

Impact Report 2018-19

Welcome to our 2018-2019 annual report!

Young Adult Cancer Canada (YACC) was established in 2000 to help young adults in their late teens, 20s, and 30s living with, through, and beyond cancer. There are over 8,300 young adults diagnosed with cancer each year in this country who are aching to connect with peers who truly understand the unique challenges they face. We help them connect to discuss issues such as parenting through treatment, getting your finances on track after extended leaves of absence from work, facing the end of your life when you're just getting started, and so much more.

This life-changing work is done through our digital, local, and national programs thanks to the support of engaged partners and supporters from coast to coast to coast. This report will tell you all about what we did this year while providing a sneak peek into what we have up our sleeves.

“Being around so many other great people who were also struggling with their own wounds and who still wanted to connect with each other deeply really helped me overcome some of my terror and fear of rejection.”

- Dylan Fontaine, Retreat Yourself ON participant

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MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

Last year bore the fruits of the labours of the last couple of years. Relationships were established and are in place to help us focus more on the programs we offer and the way we offer them. We also hit record high program demand of 192 per cent capacity for our four-day national programs, proving the need is higher than ever. The YAC Prime Study research team continues to explore the data, and we are excited to get information out to help young adults feel understood and to influence the direction of young adult cancer care in Canada (read more about our programs on page 4).

We held another Retreat Yourself Adventure, two Retreat Yourself programs, and grew the Survivor Conference to 112 participants. Localife continued to rock out in eight cities, the 6th Annual Big Cancer Hook-up was a success, and our digital network is nearing some of those magical numbers we've had our eye on.

After meeting our YAC Prime Study recruitment goals last year with 622 young adult participants to make this the largest young adult cancer study ever done, our amazing research team lead by Dr. Sheila Garland is currently compiling the results to learn what life is like for young adults after cancer, which we will also compare to data on the non-cancer young adult situation to fully see the degree to which cancer affects your life when you're diagnosed in your late teens, 20s, and 30s.

Our Shave for the Brave ambassador program got an upgrade (read more on page 16) and Shave for the Brave continued to be our largest annual fundraiser. We continue to have incredible engagement from our third party organizers and corporate donors and we are grateful to have received more personal donations than last year (learn more on page 18). Due to the financial challenges faced by young adults after a cancer diagnosis, we ensure our programs are offered at no- or low-cost to the young adults who need them. We are grateful to everyone who lent a hand or contributed through donations or other support this year to help make that happen.

To all the young adults dealing with cancer, remember that every cancer, every stage, YACC's got your back.

To all our donors, supporters, cheerleaders, Shavers, Head Hunters, and more, your support is key to rebuilding lives and we are committed to working with you to continue to do so. Please stay connected and tuned in. Big thanks!

Always...
Live life. Love life.



Valerie Pike
Chair of the Board of Directors



Geoff Eaton
Founder and Executive Director

YACC's mission

To support young adults living with, through, and beyond cancer. To be the connection to peers, bridge out of isolation, and source of inspiration. Every cancer, every stage, YACC's got your back.

Young Adult Cancer Canada's Board of Directors is responsible for the governance and strategic direction of YACC.

Visit youngadultcancer.ca/board-of-directors to learn more about them!



Valerie Pike, Chair



Matthew Follett



Deirdre "Beep" Ayre



Karl Smith



Robert Decker



Dr. Norma D'Agostino

YACC's values

Heart

We are bold and brave, compassionate and fiercely protective of our pride of young adults.

Courage

We take the right path, regardless how tough it may be. We know the pursuit of our vision will continue to call upon our courage.

Strength

We are strong and offer strength to those in need.

Commitment

We are all in. We know our vision is ambitious and it is our promise to young adults with cancer to realize that vision.

Spark

We are engaged, anticipatory, change-oriented and self-initiated.

Visit youngadultcancer.ca/tag/yaccs-values to read more!

OUR PROGRAMS

Our digital, local, and national programs are truly the heart of YACC. They're the reason we exist, and we work hard to make sure we continue to offer these transformational programs to the young adults who need them.

Digital

YACC's online support is primarily delivered via youngadultcancer.ca, our website; and 29 private Facebook groups we manage where young adults connect with each other 24/7. Young adults dealing with cancer report isolation as a top issue they deal with; these online programs help bridge that gap.

