

Youth Emergency Shelter Society's Annual Campaign



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As the year's first extreme winter temperatures hit Edmonton, the Youth Emergency Shelter Society (YESS) is seeing the usual surge of clients seeking shelter from the cold. At the same time, the agency is struggling to raise enough funds to maintain its operations – with only a week to go in its annual fundraising campaign, it has reached only half of its million-dollar campaign goal.

The majority of YESS clients – approximately 76% – are fleeing abuse and neglect at home. There are few organizations in the Edmonton area that house homeless teens, and every year roughly 3000 young people rely on YESS for a safe place to stay. Beyond emergency accommodation, the

agency offers longer-term transitional housing, individual and family counselling, life skills and personal development opportunities – all designed to help youth become successful, independent adults and leave the streets behind for good.

However, YESS needs the community's support to keep its programs open. Government funding is limited, and provides less than a quarter of the organization's annual operating costs, even with every dollar stretched as far as it can go. The annual fundraising campaign, which runs through January this year, is one of YESS' most crucial fundraising initiatives – failure to meet

the campaign goal could lead to shorter program hours, decreased staffing, and subsequently less of the resources that disadvantaged youth desperately need to get back on their feet. Two full-time staff positions have already been cut, and the campaign results will determine what other actions must be taken.

You can give youth at risk a chance. Please consider a donation to YESS' annual campaign this week, and help the thousands of youth who find themselves homeless and alone. Donate online at www.yess.org or by phone at 780-468-7070 with your credit card, or by sending a cheque or cash donation to 9310 82 Avenue, Edmonton, T6C 0Z6.

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