

YW KITCHENER-WATERLOO ANNUAL REPORT 2024



This mural, inspired by Eva Lukacovics, YW Family Services Manager, is located on a pillar in the common area at Block Line Supportive Housing. Staff and tenants created the leaves using hand prints. The tree symbolizes the permanence and stability provided to the women after long periods of homelessness, while birds and butterflies represent the women themselves, chosen by them to reflect their journey and transformation.



KITCHENER-WATERLOO

WOMEN CHOOSING CHANGE

www.ywkw.ca
[@ywcakw](https://twitter.com/ywcakw)

Leadership Message



Dear friends, colleagues and supporters

At the YW Kitchener-Waterloo (YWKW), we are proud of the impactful work we are doing to support women, gender diverse people, and families in our community. When we empower women and families, we strengthen the social fabric that binds us together. Our programs and services are designed to provide the tools, resources, and supports needed for individuals to achieve their full potential. By lifting each other up, we create a ripple effect of positive change that extends far beyond our immediate reach, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

INVESTING IN FAMILIES

Our early childhood education programs provide quality care and learning opportunities for children, fostering a safe and nurturing environment for their development. We continue to advocate for, and invest in, the early years sector, and will be opening our fifth childcare centre in the Fall of 2025.

INVESTING IN FUTURES

Our employment and training programs are designed to equip women and gender diverse people with the skills and confidence needed to achieve economic independence and overcome barriers to employment and in 2024, we were pleased to expand our programming to support some of the most vulnerable women in our community, bringing trauma-informed, supportive employment programming to women in shelter and supportive housing programs. This work truly allows women to change their futures, giving them the tools, support and resources necessary to build independence.

INVESTING IN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

In 2024, our housing programs continued to offer essential support to women and families experiencing homelessness, providing them with safe and stable housing options. Local data highlights the growing demand for supportive housing in our region with more than 200 women on the local wait list. In 2023, we opened a new 10-unit affordable housing project at 1480 Block Line Road for mothers and their children in Kitchener, which has already made a significant impact on the lives of families experiencing homelessness. With this building, the YW now owns and operates 105 units of deeply affordable supportive housing for vulnerable women and children in our region.

Our commitment to expanding housing options is unwavering, and we will continue to work with our partners to address the housing crisis and ensure that every woman and family has access to safe and stable housing.

INVESTING IN OUR TEAM

Since 2022, the YW has worked to commit to our strategic aim to be the best place for women to work. In the past three years our employee engagement survey results have improved by 9 percentage points, with positive shifts made in engagement, culture, well-being and performance. The work that we do is often filled with significant challenges and yet, our staff continue to show unwavering commitment and empathy. It is because of their hard work that we can continue to make a difference in our community, and we will continue to support and invest in our people.

As we reflect on 2024, we think about the significant strides we have made and will continue to make in addressing women's issues locally and nationally. We remain steadfast in our commitment to empowering women and advancing gender equity. The landscape of women's issues in Canada continues to evolve, with critical areas such as gender-based violence, economic inequality, and access to affordable childcare and housing requiring our continued and urgent attention.

Our advocacy efforts continue to be a cornerstone of our mission. We work tirelessly to raise awareness and drive policy changes that promote gender equity and social justice. Our relationship with YWCA National strengthens our ability to advocate for systemic change at both the local and national levels. Together, we are committed to advancing an equity agenda that addresses the root causes of inequality and empowers women to thrive.

Leadership Report

- continued

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead, we are dedicated to ensuring a sustainable future for YWKW. Our growth is driven by the needs of those we serve, and we are committed to adapting our programs and services to meet the evolving challenges faced by women and families. To this end, we have embarked on a long-term housing strategy that aims to provide a continuum of housing with supports tailored to the complex needs of our community. This strategy includes the development of new affordable housing units and the enhancement of our existing shelter services to offer comprehensive support for women and families experiencing homelessness.

As we move forward, we remain inspired by the resilience and strength of the women we serve. We are grateful for the support of our community, donors, volunteers and partners, who make our work possible. We would like to acknowledge and celebrate our long-standing supporters at Club 84 as they celebrate their 45th anniversary in 2025! We couldn't have done it without you.

Together we can rise to meet these challenges head-on and lead the change we wish to see.