In addition to our socially-driven programs, each year we offer a webcast, The Big Cancer Hook-up, as a way to "warm up the long Canadian winter" while bridging the gap between other face-to-face events and providing opportunities for YACCers in up and coming markets to connect.

Local

Localife is our peer-led, activity-based group where young adults connect with their survivor and supporter peers at fun, casual events throughout the year in eight cities including Calgary, AB; Edmonton, AB; Ottawa, ON; St. John's, NL; Toronto, ON; Vancouver, BC; Victoria, BC; and Winnipeg, MB.

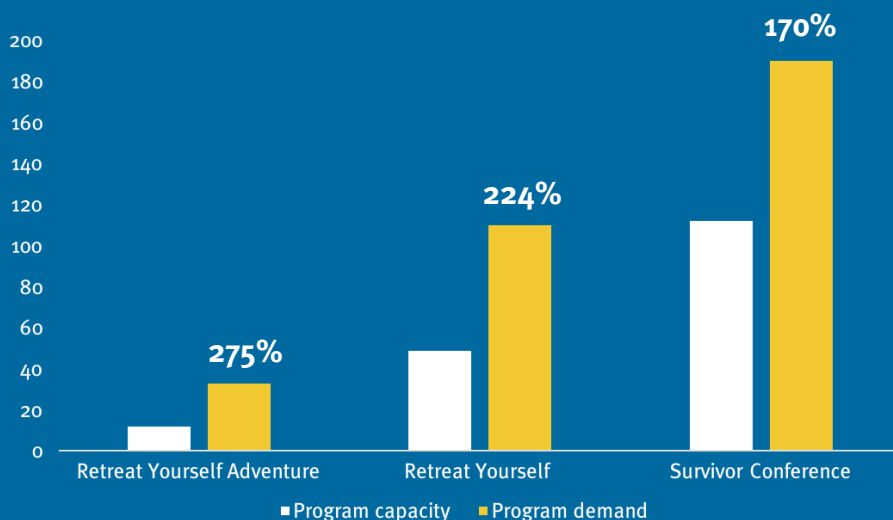
National

Our four-day national programs are held throughout the country and are open to all eligible Canadians. Retreat Yourself offers an opportunity for deep processing of the cancer experience with other young adults with cancer, many of whom haven't attended another YACC event. Participants share stories, hang out, and build relationships they value for a lifetime. Retreat Yourself Adventure gives YACCers a chance to tackle survivorship issues while ziplining and hiking in Newfoundland on a trip that pushes them physically and emotionally. The annual Survivor Conference is the biggest reunion of young adults dealing with cancer in Canada, providing resources to help make the best of the rest of their lives.

Support expenses accounted for 53 per cent of YACC's total expenses in 2018-19, up from 44 per cent in 2017-18.

PROGRAM DEMAND

Our four-day national programs
are at **192 per cent**
capacity with 333 applications
received for 173 available spots.



YACC’S DIGITAL COMMUNITY

With over 117,000 pageviews, the YACC website is the first point of contact for many of our community members. In 2018-19, 17,733 people visited a profile page on our website for a total of 23,940 sessions, or 20.46 per cent of our overall traffic. The 231 profiles currently published provide insight into treatment, how cancer impacts a young adult’s life, and the steps they take to truly live afterward.

“Having access to a private, secret group helps me move through cancer by giving me that mental reassurance than I can ask a question or vent about a situation to people who may have had the same situation or question. They may or may not have the same type of cancer, but the experiences are still similar and the comfort is real.”

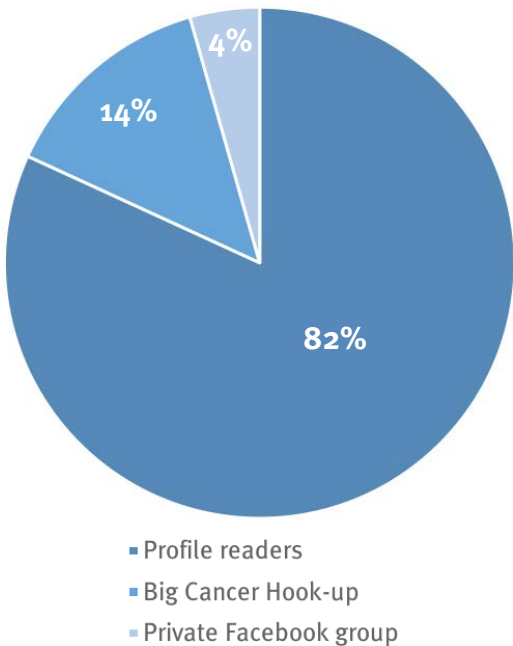
- Member of the private Facebook group

We also engage YACCers to write blog posts for the **community section** of the site, digging deeper into a specific issue or experience to help them process their stories while helping their cancer peers feel understood.

