

Walking Together:

SHARED EFFORT
REAL IMPACT
RENEWED HOPE



ANNUAL REPORT
2025-26



A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At our agency, we know meaningful change never happens in isolation. It takes a village, partners, communities, funders, internal colleagues, families and people with lived experience working together with shared purpose and mutual respect. This past year has reaffirmed that when we recognize each other's strengths, listen deeply, and build on what each partner brings, we create better pathways of support with the people and communities we serve.

We see this in partnerships that are grounded in trust, shared leadership, and community voice. Our collaboration with **Anishnabeg Outreach** reflects a commitment to mutual respect, reconciliation in action, and Indigenous-led, community-informed service development. Our partnership with **Community Living Central York** demonstrates how bringing together individuals, families, and support networks leads to more meaningful and sustainable outcomes by building on strengths and recognizing the interconnected nature of people's lives. Our community mental health partnerships demonstrate the power of timely, connected support, linking **police, hospital, crisis, Safe Spaces** and outreach supports so people can access help earlier, more easily, and closer to home. Across every situation, the common thread is clear: cooperation, not competition, is what helps communities thrive.

As we look to the future, we are filled with both gratitude and hope. Together, YSSN will continue strengthening relationships that value diverse perspectives, build on collective strengths, and respond to community needs with compassion, innovation, and courage. By working in partnership, we do more than provide support, we help create a stronger, more connected community for all.



Demetre Rigakos
Board Chair



Kimberly Thorn
Executive Director

About YSSN **Walking Together Across Every Journey**

YSSN is a not-for-profit organization that connects people, along with their families and caregivers, to the services and supports they need to live their best lives. As a social services hub, we support children and adults with developmental disabilities, mental health needs, and people experiencing crisis.

With direct 24/7 crisis support, access services and service coordination, YSSN provides a streamlined process for people to navigate the right supports for their unique needs, at the right time, across every stage of their lives.

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

Our Mission **Communicate. Connect. Collaborate.**



32,694 people
received services from YSSN
↑+1.6%



YSSN engaged in
107,789
service contacts and visits

▶ 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.



10,792 people served
↑+10%

Streamlined Access

2,616 people served
1,941 referrals received
↑+1.8%
7,088 contacts/visits
↑+6.7%

DSO Central East Region

8,176 people served
↑+13.6%
29,553 contacts/visits

1,548 intakes

1,291 applications completed
↑+25.6%

▶ Coordination Services

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



3,316 people served
Mental Health

1,197 people served
↑+11.3%
26,297 contacts/visits

Developmental Services

2,119 people served
14,916 contacts/visits
↑+26.7%
9,319 adults
↑+8.1%
5,597 children
↑+77.5%

Passport Program

4,112 people served
↑+5.9%
utilization of funds
78.1%

▶ Crisis Services

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



16,874 people served
33,707 contacts/visits

Mobile Crisis Response Teams

4,699 people served
↑+12.6%

Call Diversion Unit

2,856 contacts
↑+19%

801

Calls diverted from direct police involvement through CDU intervention
↑+34.8%



Crisis and Safe Beds

154 people
↑+31.6%
2,373 resident days

Highlighted comparisons are comparing to 2024-25 results.

THE RIGHT HELP AT THE RIGHT TIME

A 911 call comes in. Someone is in distress, overwhelmed, anxious, and unsure where to turn. In the past, this call would almost always lead to a police dispatch. Today, that response is changing.

Through YSSN's partnership with local police services an alternate, and arguably more supportive, path is available. With the Call Diversion Unit (CDU), a YSSN crisis worker is embedded within the 911 communications centre. When a non-emergency mental health call is identified, it can be transferred directly to a trained YSSN professional who can help de-escalate the situation, provide immediate support, and connect the caller to the right services.

This shift is transforming outcomes. In 2025–26, the CDU handled 2,856 contacts, an increase of 19%, and diverted 801 calls away from frontline officers, a 34.8% rise from the previous year. Each diverted call represents a person receiving timely, appropriate support, while allowing police to remain available for urgent public safety needs.

This progress builds on a long-standing collaboration. Since launching York Region's first Mobile Crisis Response Team in 2005, YSSN has worked closely with York Regional Police, Nottawasaga OPP, and South Simcoe Police Service to strengthen crisis response. This work is supported further by YSSN's Safe Beds program, giving officers a safe, supportive place to bring people in crisis, with 24/7 access to immediate support followed by professional needs assessment and connections to community services.

The impact of these partnerships is gaining wider recognition. In early 2026, provincial funding enabled expansions of crisis response with South Simcoe Police Service and York Regional Police, supporting continued collaboration between YSSN crisis workers, police, and community partners.

Together, these efforts show what's possible when services work as one system, meeting people with compassion, reducing strain on emergency services, and ensuring help comes from the right place, at the right time.

“Last year alone, CDU diverted 76% of their transferred 911 calls from frontline officers. That’s a huge impact. Police can focus where they’re needed most and individuals get the right mental health support right away.”

