



News Release

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YMCA of Eastern Ontario Receives Funding for New Teen Drop-in Space

Brockville, ON – Thanks to receiving \$136,000 in funding through the Emergency Community Support Fund from the Brockville and Area Community Foundation and the United Way of Leeds and Grenville, the YMCA of Eastern Ontario is announcing that it will be opening a teen drop-in centre at the Brockville YMCA in September.

“Last fall, we ran Teen Night every Friday night, providing local teens with safe, inclusive space for them to socialize with their friends,” said Rob Adams, CEO, YMCA of Eastern Ontario. “The pandemic has shone a light on just how important this program is and the effects that isolation can have on our youth.”

Shortly before the pandemic hit, the Y signed a partnership agreement with Connect Youth Inc. to provide free Y memberships to at-risk youth. This partnership will now be able to not only come to fruition, but will grow. Connect Youth and the Y are strengthening their alliance by sharing program delivery for the teen drop-in program.

“The YMCA has always evolved to meet the needs of its community. COVID-19 has certainly highlighted some issues, particularly around mental health and the need to address social isolation. It has also shown us that we need to seek out and to welcome partnership arrangements so we continue to meet the changing needs of Eastern Ontario,” Adams said.

Funds will be used to renovate space at the Brockville YMCA that will be dedicated to the drop-in program, and for programming supports such as computers and guitars. The new teen drop-in program will run Monday to Friday and provide local youth with a safe, positive environment to socialize, have a snack, access wifi and to play guitar or video games. Safety measures against COVID-19 will be in place including: self-screening, room sanitizing, access to hand sanitizing stations and physical spacing.

“It’s great to see the YMCA partnering with United Way to receive this funding. The YMCA has been a terrific advocate for youth and I encourage every parent and guardian to look into the YMCA and their Youth Drop-In Centre,” said Michael Barrett, MP for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. “Young people become the leaders of tomorrow by their unique experiences and the opportunity to build leadership skills. With fitness lessons, access to food, and leadership training, the YMCA will play a vital role as our community opens up and youth can regain their daily lives.”

About the YMCA of Eastern Ontario

The YMCA of Eastern Ontario is a charity that provides programs and services to improve health and health outcomes, develops leaders, helps build social connections and provide safe, inclusive spaces for people of all ages. The Y is Canada’s largest provider of childcare with trademarked curricula, and offers fitness and other programs including SCUBA, Karate and Total Life Care (specialized programming for individuals with chronic conditions).

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