The **private Facebook group** was initiated by YACCer Julie Michaud in 2011 and currently has 957 members. The group’s members share their trials and triumphs—as well as a few jokes now and then—in a very supportive space. Having a community at your fingertips is also a great way to organize casual meet-ups, find people in your area, and stay in touch with those you meet through YACC events!

The 2019 **Big Cancer Hook-up** was the sixth edition of this national event providing opportunities for young adult cancer survivors and supporters to get together in their local communities to connect, reconnect, be inspired, and have fun. It’s all about connection, information (and a few awesome jokes). An estimated 2,838 young adult cancer patients, survivors, supporters, and caregivers tuned in from home and 138 young adults affected by cancer got together to watch in Calgary, Edmonton, Fredericton, Halifax, Ottawa, Prince George, St. John’s, Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria, and Winnipeg!

DIGITAL COMMUNITY



YACC’s web stats

117,005 page views in 2018-19

48,223 sessions

33,768 unique visitors

Visit youngadultcancer.ca to see it for yourself!

LOCALIFE

616 participants in
2018-2019

66 events held

18 volunteer leaders

107 new connections
through this program

Is there a Localife near you?

- Calgary, AB
- Edmonton, AB
- Ottawa, ON
- St. John's, NL
- Toronto, ON
- Vancouver, BC
- Victoria, BC
- Winnipeg, MB



Localife is a fun, local, social activity-based group led by YACCers in eight cities across Canada. They get together to connect over a basket of wings, check out a museum, attend a sporting event, and more! The conversation isn't always about cancer, but it's always welcome to come up.

