



**CREATING
OUR FUTURE,
*together***

**ANNUAL REPORT
2023-24**



A MESSAGE FROM THE Board Chair and Executive Director

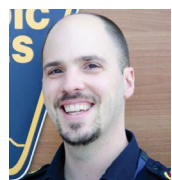
As we reflect on the past few years, we recognize the turbulent nature of our world. Volatility and uncertainty have become constant companions for many, impacting every aspect of life, from financial concerns to social dynamics, and from the challenges faced at home to those encountered in schools and workplaces.

In the midst of this instability, the need for the vital services provided by YSSN has never been greater. We witness firsthand the profound impact of mental health concerns, developmental disabilities, complex support needs and the strains they place on individuals, their loved ones, and caregivers. The demand for our assistance continues to surge, underscoring the critical role we play in helping people access and navigate the essential supports and services they require.

At YSSN, our primary objective remains the well-being of those we serve. We also acknowledge that the same forces of change and uncertainty affecting our community also influence our organization's operations. In response, we are actively choosing to embrace adaptability and innovation, recognizing that these changing times also present opportunities for growth and transformation. So, as our staff continue to work with thousands of individuals to help them on their journeys, this past year has been marked by a renewed focus to build and apply our abilities as innovators, connectors and collaborative leaders who are empowered to provide excellent service.

As we celebrate 25 years of YSSN's crisis response services, we are reminded of the unwavering dedication of our staff, board members, and partners. Their tireless efforts, fueled by compassion and commitment, serve as the foundation of our organization's success. Ultimately, no matter how things change, how uncertain things become – it is the commitment to help people live their best lives that lies at the core of YSSN.

Looking ahead, it is with this commitment that we will continue to work with each other, our partners and our communities to create our future, together.



Bryan Laviolette
Board Chair



Kimberly Thorn
Executive Director

WE ARE YOUR SUPPORT SERVICES NETWORK (YSSN)

Serving as a hub for developmental, mental health and children's services, YSSN is a non-profit agency that helps people, caregivers and families navigate and access services and resources, and build connections they need to live their best lives.

Our caring professionals tap into a network of services provided by YSSN and our partners to create a seamless process for accessing and coordinating the appropriate support – from early intervention and diagnosis, to ongoing support and community integration.

Operating since 1982, YSSN continues to adapt to meet the growing needs of the diverse communities it serves in York Region, Simcoe County, Durham Region, Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough and Northumberland, and since 2023, as a partner in the national 9-8-8 suicide crisis helpline, across Canada.

OUR VISION

A Meaningful Life for All: Relationships, Community, Well-Being.

OUR MISSION

Communicate. Connect. Collaborate.

Our Impact



29,456 people received services from YSSN
↑+3.1%



YSSN engaged in **103,843** service contacts and visits
↑+8.6%

Access Services

Working with individuals, families and caregivers to navigate available supports and services and provide seamless access to the right services at the right time.



9,049 people served
↑+12.1%

Streamlined Access

2,801 people
↑+11.4%

1,817 referrals received
5,119 contacts/visits

DSO Central East Region

6,248 people
↑+12.4%

25,482 contacts/visits

1,306 intakes completed
↑+21.5%

1,027 applications completed

Coordination Services

Supporting people to plan their goals and connect them to resources, supports, services and community partners.



3,158 people served

Mental Health

1,311 people
30,388 contacts/visits
↑+3.1%

Developmental Services

1,847 people
9,999 contacts/visits

719

children and youth served
Foundational Family Services

94

children and youth served
Children's Case Coordination

Passport Program

3,486 people served
↑+8.3%

\$29,161,943
Funding processed

Crisis Services

Responding to people's urgent needs through a continuum of services including 310-COPE, Crisis Beds, Safe Beds, Mental Health Support Teams, and the Call Diversion Unit.



19,540 people served
33,871 contacts/visits
↑+5%

Mobile Crisis Response Teams

3,260 people
↑+8.7%

Call Diversion Unit

1,815 contacts
↑+54.7%

821
Calls diverted from direct police involvement through CDU intervention



Crisis and Safe Beds

98 people
↑+12%

1,582 resident days
↑+154%
Note: New Safe beds opened throughout the year

In 2023 YSSN introduced its 2023 – 2027 strategic plan to guide the organization and set its priorities. This report describes key accomplishments in the 2023-2024 fiscal year that support each of the four strategic pillars, or areas of focus, identified in YSSN’s strategic plan.

Pillar 1

Transformational and Collaborative Leaders



"Grounded by our firm belief in the power of collaboration, we will do the hard work needed to inform, influence and drive purposeful changes to systems planning. We commit to ensuring effective service pathways truly reflect community needs and better support you at every stage along your journey."