Dominique Vernon, Police Constable
Mental Health Support Team, York Regional Police



CONNECTING CULTURE, SUPPORT, AND COMMUNITY

Across York Region, many people are searching for support, whether for mental health, connection, or a sense of belonging. For Indigenous residents, that search has too often meant navigating systems that were not built with their experiences, cultures, or histories in mind.

Through YSSN's partnership with Anishnabeg Outreach (AO), that is beginning to change and the shift is grounded in Reconciliation.

The relationship began in 2024 when YSSN started piloting AONest, an Indigenous-centred, self-guided online tool designed to help people navigate and work through mental health concerns. This early collaboration gave AO insight into the experiences and needs of Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents in York Region, helping to shape and strengthen the resource in meaningful, practical ways.

As that understanding deepened, the partnership evolved into a more strategic phase focused on longer-term impact. With support from YSSN, AO has begun a broader assessment of the needs of York Region's Indigenous community, identifying gaps in access, connection, and culturally grounded services, and exploring how to address them through Indigenous-led approaches. New funding from Region of York in 2026 now supports a dedicated Indigenous Relations Manager - York Region Pilot Project, based out of YSSN offices. In this community-facing role, the Manager leads outreach, builds relationships, and helps lay the foundation for a more connected, culturally responsive system of wellness support.

At its core, this partnership reflects a commitment to working differently. AO's work is Indigenous-led, grounded in Indigenous voices and traditions, and recognizes that Reconciliation goes beyond delivering services, to rebuilding connections to identity, culture, and community. YSSN supports this by providing local space, networks, and pathways that will bring these supports closer to home.

Together, they are helping more Indigenous people in York Region reconnect with community and cultural identity, strengthening access not only to mental health resources, but also to cultural knowledge, belonging, and community-led healing.



“I view the work that we’re doing as a partnership. We’re working together to deliver outcomes to Indigenous people in York Region. I don’t view it as AO doing it. It’s not YSSN doing it, but it’s us together doing it. And by definition, that is Reconciliation. It’s working together to deliver an outcome for Indigenous people, letting Indigenous people lead. It’s almost the epitome.”

Stephen Jackson
CEO, Anishnabeg Outreach

SUPPORTING PEOPLE BEYOND THE EMERGENCY ROOM

For many people in York Region, the emergency department has become a first stop for mental health support, but it's not always the right one.

At Southlake Hospital, data showed a clear, longstanding pattern: people returning to the Emergency Department (ED) multiple times within months, often for concerns like anxiety, depression, or acute stress. Most had a family doctor. Most were not admitted. What they needed wasn't another hospital visit. They needed timely, coordinated community-based support.

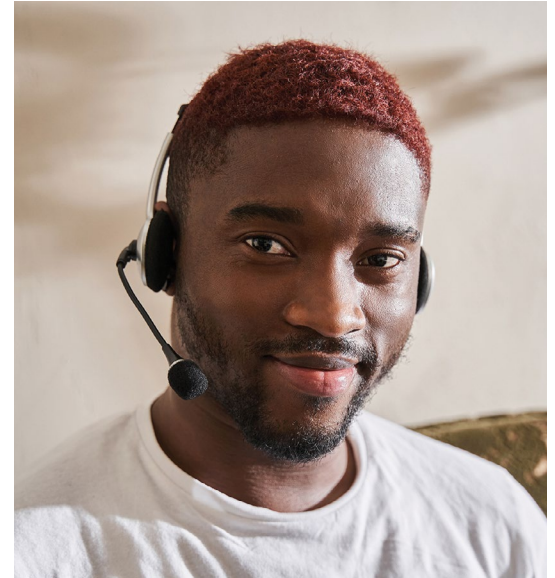
Through its partnership with the Northern York South Simcoe Ontario Health Team (NYSS OHT) and Southlake Hospital, YSSN is helping to change that.

Together, partners designed a simple but powerful solution that connects people to support earlier. When someone visits the ED multiple times with mental health concerns, or arrives with police, they are now offered follow-up from a YSSN outreach worker. Within 48 hours, that worker reaches out to build a personalized wellness plan, connect them to services, and provide hands-on help navigating next steps.

The results are promising. In its early phase, the program received 59 referrals, with meaningful contact made in most cases. Individuals are not just given information, they receive practical help from completing applications to accessing counselling and crisis services. Early indications suggest very few participants are returning to the ED for mental health concerns.

Just as important is the experience. This partnership allows for stronger advocacy across systems and more compassionate, individualized support, especially for those who face barriers navigating services on their own.

By working together, YSSN, NYSS OHT, and Southlake are easing pressure on the Emergency Department while ensuring people get the right support, at the right time, in the right place. It's a practical example of how collaboration leads to better outcomes and a more responsive mental health system for everyone in our community.



The partnership with YSSN's Emergency Department Diversion Worker has provided a valuable bridge between emergency mental health services and community-based supports. It has enhanced continuity of care, reduced barriers to accessing support, and provided timely follow-up for individuals at a critical point in their recovery journey. We greatly value YSSN's partnership and the positive impact this program has had on our patients.

