



LONDON

## INVESTING IN THE LIVES OF YOUTH

Yet I will still dare to hope.

“I will never forget this awful time,  
as I grieve over my loss.”

Lamentations 3:20

These words were scribed by the exiles from Jerusalem when Babylon took them captive and destroyed their city. However, they also describe so many youth and families who have become overwhelmed by the challenges this pandemic has created for them. These barriers only compounded what they were already facing, leaving a feeling that it would be foolish to even consider hope.

The writer continues by saying “Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is His faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each morning. I say to myself: ‘The Lord is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in Him!’”  
Lamentations 3:21-24

The same hope is what our city’s youth need today and I am thrilled to share with you that the team at YFC London is able to do so through your generous support. As we navigate the next few months of transitions, we are providing inclusive hybrid programs whereby youth can meet in person, or virtually, as we simultaneously connect. We don’t want any youth to miss out regardless of restrictions that may be in place at any given time.

Please pray that as we connect and gather youth together again, they may “still dare to hope” as they discover the faithful love of the Lord!



We are praying for you too!

In His peace,

James Coolidge  
Executive Director, YFC London

## COMMUNITY

We want to fully engage in and with our neighbourhoods and nurture healthy community interaction with staff, volunteers, families, local partners and most of all, young people.

## GOD-CENTRED

We believe that personal faith is essential and that spiritual questions can and should be explored with freedom, respect and integrity.



## SAFE SPACES

We strive to provide a safe, welcoming place where youth can come, connect, feel appreciated and have fun.



## RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

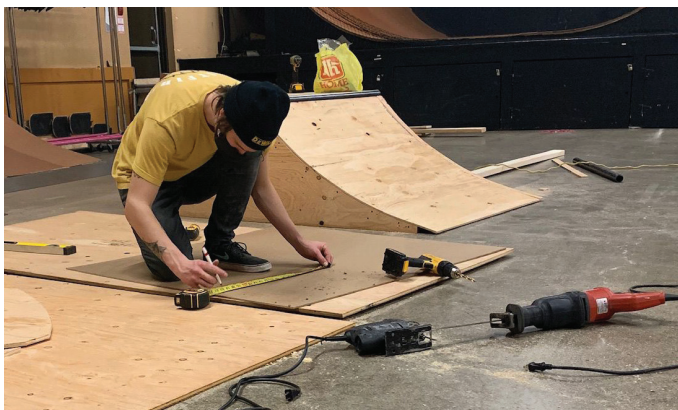
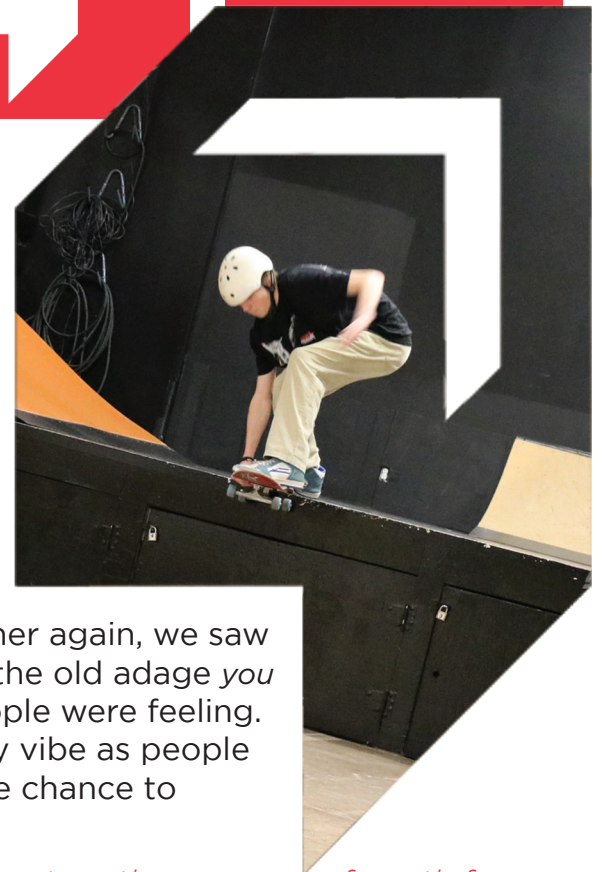
We desire to journey alongside and build strength into young lives during these important adolescent years; encouraging them to discover, grow, lead and learn.

