (AMH) offers a secure, anonymous refuge for women and their children experiencing violence. With six bedrooms and 12 beds, staff provide women with a caring, non-judgemental ear, referrals, and support to help determine their options. Staff also answer phones from women across the territory on the 24/7 crisis line and assist women and Elders in obtaining Emergency Protection Orders, which keep an abuser away from them for a period of time and/or protects Elders from abuse by younger family members.

Community Safe Homes

These community-managed Safe Homes in Fort Simpson and Fort Good Hope offer options for women and children who are fleeing violence to stay in their home community. YWCA NWT is working with the community to continue this pilot project, started in 2023, and obtain long-term, stable funding so the safe homes can continue to remain open.



ILAR partnered with the Inuvik Justice Committee and Tahluqtiit Women's Society for International Women's Day events and met with local RCMP and service providers

Independent Legal Advice & Representation (ILAR) Program

The ILAR Program offers specialized support in the legal system to survivors of sexual violence, family violence, and Emergency Protection Orders (EPOs) across the Northwest Territories. Lawyers provide free legal advice to survivors, attend court, and perform legal research, always ensuring to respect survivors' privacy and help them make informed decisions.

In August 2024, the ILAR program expanded to include therapists to provide mental health support to survivors as they navigate the legal system. As of March 31, 2025, there were 13 lawyers and four therapists within the ILAR program providing free services to survivors.



I think the program is fantastic. ... Having independent representation for survivors is huge, and ... certainly the general sense is that people who are participating in the court process seem to feel more empowered and more aware of their rights and the legal system in general and supported in a way that we're not able to do because we're not there as their lawyers. And so knowing that that's something that's available to them, I think does make a huge difference."

-Lawyer feedback, ILAR lawyer panel

Canadian YWCA affiliates gather together at One Movement Meeting (OMM) November 2024

Children & Youth Programs

Affordable After-school Childcare

The After-School program provides top-quality, play-based learning for children from junior kindergarten up to age 11, at five Yellowknife schools. As the largest licensed childcare provider in the territory, trained staff - with a 10:1 ratio - provide care for up to 245 children. Last fiscal year, the program had 225 children as finding and keeping staff to maintain the required ratio continued to be a challenge. As a licensed early learning program, the Government of the Northwest Territories determines the program fees. Program leaders continued to work closely with our license provider on program regulation changes outlined in the Federal Government's 2030 Early Learning and Child Care Strategy and the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. YWCA NWT is also working diligently to increase the number of day care spots available due to the massive community need.

Family Resource Centre

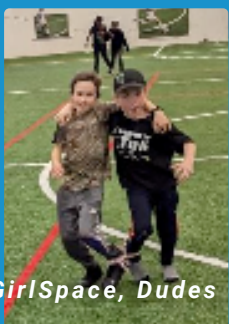
Open year-round, the YWCA NWT Family Resource Centre offers free programming for children from infant to age six, with their parents or caregivers. Programs include open play, workshops on parenting and nutrition, outings to local playgrounds and play centres and other activities to stimulate young minds and create a positive bond between parents and children. Also offered as part of programming is a free Toy Lending library, where families can borrow toys, books and other resources.

As of April 1, 2025, Family Resource Centre programming expanded to incorporate the Family Connections Program, previously operated by the Yellowknife Women's Society. The new name of the program is YWCA NWT Family Resource Centre. Part of the expanded program includes pre-natal and pregnancy support services. The program is located at 4909 51 Ave, Yellowknife on the 2nd floor.

Youth Leadership Programs

GirlSpace (ages 8-17) and Dudes Club (ages 8-14) encourages youth participants to build self-esteem and skills including leadership, communication and problem-solving. Activities, outings, guest speakers, on-the-land activities, community volunteering, workshops and more focus on creating resilient young leaders by providing a safe space for youth to learn, share, talk, create and make friendships.

Project Child Recovery is offered for children and youth who have witnessed or experienced trauma such as family violence, addictions in the home, bullying, or grief/loss. Led by skilled staff, programming encourages youth to talk about their feelings, explore healthy coping strategies and build self-esteem.