RETREAT YOURSELF ADVENTURE

12 participants

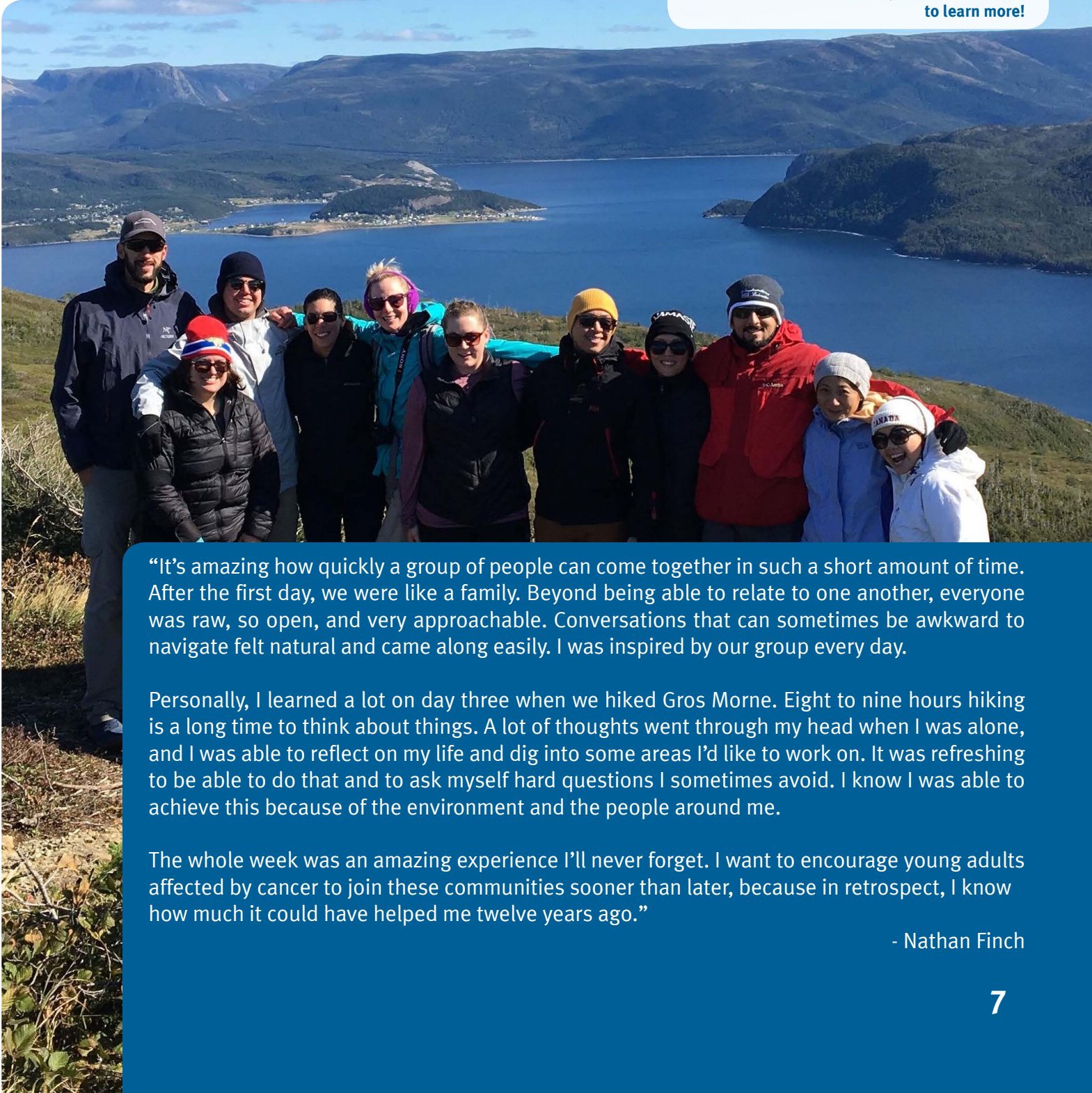
21 kms hiked

9 lines zipped

Retreat Yourself Adventure is for those who are more interested in tackling their cancer experiences while speeding through the forest in a harness or hiking a mountain than in sitting around a retreat centre.

Infinite stories

Visit youngadultcancer.ca/our-programs/retreat-yourself-adventure to learn more!



"It's amazing how quickly a group of people can come together in such a short amount of time. After the first day, we were like a family. Beyond being able to relate to one another, everyone was raw, so open, and very approachable. Conversations that can sometimes be awkward to navigate felt natural and came along easily. I was inspired by our group every day.

Personally, I learned a lot on day three when we hiked Gros Morne. Eight to nine hours hiking is a long time to think about things. A lot of thoughts went through my head when I was alone, and I was able to reflect on my life and dig into some areas I'd like to work on. It was refreshing to be able to do that and to ask myself hard questions I sometimes avoid. I know I was able to achieve this because of the environment and the people around me.

The whole week was an amazing experience I'll never forget. I want to encourage young adults affected by cancer to join these communities sooner than later, because in retrospect, I know how much it could have helped me twelve years ago."

- Nathan Finch

RETREAT YOURSELF

Retreat Yourself was our original four-day program, and continues to be the most powerful experience. A YACC retreat often offers the first connection a young adult feels to a supportive peer community and provides opportunities for participants to talk about their experiences, relax, have fun, and share stories with peers who “get it.”

After an initial “opening circle,” the rest of the program is centred around small group discussions on issues like relationships and dating, finances, loss and grief, fear of recurrence and the road ahead; creative expression; relaxation; and connection.

While led by members of YACC’s team, Retreat Yourself is also facilitated by a “peer supporter” team comprised of past participants as well as health professionals from our national network, including psychologists, nurses, and other organizations.

“Retreat Yourself BC didn’t just teach me how to smile and laugh, it reminded me how to live again. How to learn from others and respect myself and my new friends’ journeys in a way I never thought I could.

When I got to the retreat, I felt the warmth. Not the warmth of the house (although it was toasty), nope, I felt the warmth of the people there. I could hear their laughter and feel the positivity bouncing off of them. It was like a rave of happiness. Then I turned the corner and saw my buddies, Gerard and Jody. Damn, I was happy to see them because I knew nobody. Well, not yet. But that would soon change.

I walked in to many introductions and learned as many names as I could. Due to treatment-related brain fog, this would be a problem for me, but everyone had name tags so it was so much easier.

Each day opened with a topic; one of them was relationships. I had previously felt so isolated and alone and like nobody understood me, but when others cried sharing their struggles, it felt like a wake up call. ‘I’m not the only one.’ It was so hard to see everyone struggle. But so therapeutic to let all the shit out that was haunting us.

We cried tears of laughter and tears of pain. We sang together like dumbasses while talking in our rooms and playing music.