In 2023 – 2024 we engaged in systems collaboration to better serve the needs of our diverse communities.

- YSSN continued to build on its opportunities for learning about emerging trends and best practices, and collaboration toward system improvements by joining the **CAMH Constituency Council**, the Centre of Excellence’s Coordinated Access Working Group and provincial Mental Health planning tables.
- YSSN shared data generated by Developmental Services Ontario and the Passport Program with local and provincial partners to provide insight into community needs and inform **systems planning**.
- YSSN facilitated collaboration and coordination among Ontario Autism Program partners in York Region and Simcoe County by establishing common program **descriptions and metrics** that make it easier to plan and coordinate services collectively.
- YSSN expanded its Ontario Autism Program (OAP) **Foundational Family Services** program through additional funding from Kinark Autism Services. As a result, more families can access more tools to work with their child and participate in their ongoing learning and development.
- With funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation’s Resilient Community Fund, YSSN secured staffing dedicated to developing **effective delivery of services for people with dual diagnosis**, especially the integration of mental health and developmental services to help overcome the systemic barriers that dually diagnosed people face.

Pillar 2

Agile Connectors and Navigators



"We will do everything possible to make you feel welcome and supported, helping you navigate pathways to support your journey in a way that is best for you. It's your journey, it's your way."

This year, we initiated new ways to connect people, families and caregivers with more integrated pathways to ensure more seamless and supported experiences.

- YSSN strengthened its community outreach with the addition of staff, funded by United Way, who attended 120 community events and **connected with 2,269 people** to introduce them, through face-to-face conversations, to YSSN and its programs.
- YSSN continued to develop partnerships to provide better support to children and their families. We formalized a partnership with York Region Children’s Aid Society to **enhance consultative support** and direct assistance to families.
- YSSN initiated the deployment of OCEANS - a cloud based Health Service Directory and e-Referral Solution for clinicians, to make referrals for primary care physicians and **service coordination with Streamlined Access** easier and more efficient.
- YSSN administered the completion of **1,027 DSO Application** packages for ministry-funded adult developmental services. Applications are completed by people seeking services and supports. They become the basis for future connection with a variety of developmental services providers.
- Streamlined Access services were expanded to include 25 new Western York Region Ontario Health Team (OHT) youth and primary care physicians who were provided with **direct referral pathways** for mental health and addictions patients to access the services they need.
- Streamlined Access became a **Partner of Access and Navigation** for the PAN Regional OHT Project in York Region to help provide people served by the York Region OHTs with easier service navigation and seamless transfer to the right services.
- YSSN partnered with the High Communities Priority Strategy lead by Carefirst to link people in underserved neighbourhoods with mental health services and service navigation support.

Pillar 3

Informed and Nimble Innovators



"Journeys are seldom simple, making it challenging to navigate the best way forward and sometimes even require us to forge a new path. We commit to seeking the most effective connections, approaches and solutions to help you achieve your meaningful life."

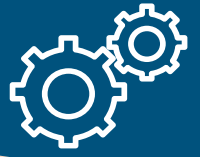
Building on its track record as a service innovator, YSSN continues to forge creative partnerships and foster a planning culture that address service gaps.

- YSSN has completed the preliminary stages in trialing a groundbreaking proof of concept for our Safebeds program that leverages **mobile technology** to provide ongoing support to the overall wellbeing of individuals facing critical challenges.
- With funding from CAMH, YSSN joined a network of partners across Canada to launch Canada's **9-8-8 national suicide helpline**. Everyday YSSN call responders are now providing urgent telephone support to 9-8-8 callers from the YSSN catchment area and from across Canada.
- Continuing the 2022 expansion of the Safe Bed program, YSSN worked with three housing partners to open eleven additional **crisis / Safe beds** in four locations. Individuals served by our new safe beds rose by 66% in the second half of 2023.
- YSSN continued to develop its relationship with York Regional Police (YRP) through the Call Diversion Unit (CDU). Our staff are now trained on the YRP database system to allow for the **review of live calls** for intervention suitability. Through the CDU, 821 calls to police were diverted from direct police involvement.
- YSSN developed and launched a website (passportfunding.ca) on behalf of Ontario's Passport agencies. With collaborative support from all the agencies, this informational tool supports the emerging trend of client and family "self-navigation".