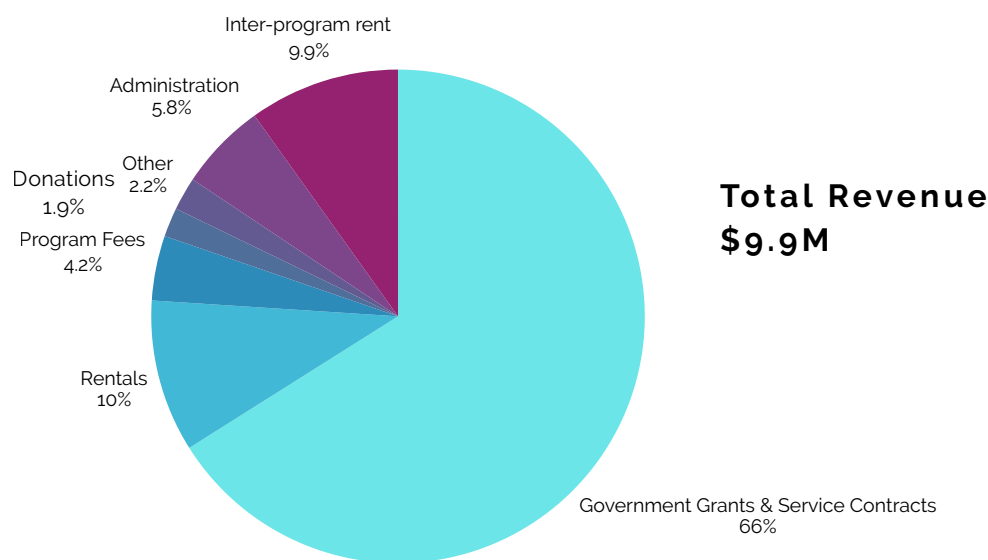


Children & Youth Programs - After-School program, GirlSpace, Dudes Club

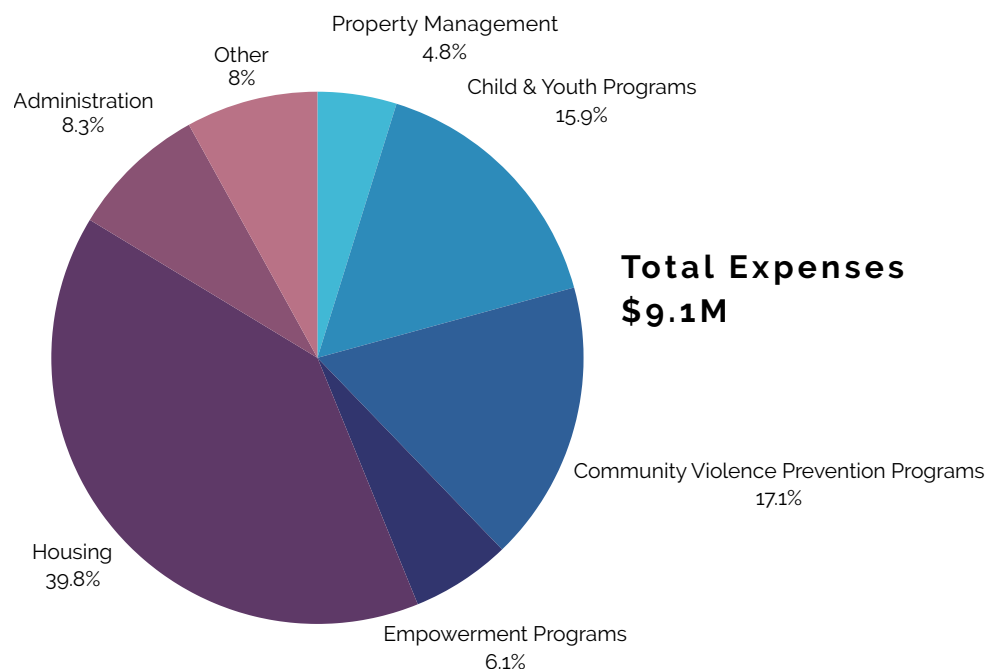
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

YWCA NWT is committed to careful financial management that brings maximum benefits to the people we serve and ensures long-term sustainability of the organization. Financials are independently audited annually to ensure transparency and accountability to our donors, supporters and partners. The summary financials below indicate YWCA NWT's financial position as of year end on March 31, 2025.

REVENUE



EXPENSES



OUR DONORS & SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our generous donors, supporters and partners! With your contributions - both financial and in-kind, we have positively impacted the lives of thousands of Northern women and families.

In keeping with a practice established by YWCA Canada in 2025, YWCA NWT will no longer be publishing the names of individual donors in our annual report.

- **Government of Canada**
- **Government of the Northwest Territories**
- **ScotiaRISE**
- **City of Yellowknife**
- **Canadian Women's Foundation**
- **YWCA Canada**
- **MakeWay Foundation**
- **NWT on the Land Collaborative**
- **United Way NWT**
- **Yellowknife Community Foundation**
- **Yellowknife Co-op**
- **Rio Tinto Diavik Diamond Mine**
- **Yellowknife Education District No. 1**
- **Shoppers Drug Mart Yellowknife**
- **Dollar a Day Foundation**
- **DC Moving**
- **Your Independent Grocer Yellowknife**
- **Rogers Communications**
- **For Women Only**
- **Canadian Online Giving Foundation**
- **Charitable Impact Foundation Canada**
- **Crowe MacKay LLP**
- **E&M Maintenance Services**
- **Ledcor Industries Inc.**
- **Northern Employee Benefit Services**
- **Northview Canadian HY Properties LP**
- **Pro Act Consulting**
- **RCMP Executive Officers Team (Yellowknife)**
- **Royal LePage Shelter Foundation**
- **Shoppers Foundation for Women's Health**



YWCA
NWT

A TURNING POINT
FOR WOMEN