The hardest part was leaving to go home. I had all these new friends and I didn’t want to say goodbye. There were tears and hugs — at least I knew some others going back to Edmonton, but it still didn’t take away the pain of saying goodbye.

I had so many new friends after the retreat, and I want nothing more than to experience this all over again.”

We were thrilled to offer two retreats this year. We returned to Edenvale Retreat and Conference Centre in Abbotsford, BC in November and held our first event at Five Oaks Education and Retreat Centre in Paris, ON in March. We are excited to return to both of these venues next year.





2 Retreat Yourself programs
held in 2018-2019

45 participants

18 peer supporters
and health professional
facilitators

Visit youngadultcancer.ca/our-programs/retreat-yourself
to learn more!

SURVIVOR CONFERENCE

Young Adult Cancer Canada (YACC) hosted our largest Survivor Conference from May 16-20, 2019. One hundred and twelve people affected by young adult cancer gathered together at the Holiday Inn in St. Catharines to laugh, learn, grow, cry, hug, heal, dance, and thrive because of the community and unique connections they found in one another. The theme was, “Cascade,” which was fitting due to the close proximity to Niagara Falls and the intense outpouring of love and support each participant gave and received.

The opening dinner was attended by survivors, supporters, and program facilitators, as well as YACC’s board members and staff. A quick glance around the room at the smiling faces and the tender conversations revealed the truth of YACC’s mantra, “Every cancer, every stage, YACC’s got your back.”

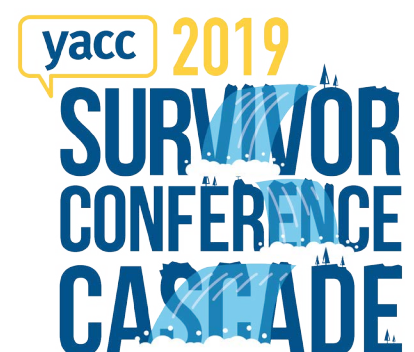
Participants enjoyed a beautiful afternoon at Niagara Falls. Some took part in a photo scavenger hunt while others braved the zip line! The weather could not have been better and many life-long memories were made as friends, old and new, enjoyed the stunning sites of the massive waterfalls.

Throughout the weekend, facilitators led workshops on a variety of topics such as body image, grief, sleep, exercise, and the power of owning your story. On Saturday night, YACCer and comedian, Daniel Stolfi, performed his moving and hilarious one-man show, “Cancer Can’t Dance Like This.”

After the show, a moment was taken to talk about the Shave for the Brave and to recognize how incredible Shavers are to the work of YACC. The room exploded with applause and each young adult cancer survivor was given a special Shave for the Brave toque with, “Brave,” stitched into the back. It was an amazing moment, highlighting the powerful connection between the Shave and the Brave and YACCers.

On Sunday, participants of the conference embarked on The Climb, an annual community hike that ended with a time of remembrance for friends and family who have died of cancer. Loss is the difficult and challenging part of being a member of the YACC community. The moment was etched with both tears and smiles, as those who have passed away were deeply mourned and fondly remembered.

Survivor Conference 2019 was memorable, emotional, and rejuvenating. It ended on Sunday evening with a beach-themed dance party, where everyone traded the trials of cancer — the appointments, the treatments, the sorrow, the fear — for the joy of singing, dancing and being together.



“The conference was overall amazing, I was slightly nervous that it was just going to be very focused on cancer and being sad about it, but it was very empowering.”

“Thank you for everything! I had soooooo much fun! I did more in this conference than I did all year and I loved it. I met so amazing people and had so many adventures and learned a lot about myself! Thank you times a million.”

