

# Deep Dive: Youth Organizing for the Greater Good

## Community Partner Guide

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## Expert Interviews

**Week One:** [Building the Case: the Importance of Research and Data](#) – includes interview with [Elisabeth Wells Ph.D., Research & Knowledge Mobilization Manager with OKN](#)

- The importance of data when planning community action projects
- How to find/use the OKN Database to “build a case” for a community action project
- Any unique insights on Halton Region or data sourcing knowledge that you can share with our leaders

**Week Two:** [How Communities Grow: Getting Others Involved](#) – includes interview with [Nabeel Rahman, Community Development Specialist at the Town of Oakville](#)

- The importance of a clear message when planning community action projects
- How to recruit volunteers and supporters to “build a case” for a community action project
- Any unique insights from the Town of Oakville as it relates to how to recruit volunteers, raise awareness of programs, gather public support for town decision, mobilize donation campaigns, etc. - that you can share with our leaders
- Other prompts
  - Messaging that resonates with people
  - Creating a positive message that aims to improve quality of life for people
  - Importance of getting large numbers of ordinary people involved with social causes

**Week Three:** [Solidifying your Message & Telling your Story: Succeeding by Sharing](#) – includes interview with [Beth Williams, Communications and Marketing Manager at OKN](#), and [Pat Howell-Blackmore Capacity Building Champion at PHB Spark Consulting](#)

- The importance of a clear message when explaining community action projects
- How to solidify your message and fine tune it for various actions (recruiting volunteers, donation campaign, raising awareness, taking action)

- Any unique insights from your communication and community experience that you can share with our leaders
- Other prompts:
  - What has separated successful and unsuccessful initiatives you've run or been a part of?
  - Provide an in-depth example of a successful initiative you've run or been a part of, what did it aim to change and why did it succeed?
  - Importance of finding allies at all levels

## Partner Projects

1. **Our Kids Network** - Youth Well-Being Survey - a National collaboration with UNICEF
2. **Canadian Gap Year Association** awareness and understanding
3. **ArtHouse** - Raising Awareness and Strengthening Engagement
4. **YMCA of Oakville** - Strengthening YMCA Oakville post-lockdown
5. **Town of Halton Hills** - strengthen their online programming and recruit new volunteers (youth)
6. **Halton Youth Initiative** - Transitioning HYI into the community

### Option One: Youth Well-Being Survey - UNICEF

- **Contact:** Liz Wells and Beth Williams from Our Kids Network
- **Contact info:** [Elisabeth@ourkidsnetwork.ca](mailto:Elisabeth@ourkidsnetwork.ca) / 905-805-3541 & [Beth@ourkidsnetwork.ca](mailto:Beth@ourkidsnetwork.ca)
- **Website:** [www.ourkidsnetwork.ca](http://www.ourkidsnetwork.ca) / [UNICEF CY Index](#) / additional documentation
- **What is the CY Survey:** The Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-Being is a framework to: communicate to Canadians what Canada is like for people from birth to age 18, track progress for their rights and well-being, and guide action to address the greatest challenges. The Youth Impact survey is a chance to learn directly from youth in the development of the survey and delivery. This is a unique opportunity to help UNICEF create definitive measures to track youth well-being. Only three communities are participating in this early stage: Waterloo, Halton Region, and Digby, Nova Scotia.
- **Proposed area of focus:** The research committee from Our Kids Network is interested in having volunteers develop engaging videos and messages to encourage young people to take the survey in April, to provide feedback on the questions, and to understand strategy for distributing the survey in Halton Region.

### Option Two: Canadian Gap Year Association

- **Contact:** Michelle Dittmer, President and Founder
- **Contact info:** [michelle@cangap.ca](mailto:michelle@cangap.ca) / 647-821-7060
- **Website:** [www.cangap.ca](http://www.cangap.ca)
- **What does the Canadian Gap Year Association do:** The Canadian Gap Year Association (CanGap) is a registered non-profit organization with a mission to support young people looking to take an intentional step off the conveyor belt of life to explore and experience 'the real world' according to their talents, goals and interests.
- **Proposed area of focus:** when you hear Gap Year, what do you think? Challenges and barriers youth face for engaging in a gap year? Promotion and recruiting youth and their families to Canadian Gap Year Association program and workshops?

### Option Three: ArtHouse

- **Contact:** Tracey Ohata, , Program Manager
- **Contact info:** [tracey@arthousehalton.com](mailto:tracey@arthousehalton.com)
- **Website:** [www.arthousehalton.com](http://www.arthousehalton.com)
- **What does ArtHouse do:** provide accessible, safe, FREE programming with strong role-model relationships. In addition to our foundation of Arts-related Programs that

support the creativity and well-being of our young people, our work includes homework help, cooking, gardening, environmental education and maybe just a great conversation. ArtHouse is often the child's only extra-curricular activity. And, we may well be the only person outside of their family with whom they feel truly comfortable.

- **Proposed area of focus:**
  - 1) An awareness campaign with a focus on education for the arts supporting community—around what ArtHouse stands for and offers to generate more fundraising dollars. We value the smaller long term donors that become part of the ArtHouse family just as much as our large donors
  - 2) a possible campaign to engage our youth more readily and get our opportunities out to them without going through their parents ie. an ArtHouse youth Instagram page?

