

MAY 2022

# YESS NEWSLETTER

## MESSAGE FROM MARGO



Hello everyone and happy May!

May in Edmonton is about the promise and hope of Spring and the incredible Summers that are just around the corner. At YESS, hope is paramount in the work we do, but it starts with something very vital. The first step to healing, understanding, and hoping for a strong future is ensuring that a youth has **Safety and Stability**. When youth in crisis arrive at YESS, we try to create as much of a sense of safety and stability as we can, to help them rest, lower their cortisol, and get out of the terror of Flight, Fight, Freeze, or Fawn mode. In Trauma Informed practice, safety

and stability is built through many areas, such as environment, tone, and sensory input—ensuring nothing is overwhelming. Safety and Stability is also built through predictability and consistency. Traumatic events are surprise events in which we have no control, so we must ensure that **we are as transparent as possible** for youth, and that they have as much choice and accountability as possible to rebuild their sense of safety and autonomy. In this issue, we hear from....

Enjoy the blossoms, and take a minute in your life to think about what brings you safety and stability,

Margo

## A SPOTLIGHT ON NO PERIOD WITHOUT

*No Period Without.* was founded in 2017 when an Edmonton homeless woman asked Scarlet Bjornson for change. Out of curiosity, as Scarlet gave her some money she asked the woman what she planned to spend the money on. The woman replied, "Well truthfully ma'am, I would like to buy some booze, but I need to buy some tampons." In Scarlet's words "This hit me like a brick. I went to my car and grabbed my emergency stash of tampons from the car and gave them to her." She took to social media to ask her friends if anyone was interested in helping with a tampon drive and the response was overwhelming both from those that wanted to help, and from charitable organizations in the city hoping to be a recipient of the donations.

The overwhelming community support and requests for support from local organizations highlighted the ongoing issue of period poverty in Edmonton. It was clear there was a need for continual and consistent support as well as advocacy. This led to the evolution of No Period Without.

### How do you see the impact of your organization in the community?

By providing free menstrual hygiene products to key stakeholders like YESS, NPW is able to address period poverty in a meaningful and eliminate the burden of that cost for our beneficiaries. NPW also played a key role in getting free menstrual hygiene products added to City of Edmonton washrooms and continues to advocate for increased access for those experiencing period poverty.

**What is one thing you wish the community knew about your purpose for the community that you serve?**

NPW believes everyone has the right to a safe and healthy menstrual cycle. Period poverty is also a manifestation of the wage gap, it is more expensive to experience homelessness if you menstruate and one of our goals is to remove that financial burden for those experiencing period poverty.



## SPOTLIGHT ON THE REMODELING OF GRAHAM'S PLACE

The remodeling of Graham's Place bathroom space and laundry room has provided a comfortable home-like environment for youth to thrive and achieve their personal goals. Our previous set-up for our laundry system did not match the lifestyle intended for our youth nor was it a sustainable way for our staff to teach living skills. A large portion of Supportive Housing is giving youth life skills and providing guidance for them to what life is like upon transition into independent living; a laundry room in their

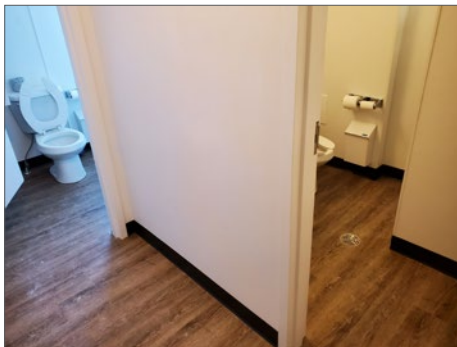
residence identified as a safe space to learn and grow supports our work.

In addition to the laundry room, the remodeled bathrooms have finally given the youth a sense of privacy. Most of our youth come from shelters or sharing spaces with people they do not know or are comfortable with. Now, they are able to experience what it feels like to have their own private bathroom; wash up, get dressed and put make-up on as most teens would. Our youth experiencing trauma having that alone time

and safe space gives them the ability to regain power within themselves. The new setup for bathrooms has also taken away the notion of gendered bathrooms and has created a safe and neutral environment for all to experience together.

**Thank you to all the donors who made this renovation possible.**

*Government of Alberta, St. Paul's Foundation, Edmonton Civic Employees Charitable Assistance Fund, and an anonymous donor.*



## WHAT YOU WOULD DO WITH A BIG BAG OF MONEY TOTTING \$20,000 THIS SUMMER?

Maybe take that trip you have been putting off? Or renovate your backyard to have the barbecue and hot tub of your dreams? Maybe go on a wild no-holding-back shopping spree?

Well, YESS, wants you to find out!

It's been a trying few years and we bet you deserve a vacation! Enter in for a \$5000 gift certificate for the Kananaskis Nordic Spa, and spend some time away from your work in this gorgeous alpine sanctuary. Entry is just \$100 and the gift certificate gets you access to the spa, pools, restaurant and their feature hotel!

Tickets can be purchased by individuals 18 years or older, located within Alberta's provincial borders at the time of purchase. All ticket sales are final, and ticket buyers will receive a receipt, and their raffle ticket(s) via email after purchasing.

**PURCHASE TICKETS AT:**  
[yess.org/midway-affle](https://yess.org/midway-affle)



# COME ONE, COME ALL! TO OUR ONE AND ONLY FUNDRAISING EVENT OF THE YEAR...

## The Midway is in town!

Tantalize your inner child with the sights and sounds of a country Midway. Snap on your fanciest suspenders and bring your special someone to Fort Edmonton Park. Here you will experience delicious treats, masterful stilt walkers, and even a barbershop quartet as you stroll through the illuminated scenery. The Midway is everything for an Insta-worthy night you will never forget!

**Tickets are JUST \$100!**

**We hope you can join us for the celebration!**

For more information, visit:

[YESS.org/midway](https://yess.org/midway) or email [giving@yess.org](mailto:giving@yess.org)