Sam Cassidy, RN
Manager, Adult Outpatient Mental Health,
Southlake Regional Health Centre

PREVENTING CRISIS, STRENGTHENING HOME LIFE

Families supporting a loved one with a developmental disability often manage complex, ongoing needs, balancing daily routines, behavioural challenges, and caregiving responsibilities over time.

When those demands intensify, many families begin to struggle to keep up without additional support.

To respond to this need, YSSN and Community Living Central York (CLCY) came together to offer short-term, community-based respite that can provide families with timely relief and help stabilize situations before they escalate.

Together, YSSN and CLCY piloted a respite bed program for people with developmental disabilities and families experiencing acute stress or caregiver burnout. The goal is simple: provide short-term respite, and prevent the need for more intensive interventions.

YSSN leads intake, assessment, and ongoing support, while CLCY provides the space, staffing, and day-to-day environment. Stays range from one week to just over a month, giving families time to rest and plan next steps with support.

In its first year, the program supported 20 people and their families. For some, respite provided a critical break. For others, it offered stability during transitions or while waiting for longer-term services.

The impact is clear. Families report reduced stress and a stronger ability to continue supporting their loved ones at home. Fewer situations escalate to crisis, and reliance on high-intensity or out-of-region placements is reduced.

By investing in timely, community-based respite, this partnership is strengthening families, supporting stability, and showing how collaboration can create meaningful system-wide impact.

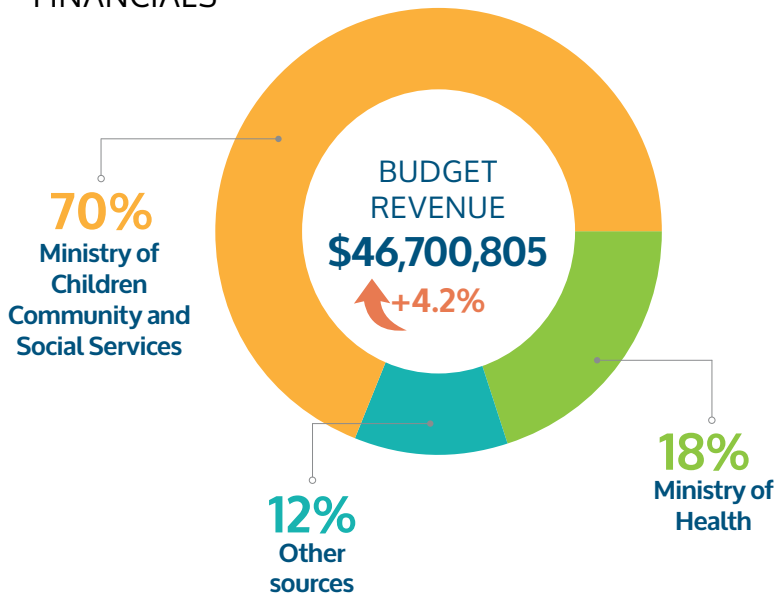


YSSN Funders and Partners

These organizations reflect the range of partners that work alongside YSSN, from funders to organizations collaborating with us to deliver coordinated, person-centred supports. We are deeply grateful to the many organizations who walk alongside us, creating meaningful impact and renewed hope for the people and communities we serve together.

Addiction Services Central Ontario
Anishnabeg Outreach
Cedar Centre
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre for Behaviour Health Sciences
Children's Treatment Network
CMHA Simcoe
CMHA York Region South Simcoe
Community Living Ajax Pickering
Community Living Alliston South Simcoe
Community Living Central York
Community Living York South
Eastern York Region North Durham Ontario
Health Team (OHT)
Evergreen Hospice
Family Service Toronto
Hospice Vaughan
Housing with Supports provider (John G)
Kinark Child and Family Services
Krasman Centre
Mackenzie Health Hospital
Matthews House Hospice
Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Nottawasaga OPP
Northern York South Simcoe OHT and Southlake Regional Health Centre
Ontario Health
Reena
Region of York
Simcoe County Paramedic Services
South Simcoe Police
Sunbeam Community & Developmental Services (Ontario Autism Program)
United Way Greater Toronto
Western York Region OHT
York Community Autism Partnership
York Hills
York Region Children's Aid Society
York Region Paramedic Services
York Regional Police
York Simcoe Autism Network

FINANCIALS



HUMAN RESOURCES



260
Total employees

18
New hires

96%
Staff retention

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Demetre Rigakos – Chair

Rose Luo – Vice-Chair

Brad Smith – Treasurer

Bijesh Balan – Director

Suzanne Conner – Director

Jojit Labuntog – Director

Bryan Laviolette – Director

Oluwakemi (Kemi) Oduwole – Director

Marcel Price – Director

Kimberly Thorn – Executive Director/Recording Secretary

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

We are deeply grateful to everyone who walked alongside YSSN this year.

Whether you shared your time, resources, or partnership, your contributions reflect a shared effort to create real impact and renewed hope. Thank you for being part of this journey.



Your 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.