#### **Option Four: YMCA of Oakville**

- **Contact:** Teresa Rinaldi, Manager, Community Outreach and Special Events
- **Contact info:** [teresari@oakville.ymca.ca](mailto:teresari@oakville.ymca.ca) / 905-845-5597 Ext.2260
- **Website:** [www.ymcaofOakville.com](http://www.ymcaofOakville.com)
- **What does the YMCA Oakville do:** We are unique. We are a charity that offers fee assistance to those in need, ensuring that our programs and services are open to all. Since 1956, the YMCA of Oakville has played a crucial role in improving the quality of health and life for thousands of people in Oakville. We do this through:
  - Membership assistance for YMCA programs helping individuals and families in need get healthier in every way
  - Quality and caring child care for struggling parents
  - Free parent-child programs to help connect parents and together face the joys and challenges of parenthood.
  - Community outreach programs delivered in neighbourhoods in need.
  - The YMCA community van transporting children and youth to programs at the YMCA.
  - Volunteer opportunities for those who need to build confidence before stepping out into the world and much more
- **Proposed area of focus:** Our organization has experienced a significant loss as we have been closed for most part of the lockdown. Our delivery model would fit under the social enterprise model as we are a charity that partly funds itself with a paid gym membership. As a charity we support children, youth and families through financial assistance enabling them to fully participate in programs and services for child care, camp, fitness and more. We also have a strong position in community where we provide specific programming that is free for vulnerable youth and families. Your youth can investigate the impact of covid 19 on the charitable sector (many YMCAs in Ontario have closed their doors as a result of the pandemic), when a YMCA closes what are the community impacts? For our YMCA,
  - There has been a loss of revenue and funding which impacts delivery of service, particularly to those who are marginalized
  - Inability to take on new volunteers as we are running community outreach programs with limited staff and limited programs

#### **Option Five: Town of Halton Hills**

- **Contact:** Jennifer Ancona, Recreation Coordinator - Youth
- **Contact info:** [jennifera@haltonhills.ca](mailto:jennifera@haltonhills.ca) / 905-873-2600 ext. 2285
- **Website:** [www.haltonhills.ca](http://www.haltonhills.ca)
- **What does the Town of Halton Hills Recreation Department do:** Recreation provides residents of Halton Hills with opportunities to get together and enjoy the benefits of healthy living! Our programs cover every age range and ability, as well as a wide variety of program types - from aquatics to fitness. As part of our drop-in youth programming we operate two youth centres in Halton Hills with locations in Acton and Georgetown. Recreation-based activities include video games, arts and crafts, lounge space, computers, wi-fi, cooking, special events, movies and drop-in gym activities (Georgetown location). Both youth centres are attended by trained Town of Halton Hills staff. All admissions and programs are provided at no charge.
- **Proposed area of focus:** strengthen their online programming, bring new youth to the youth centres (in person) and recruit new volunteers to help at the Youth Centres

### **Option Six: Halton Youth Initiative**

- **Contact:** Siobhan Laverdiere
- **Contact info:** [siobhan@ourkidsnetwork.ca](mailto:siobhan@ourkidsnetwork.ca)
- **Website:** [www.haltonyouth.com](http://www.haltonyouth.com)
- **What does the Halton Youth Initiative do:** We are a group of young people (ages 12-17) plus community partners from across Halton Region. Together we volunteer to make our community a better, more equitable and more connected place. Our focus is on: raising awareness of local resources for youth, creating projects on topics important to youth, and collaborating with community partners to create positive youth hangout spaces in person and online.
- **Proposed area of focus:** The funding for HYI wraps in October 2021. We want to keep the momentum going for our project. Although it is still a while away, students can use this leadership opportunity to create content on the following topics (and open to other suggestions):
  - Why HYI should continue in our community
  - Campaign to encourage community partners to take on our project (whole or parts of it)
  - Sharing about the importance of youth volunteerism (using HYI examples)
  - What the HYI could look like post-funding
  - Volunteer campaign to specifically recruit youth from halton hills area

# Outcome: From Idea to Showcase

**Week One:** Building the Case: the Importance of Research and Data – includes interview with Elisabeth Wells Ph.D., Research & Knowledge Mobilization Manager with OKN

- Go through Background information
- **Environmental Scan** - who is impacted by this idea? What numbers? What's the demographic? Are there *general* statistics that make the case for this to be focused on? Use: OKN Data portal, Stats Can
- **Questions to ask your community partner** - How prevalent is this problem? How deeply is this affecting your organization? What's the opportunity? Any *specific* statistics from your organization that strengthen the case?
- **Research** - Find a study, news article, infographic that supports your research and data. It may also help guide your future weeks.

**Week Two:** How Communities Grow: Getting Others Involved – includes interview with Nabeel Rahman, Community Development Specialist at the Town of Oakville

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**Week Three Point Five:** Finalizing your campaign elements + support session with Josh, Lily, and community organizations notified ahead of time

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**Week Four:** Community Showcase with participating community organizations!

**Presentations – prompts**

- The organization you represented
- The idea statement
- The process with your community partner
  - How did you better understand their needs?
  - What was something new that you learned?
- The outcome
  - What did your team decide to do?
  - Screen share any items that help tell your story
- What's next?
  - Are there any outstanding tasks to complete or meetings to attend to with your community partners?
  - Are there plans in place to know how your work gets used by the organization?