



Child and Youth Friendly Calgary Fact Sheet

Organization: Child and Youth Friendly Calgary (CYFC)

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What is Child and Youth Friendly Calgary?

Child and Youth Friendly Calgary (CYFC) is a charitable non-profit organization established in 1992 and is based on the firm belief that young people who experience being contributing members of society will become adults who have a sense of ownership and a responsibility to their community. Our purpose is to “**lead in providing meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute to our community**”. Last year, approximately **2,000 youth gave 55,000 hours to volunteering** in our community! The youth volunteers are very diverse; many are from the International Baccalaureate program, while others are completing community service hours through the Youth Justice Committee.

CYFC accomplishes its purpose with innovative programs and outstanding commitment to the community. Its three goals are to: create opportunities for children and youth to participate, volunteer, and practice philanthropy; raise the self-esteem in Calgary's children and youth by encouraging them to understand they have infinite capacity for growth and achievement; and enable youth to be more active and productive citizens by encouraging the charitable and non-profit sectors to welcome youth as volunteers. For its work over the years, CYFC is recognized as a worldwide authority for including youth in community. The child and youth friendly city concept is spreading and CYFC is frequently called upon to assist many cities around the world in developing their own youth-inclusive initiatives modeled after our programs.

Youth in modern society are an undervalued resource and should be asked to take on more responsibility. They need to be included in all aspects of community life. Through various youth initiatives, we provide the opportunity for youth to volunteer, serve on a board of directors, voice their opinions to business leaders and politicians, learn about the diversity in their community, serve on a youth foundation and experience citizenship. To create these opportunities for youth involvement, CYFC runs ten different programs.

These programs give youth the opportunity to grow as individuals and broaden their educational experience. In addition, youth develop leadership skills, increase self-esteem, make new friends, make a difference in the community and learn about its diversity, and gain valuable employment skills to help prepare them for the future.

Programs:

Business Accreditation Program – This program provides residents and visitors with a brochure containing child and youth friendly attractions, hotels, restaurants, grocery stores, recreational facilities, services, etc. All have met criteria established by CYFC and have been inspected *by kids* to ensure they accommodate the needs of children and families. www.childfriendly.ca

Calgary Urban Vibe – A web portal for youth. Calgary Urban Vibe's primary objectives are to connect youth to youth, connect youth to resources, to enhance communication and coordination

within the youth-serving sector, and to give youth a greater voice in Calgary. It is created, managed and directed by youth. www.calgaryurbanvibe.ca

Calgary Youth Foundation – This program involves youth in a hands-on approach to philanthropy. They raise money, solicit grant applications, and give funds to youth-driven, grassroots projects. This past year, they gave away \$10,000 to youth-driven initiatives in the city.

Mayor's Youth Council – This group of young people represent the voice of Calgary's youth. In addition to advising the Mayor on issues of concern to youth, they provide their perspective to a variety of organizations seeking youth input.

Teen Critic – In partnership with CBC Radio, the Teen Critic program provides an opportunity for two youth critics, to go undercover and review events, businesses and services in Calgary. The reviews are aired on CBC Radio's Home Stretch Program once a month.

Youth for the Future – This annual fall conference for youth, strives to eliminate racial discrimination by enhancing communication, understanding and mutual respect between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal youth, and by fostering the development of inter-cultural fun and friendships.

Youth of Distinction Awards – This annual event recognizes youth for their perseverance, leadership, generosity, environmentalism, and selfless service.

Youth Volunteer Corps – This program offers young people of junior and senior high school ages opportunities to get involved in volunteer projects for non-profit agencies throughout the community. In addition, the Youth Volunteer Corps Steering Committee organizes Empty Bowls and Global Youth Service Day. Every year, Youth Volunteer Corps volunteers contribute approximately 50,000 hours of service.

Youth Volunteer Corps Clubs in Schools – This program provides youth with opportunities to volunteer in their communities through their junior high and senior high schools. The Youth Volunteer Corps staff acts as support, providing training and stability for the schools and youth involved. H!pkids an extended version of Youth Volunteer Corps Clubs in Schools aimed at elementary schools. H!pkids allows children under the age of 12 to volunteer and make a difference in their community from their school and home.

Youth Week – Youth Week, in partnership with the City of Calgary, is a celebration of youth activities and community youth programs in Calgary. Throughout a one week period in May, Calgary youth participate in a variety of events across the city and complete the week with a special party at MacEawn Ballroom, University of Calgary. www.youthweekcalgary.ca