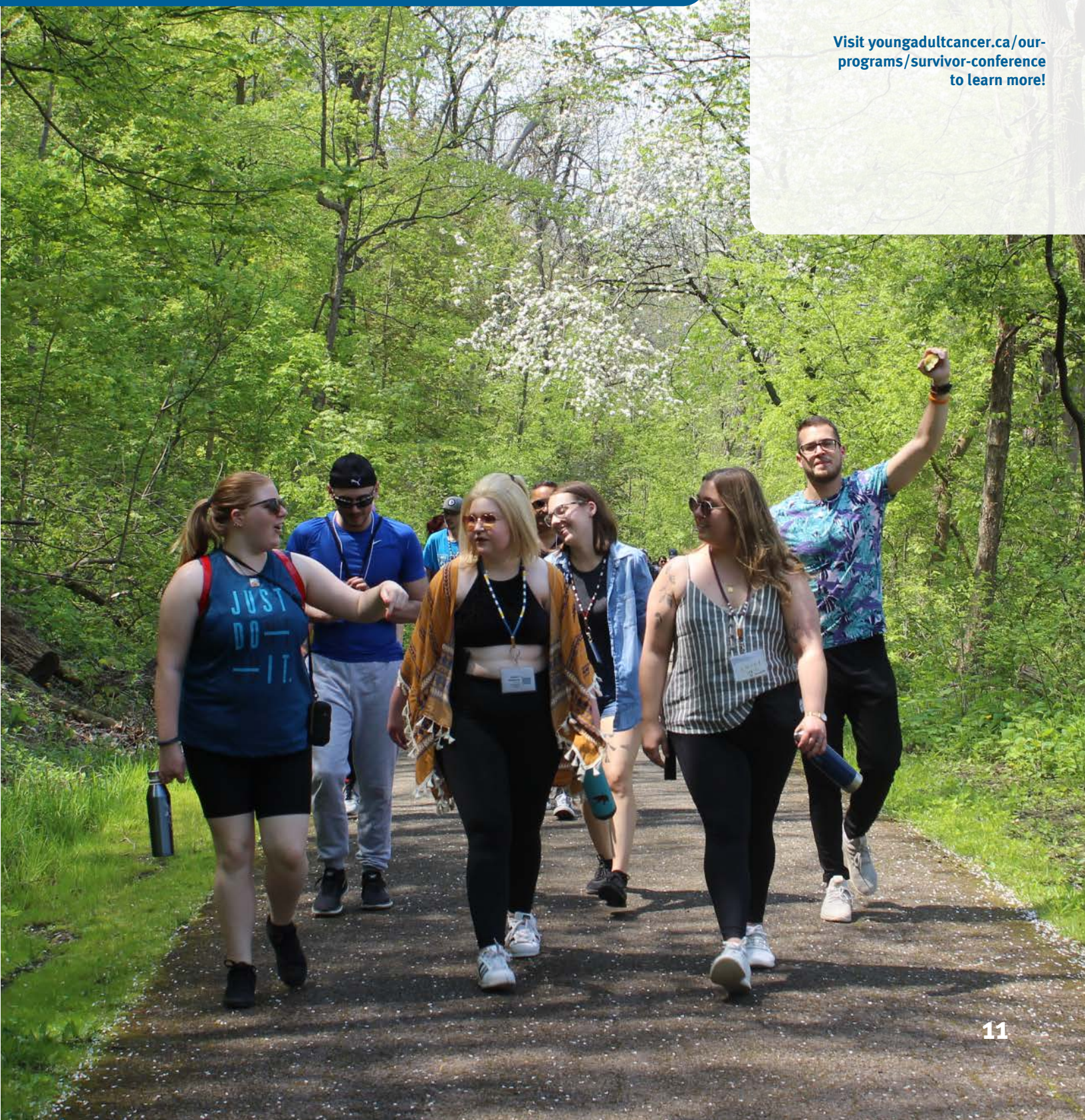
“Hands down, the best conference I have ever attended.”

112 participants

190 applications

17 workshops

Visit youngadultcancer.ca/our-programs/survivor-conference to learn more!



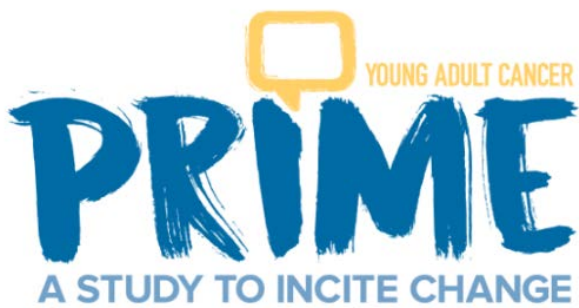
THE YAC PRIME STUDY

Young adults are in the prime of their lives, but life is different when you have cancer in your late teens, 20s, and 30s. Led by Dr. Sheila Garland at Memorial University, the YAC Prime study explored the physical, emotional, and financial challenges faced by young adults living with, through, and beyond cancer.

Launched during Survivor Conference 2017 in St. John’s, NL, the team went on to collect 622 responses to the online survey over the next few months, resulting in the largest study ever conducted on the young adult cancer population. We were stoked to return to Survivor Conference in 2019 with some incredible preliminary findings (see insert).