# SKATEPARK

Skateboarding is super popular with youth of all ages and our open skatepark has been a fantastic place for young people to meet, socialize and practice some new tricks. The program has seen more youth attending in 2021 fall/winter than the entire winter season of 2019/2020! It's especially exciting when we see three of our highschool staff helping to organize and run the program. They are using the skills they have to serve others while developing new skills too!

When restrictions were lifted and we could come together again, we saw how intentional youth were about connecting. Perhaps the old adage *you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone* describes how people were feeling. After a period of mandatory isolation, there was a family vibe as people returned to the community skatepark and welcomed the chance to interact together.

*Youth for Christ teamed up with Skatelite Toronto to bring together a group of youth for an overnight camp at Brockville. The two organizations joined together to build a stronger skateboard community, reconnect with peers and make new friends.*



## ALL HANDS ON DECK!

Our highschool staff put their construction skills to good use when they helped build obstacles for our skatepark. Not only did this employment opportunity at YFC London give them valuable work experience but it was also a chance to refine their social interaction skills, professionalism and leadership qualities.

# BASKETBALL

Compass is a community basketball program that started in the Pond Mills area in 2013. It started as pick-up ball with over 30 highschool boys - some with experience and many without. The goal of Compass Basketball is to use basketball to

- Build relationships
- Create mentoring opportunities
- Provide a safe environment where players feel loved and encouraged
- Allow them to find their God-given purpose and identity

As we open our doors once again, Compass Basketball programs continue to provide mentorship, passion, friendship and motivation for the youth. Our coaches have also had an enormous impact with their positive outlook, acceptance and love of the game. The kids that participate are seeing a huge turnaround with their mental health and attitude towards life.

We are so grateful to Jay Lawrence and the incredible YFC coaches for having created a program in London for our community youth despite the planning challenges that COVID-19 brought with it.



## FROM A PARENT:

YFC made a life-changing impact for our son. In the summer of 2019 he joined the Compass camp and learned the basketball skills required to be able to earn a spot on a London competitive team.

## YOUTH STORY:

A family reached out to us this summer, when their son was moving to London. He would be staying with his grandparents and the parents wanted this young man to connect and engage with something as soon as possible. After coming out to Compass Basketball, the grandfather has expressed his thankfulness to us that his grandson could make this new start and shared that they were seeing a different kid.

Initially they were quite worried about him and would come and watch his practices to make sure that he was ok. He has now become one of the “main” guys and has built some great friendships with the other players.

It is awesome to see him joking around and laughing with his teammates even more than making layups and shots.



## THANKS JAY:

Coach Jay is a good guy. He is a Christian. He has been a big part of my life and has helped me a lot. He actually cares. I am focusing on school, helping around the house. He has helped me not only in basketball but in becoming a better person and has helped build my relationship with God.



# HUB HARVEST

*Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day.  
Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.*

Hub Harvest is a program designed for families. It is an 8 week meal assistance program that combines food, family, community and culinary skills. It enables families to be confident in learning about food prep and budgeting.

Each Hub Harvest recipe includes a link to a YouTube tutorial to assist in the cooking process.

## What Families are Saying About Hub Harvest...

- It has relieved the stress & financial strain
- We are coming together as a family to cook
- We are excited about cooking
- It has helped with my self esteem
- Truly been a blessing
- We are having fun and learning

## PANDEMIC PROBLEMS

Throughout the pandemic, YFC London has been integral in supporting and encouraging our young people. We would love for you to pray for the things that are most concerning to them:

- Important life events and experiences they have missed out on
- Constant changes in restrictions
- Modified nature of school with hands-on learning (like the trades and arts) being hindered
- Feelings of loss and grief as they try to work out this new normal
- Mental health issues that have surfaced
- Close connections that have been lost



## THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING OUR FALL BANQUET:



## SAVE THE DATE:

- JUNE 9** - Annual Golf Tournament
- JUNE 25** - Next Step Challenge
- SEPT 26** - Ironman Golf Challenge
- OCT 24** - Annual Fundraising Banquet