Let us continue to champion the cause of gender equity, advocate for systemic change, and build a brighter, more equitable future for all.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Breaton, CEO and
Karen Coviello, Board Chair

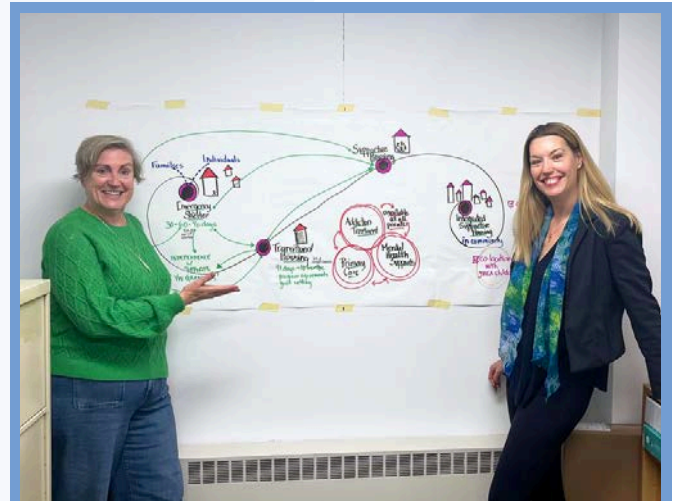
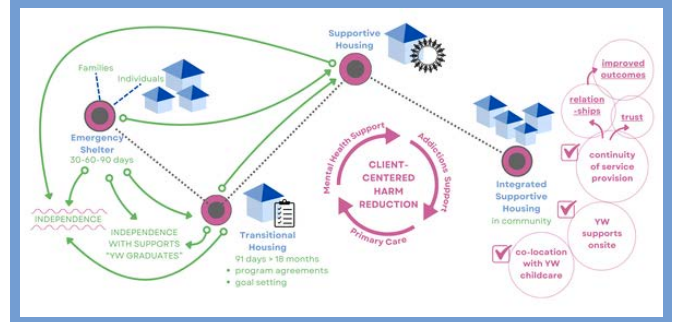


Figure 1 Leadership in Action: Karen and Jennifer map the way forward for a YW Housing Continuum



MISSION, VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mission Statement

YW Kitchener-Waterloo is dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls by providing services and programs that support physical and mental wellbeing and economic choice and independence.

Vision Statement

We envision an inclusive and equitable world where women are empowered to choose change.

Guiding Principles

- We respect the dignity and worth of individuals.
- We value diversity among people.
- We acknowledge the holistic nature of human needs—body, mind, and spirit.
- We respect the fundamental right to self-determination.
- We ensure that women are respected, their voices are heard, and their issues are addressed.
- We focus clearly, but not exclusively, on women and girls.
- We act with integrity and are accountable to our community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Strengthen our voice and leadership to increase the profile of the YW and drive positive change in the community
- Integrate support systems and remove barriers to expand and improve our services
- Be the best place for women to work

CELEBRATING OUR WORK

SUPPORTIVE & AFFORDABLE HOUSING



103
women
53
children




Our **supportive and affordable housing programs** offer a safe and secure home for women and families, assisting them in transitioning from homelessness to stable housing and independence. **We provide comprehensive support services designed to build self-confidence, facilitate the journey to independence, and enhance quality of life.**

The YW's **emergency shelter services** for families not only meets basic needs for families in crisis but also **equips each family member with tools to enhance their quality of life and health, navigate challenges, and build strong community connections.**

EMERGENCY SHELTER SERVICES



331
adults
291
children



We are proud of the impactful work we are doing to support women, gender diverse people, and families in our community. When we empower women and families, we strengthen the social fabric that binds us together.

1,648

SERVED IN

2024

INTEGRATED HOLISTIC CAREER SERVICES

223
adults
16
youth



Through coaching, guidance, and hands-on experience at our thrift store, our **career services** programs help local youth, women, and gender diverse individuals to **discover new skills and opportunities**, and **remove barriers to economic independence**.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

631
children

Educators in our **childcare programs** create a safe learning environment for children using play and social interaction tailored to their personalities and learning styles. Through a play-based curriculum, they **enhance their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development by providing opportunities for learning and practice**.