"I recently spoke with a woman in her mid 20s. Her life has been filled with trauma and she lost a friend to suicide two days earlier. I was able to direct her to appropriate community resources and take the time to give her emotional support over the phone. I was able to describe how the Dialectical Behavioural Skills group at YSSN would help her learn new coping skills, especially when experiencing strong emotional states of distress. I taught her some of those skills and she plans to keep using them to help over the coming days."

Pillar 4

Thriving and Empowered People



"We take care of ourselves too. We are committed to ensuring a culture where our employees feel valued and supported, enabling them to thrive. We provide resources and tools to support the delivery of high-quality services, together as partners along our own personal journeys."

In 2023 - 2024 we introduced new initiatives to meet the evolving needs of employees and continued to develop YSSN as a supportive, inclusive and empowering organization.

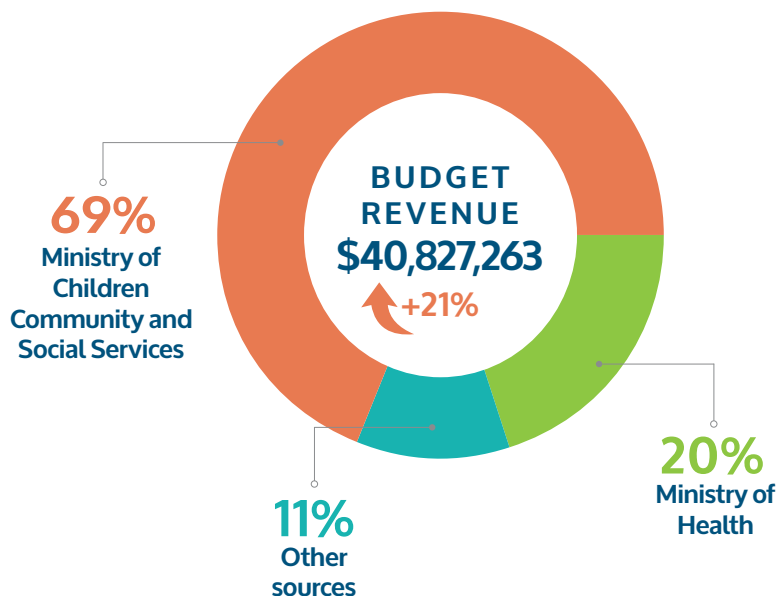
- With a focus on diversifying YSSN's workforce and providing effective service to a diverse population, 45% of new staff hires since April 2023 **speak a second language**.
- YSSN undertook a comprehensive **compensation review** resulting in a new, market-aligned compensation framework for YSSN and permanent adjustments to staff compensation.
- YSSN secured funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada to support its commitment to develop and implement **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) measures**, in particular through its 310-COPE community crisis response service.
- As part of its commitment to foster a supportive, empowering workplace, YSSN revised its staff feedback methodology to ensure the quality and impact of staff **training and professional development** is effectively assessed.
- In our ongoing efforts to ensure we provide the highest quality of service, this year YSSN participated in a three-year CARF accreditation process focused on our access, coordination and crisis services. We also completed a Ministry-led Quality Assurance Measures Review for the DSO Central Eastern Region services we provide. Both reviews were successful and confirmed the high quality of our services and processes against rigorous testing standards.

25 Years of YSSN Crisis Services

This year YSSN commemorates 25 years of service through our 310-COPE mental health crisis response helpline and our crisis response partnerships with regional police forces and paramedic services.

Over the past quarter century our community-based, partner-driven approach has provided immediate and compassionate support to individuals in their most vulnerable moments. In that time, YSSN Crisis Response Services has connected with more than 200,000 people, offering them critical assistance and ongoing support.

FINANCIALS



HUMAN RESOURCES



258
Total employees
↑ +13.2%

53
New hires
↑ +43%

93%
Staff retention

OUR BOARD OF *Directors*

We are grateful for your service, loyalty, leadership and guidance as stewards of our organization.

Bryan Laviolette – Chair

Demetre Rigakos – Vice-Chair

Brad Smith – Treasurer

Bijesh Balan – Director

Susan Dobson – Director

Rosalyn Gambell – Director

Rose Luo – Director

Patricia (Trish) Maxwell – Director

Oluwakemi (Kemi) Oduwole – Director

Marcel Price – Director

Kimberly Thorn – Executive Director/Secretary

THANK YOU TO OUR *Supporters*

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who shared their time freely, donated funds and partnered with us to help create our future, together.



York Support Services Network
240 Edward St., Unit 3, Aurora, ON L4G 3S9
905-898-6455 or Toll Free 1-866-257-9776
YSSN.CA

Connect with us!



CARF has accredited YSSN for its Access Services, Coordination Services and Crisis Services.