Supportive
& Affordable
Housing

105
units

Affordable
Housing Large
Families

4
units

Newcomer
Childminding
Program

Career
Services
Programs

5

Advocacy
at Every
Level

4
Childcare
Centres

Family
Shelter
Services

4
Before-
and After-
School care



Financial Reports

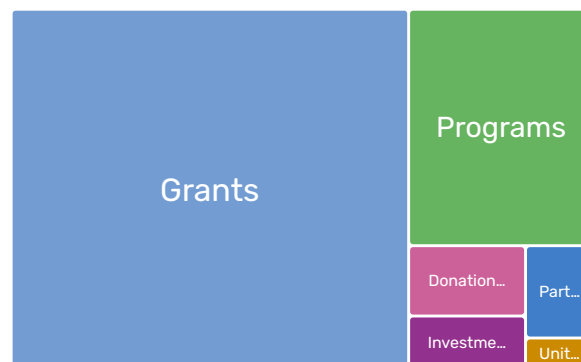
SCHEDULE OF OPERATING FUND BALANCES

for the year ended December 31, 2024

Revenues

Programs	\$ 2,336,750
Grants	
Federal Funding - Operating ...	1,090,464
Provincial Funding	41,009
Regional Funding	6,167,935
Corporations and Foundations .	306,351
Total Grants	\$ 7,605,759
United Way	\$ 75,000
Donations and Special Events	\$ 438,973
Investment income	\$ 275,832
Partnerships Contracts	\$ 282,299

Total Revenues	\$ 11,014,613
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Expenses

Salaries and Benefits	\$ 7,661,630
Occupancy Costs	\$ 1,664,954
Financial Costs	\$ (14,702)
Program Costs	\$ 638,621
Office Administration	\$ 564,547
Interest on Long Term Debt	\$ 3,104
Other	\$ 92,938

Total Expenses	\$ 10,611,092
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Excess of Revenues over Expenses Before Other Items	\$ 403,521
Other Items (including amortization and gains on long term investments)	\$ (359,961)
Gain on Disposition of Capital Assets (see note)	\$ 2,887,622

Excess of Revenues Over Expenses for the Year	\$ 2,931,182
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Note: Gain on Disposition of Capital Assets - In 2024, the YW sold the property at 84 Frederick Street, Kitchener at a realized gain of approximately \$2.9 million.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

for the year ended December 31, 2024

2024

2023

Assets

Current

Cash and cash equivalents	7,150,191	540,503
Investments	1,786,988	1,611,480
Accounts receivable	625,330	856,420
HST recoverable	79,380	518,626
Prepaid expenses	114,285	17,676

9,756,174 3,544,705

Tangible capital assets

14,126,571 17,760,901

\$23,882,745 \$21,305,606

Liabilities

Current

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,051,189	796,006
Deferred income	437,702	913,164
Current long term debt - mortgages	0	128,280
Current long term debt - other	30,652	29,452

1,519,543 1,866,902

Long term

Other long term debt	276,468	307,505
Asset retirement obligation	116,267	91,762

392,735 399,267

1,912,278 2,266,169

Net Assets

Externally restricted 704,286 642,753

Internally restricted 21,073,021 18,172,629

Unrestricted 193,160 224,055

21,970,467 19,039,437

\$23,882,745 \$21,305,606

To view the Audited Financial Statements, visit:
<https://ywk.ca/publications-resources/>

Recognizing our supporters

Thank you to the individuals, businesses, foundations, groups, and organizations who generously donated \$20 or more in 2024. We are profoundly grateful for your support. We also wish to thank those donors who have chosen to remain anonymous.

CLUB 84 DONORS

Mary Kaufman Circle (840+)

Arisa Alexanian
Judith Astley
Mary Brough
Karen Coviello
Pat Cunningham
Connie Deckert
Sue Hallman
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Alberta Jack
Heather Lackner
Desta Leavine
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Christine Michaud
Marilyn Post
Sandra Reid
Mary Reynolds
Marcia Shortreed
Terry Wilson
Glennis Yantzi
Cassandra Zehr
Anonymous - 1

Four 84 (484+)

Mary Barrett
Jane Cowan
Nancy Croth
Jenna Cruickshank
Sandra Dare
Barbara Dell
Cathryn Finch
Roberta Finnie
Marilyn Forler
Pam Irwin
Christiane Kahlen
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Andrea Witzel
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Anonymous - 2

84 and More (184+)

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Mary Boucher
Mary Joan Brooker
Courtney Cheal
Susan Clark
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Amaryah DeGroot
Elizabeth A Dell
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84 and More (184+) continued

Hulene Montgomery and Michael Graham
Jane and Scott Morley
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Ann Power
Bev Pullen
Shirley Raetsen
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Marion L. Roes
Jane Sleeman
Jodi Spall
Nancy Theberge
Elizabeth Thorsen
Jane Valentine
Joanne Waugh
Lucille West
Barb Wilgar
Elizabeth Wylie
Anonymous - 6

Club 84 (84+)

Patricia Carty
Sandra Evans
Lorna Ferguson
Sylvia Froome
Cathy Gregory
Pat Hahn
Hildegard Hales
Gail Hauser
Ute Hilgers
Joan Holland Lehn
Nancy Lackner
Lindsay Lackner-McKenzie
Jean MacLean
Michelle McCorkell
Melanie McKellar
Joan McKinnon

Club 84 (84+) continued

Barbara McLean
Carla McLennan
Heather McLennan
Marilyn McMillan
Margaret Neigh
Marg Oldenburger
Annette Oudejans
Doreen Rockett
Renu Shan
Cynthia Snyder-Paleczny
Elaine Stamp
Carolyn Sullivan
Sandra Swann
Vikki Tait
Anonymous - 13



We would like to acknowledge and celebrate our long-standing supporters at Club 84 as they celebrate their 45th anniversary in 2025! We couldn't have done it without you.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Rhonda Allen
David and Barbara Arthur
Janet Sue Ashton
Jeffrey Baer
Sara Balint
Lorraine Beattie
Scott Beech and Cindy Lebold
Gary Gombita and Marla Bell-Gombita
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Natalie Dawkins

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Emily Doobay
Lucia Dow
Lorraine Easlick
Helen Eaton Ramirez
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Beverley Ervine
Jennifer Estabrooks
Julia Farquhar
Frances Isabel Field
Donna Finch
Kristine Fletcher
Donald Freeman

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Cathy Gregory
Iris Hall
Peggy Hallman
Frances Hatherton
Leah Henderson
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Margaret Johnston
Mary Karchemny
Gregory Kent
Victoria Kish
Nancy Koebel
Dawn Konig

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Constance Schuts
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Marcia Smellie
Kevin Smith
Cathy Snyder
Stuart and Ann Snyder
Stephanie Snyder
Helene St-Amand
Conner Stickles
Ruth Sushan
Margaret-Anne Tannassee
Yukako Tomiyama
Barb Trotter
Donald Upper
Gordon Vala-Webb
Maggie VanderMeulen
John Walker

Janet Wason
Carol Wilcox
Carissa Wright
Marie Young
Anonymous (42)

IN MEMORY

Edra (Pinheiro) Haan
Sheryl Loeffler
Sidney and Elizabeth McLennan

IN HONOR

Heather Lackner
Christine Michaud
Ashley Ver

BUSINESSES, GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Activa Holdings Inc.
Ampersand Printing
Appleton Services Inc.
Audi Kitchener-Waterloo
BCL Machinery
Camino Wellbeing
CanadaHelps
City of Kitchener
City of Waterloo
Conestoga College
Easy Way
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Little Mushroom Catering & Dining Lounge
Mabel's Labels
Mattamy Homes Limited
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Perimeter Development Corporation
Pro Act Consulting
Rae & Lipskie Investment Counsel Inc.
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Spectrum Waterloo Region
TD Bank Group
The Church of God of Prophecy of Canada
Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc.
Unity Kitchener
Vive Development
Waterloo Christian Reformed Church
Waterloo Region Occasional Teachers' Local
Westmount Signs

FUNDERS

Harding Family Fund
Hockey Helps The Homeless
Jenkins Sauer Fund
Jim and Sue Hallman Family Fund
Held at KWCF
Keith and Winifred Shantz Fund
for the Arts
Marianne and Jim Erb Family Fund
Mary Bales Fund
Paul Kuntz Legacy Fund
Region of Waterloo
Rotary Club of Kitchener-Westmount
Charitable Foundation
Royal LePage Shelter Foundation
The Walden Foundation
ToastyToes Waterloo Region
Unifor Social Justice Fund
United Way Waterloo Region Communities
Victoria D'Agostino Children's Benefit Fund
Waterloo Region Community Foundation
Government, Federal, Provincial, Regional



We are grateful
for the support of
our community,
donors, volunteers
and partners,
who make our
work possible.

Leadership & Governance

2024-2025

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Administrative Vice President

Linda Kenny

Governance Vice President

Cassie Myers

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Ingrid Holbik

Secretary

Stephanie Braid

Members

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Linda Dietrich

Joanna Han*

Linda Kenny

Kristen Nolan

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Trish Brouse*

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Susan Beuerman

Courtney Cheal

Karen Coviello

Karen Grogan

Linda Kenny

Kirsten Nolan

Linda Scott Campbell

Hélène St-Amand

*Resigned during the 2024-2025 term

We are dedicated to ensuring a sustainable future for YWKW. Our growth is driven by the needs of those we serve, and we are committed to adapting our programs and services to meet the evolving challenges faced by women and families.



Ruth's Journey

At the YW's Block Line Road Supportive Housing program, we are committed to fostering an environment where women can feel supported to make transformational changes.

We are honored to share the story of one of our clients, whose journey of transformation is a powerful reminder of why we do what we do.



THIS IS RUTH'S STORY

**Ruth's real name has been changed to protect her privacy.*

Ruth's battle with addiction stemmed from a dependency on prescription medication. For years, she struggled with homelessness and addiction, feeling trapped in a cycle that seemed impossible to break. Despite her challenges, Ruth had a supportive family who never gave up on her and a dedicated mental health worker who had been with her for more than 10 years, walking alongside her through the ups and downs.

When Ruth arrived at YW Block Line Supportive Housing, she was unsure if things could truly change. But the staff, with their nonjudgmental and patient approach, offered Ruth the support she needed to start thinking differently. And when she found out she was pregnant, Ruth saw it as a turning point. Motivated by the love she had for her child, she made the decision to enter treatment and began exploring addiction support services in the community.

Ruth's recovery journey was not without its setbacks, but the collaboration between her family, her mental health worker, and the team at YW Block Line created a strong foundation of support. Together, they provided Ruth with structure, boundaries, encouragement, and, most importantly, love. They were all deeply invested in her success, offering consistent guidance and hope even when things felt difficult.

Today, two years later, Ruth is a sober, devoted mother to her active toddler. Her family, mental health worker, and the YW staff all cheering her along. Ruth was able to transform her life. Her story is a powerful reminder of the strength that comes from community, collaboration, and unwavering support.

By lifting each other up, we create a ripple effect of positive change that extends far beyond our immediate reach, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society for all.



A Look Back at 2024



EVENTS

Pictured are just a few of the many events hosted by the YW last year (pictured left to right):

- On April 17th, attendees gathered for the fourth event in the YW's Women Choosing Change Speaker Series to hear a panel discussion about Women's Homelessness in the 21st Century.
- On May 23rd, 250 people gathered at Bingemans for the YW's Rise Up Breakfast to hear Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, interviewed by Lisa LaFlamme, discuss her new book *Closer Together* and share personal insights.
- On September 5th, a groundbreaking ceremony took place for the new WRDSB school and YW Childcare Centre in Kitchener's Doon neighbourhood, slated to open in September 2025.
- On September 9th, the YW welcomed 115 golfers to the Second Annual Golf Fore Change tournament held at Rebel Creek Golf Club in Petersburg.
- On October 18th, we celebrated the grand opening of the new playground at Block Line Housing, made possible through donations from the Rotary Club of Kitchener-Westmount, Kitchener Conestoga Rotary Club, The Church of God of Prophecy of Canada, The Walden Foundation and The Lyle S. Hallman Foundation.
- On December 6th, spoken word artist Donnique Williams performed at *The Way Women Remember Breakfast*, marking the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.





OUR WORK IN ACTION

- Participants in the youth employment program pose for a group photo.
- Tenants at Block Line enjoy the harvest from their community garden.
- Children at Bridge Street Childcare make “pies” in their new mud kitchen.
- Ana Cabral, manager at Bridge Street Childcare, stands before messages of appreciation from families, celebrating the 24th Annual Early Childhood Educator and Worker Appreciation Day.
- Thanks to a generous donation from the Lions Club of Kitchener, 57 children at the family shelter received gifts on Christmas Eve, along with a turkey dinner organized by staff.



REMOVING WALLS TO BUILD BRIDGES

To enhance support services that promote tenant independence and quality of life, the main floor at Lincoln Road Supportive Housing was renovated in 2024. The space was transformed from a dim, closed-off area into a more accessible and welcoming environment where tenants can socialize and participate in group activities. Additionally, significant outdoor improvements were made, including the addition of lighting.



LAUNCH OF INNOVATIVE NEW SKILLS PROGRAM

On May 3, 2024, a press conference was held at the YW Thrift Boutique to announce new funding from Women and Gender Equality Canada for the **Warriors Aspiring to end Gender-based violence for Equity and Security (W.A.G.E.S.)** program. This innovative initiative supports individuals in supportive housing and emergency shelter programs by focusing on essential skills such as life skills, time management, job searching, and career coaching. The YW Thrift Boutique provides real-time employment training opportunities, while the program also includes outreach activities including art therapy. In 2024, 33 people benefited from the W.A.G.E.S. program.



WOMEN CHOOSING CHANGE

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153 Frederick St, Kitchener ON N2H 2M2
519.576.8856 | ykw.ca | [@ywcakw](https://www.instagram.com/ywcakw)

Charitable registration number: 11898 7643 RR0001