In October 2018, the YAC Prime team received a President’s Award For Public Engagement Partnerships from Memorial University for its innovative approach to building a beautiful and powerful research partnership that truly has young adults dealing with cancer at it’ heart.

Special thank yous to the research team, C.A.R.E., and NL Support for their substantial support of this study.



Young adults affected by cancer who feel connected to a peer group report:

- They receive more emotional and informational support;
- They use more adaptive coping behaviours, and;
- They report higher levels of post-traumatic growth.

Visit yacprime.ca for the latest news!

Original #YACPRIME Team



Geoff Eaton & Karine Chalifour
Young Adult Cancer Canada



Sheila Garland
Memorial University

#YACPRIME Expansion Team



Jackie Bender
University of Toronto



Norma D’Agostino
University of Toronto



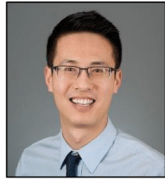
Catherine Sabiston
University of Toronto



Fiona Schulte
University of Calgary



Lauren Daniel
Rutgers University



Eric Zhou
Harvard University

#YACPRIME Fellows and Students



Breanna Lane
Memorial University



Kaitlyn Mahon
Memorial University



Scott Adams
University of Toronto



Anika Petrella
University of Toronto



Madison Vani
University of Toronto



Ashley Mah
University of Toronto

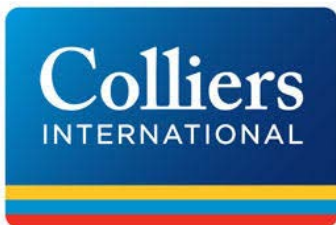
HOW WAS THIS ALL POSSIBLE?

Forget the village, it takes a whole country to help young adults live with, through, and beyond cancer!

Shave for the Brave continued to be our largest annual fundraiser, engaging Shavers, Head Hunters, and donors across the country. Third party event organizers found creative ways to raise funds in their communities by running, baking cookies, throwing parties, and more. Our YACCers helped us add extra spaces to the Survivor Conference through the “Expansion Pack.” Personal donations were up this year to \$169,687 from \$146,537 in 2017-18. Corporate donations increased slightly to \$282,940 from \$280,530 in the previous year.

Young adults know, “every cancer, every stage, YACC’s got their backs,” only because some truly awesome people have ours. Thank you.

Featured partners



THIRD PARTY EVENTS

Thank you to our 2018-19 third party event organizers!

- Karalee Golf Classic
- Dodge Cancer
- Taylor Bell Memorial Fund
- Becky Sjare Track and Field Classic
- Brews, Bowls and Charity Goals
- Power to Hope 5k
- Justin Frampton Memorial Hockey Tournament
- Tely Makes Me YACC
- Fort To Forge 10k
- A Day For The Brave
- Firecracker Fund
- Holyrood Crystal Dip
- Jody Mason's Don't Waste The Happy Fund
- Mews 8k
- Other Ocean's Project Winter
- Mary Queen of Peace Elementary bake sale
- Lakecrest Bake Sale
- O'Donel Alumni Skate
- Dan Stolfi's Cancer Can't Dance Like This

In addition to annual activities like Shave for the Brave, The Climb, and Dunk for the Brave, we engage with third party organizers on a variety of events. Initiatives like those listed to the right raised over \$80,000 this year, making it possible for YACC to continue offering its digital, local, and national programs while also engaging our community and supporters in incredible ways.

Third party spotlight: The Taylor Bell Memorial Fundraiser

The 4th Annual Taylor Bell Memorial Fundraiser was held at Julio's Barrio in Calgary, AB on October 6, 2018.

"We had 121 people turn out for this year's event and it was a huge success!" said Jacqueline Oulton-Bell, Taylor's mother.

The event raised \$10,083 for Young Adult Cancer Canada — this should allow four young adults affected by cancer to attend a life-changing Retreat Yourself program!

"Thank you for helping us honour our beautiful daughter Taylor-Marie who we lost to acute myeloid leukemia in 2013 when she was just 20-years-old," said Jacqueline. "Taylor and YACC allow us to feel like we have a purpose in this chaotic tragedy we have experienced in our lives!"



SHAVE FOR THE BRAVE

Shave for the Brave—a series of community, school, office, and solo events—continued to be our crowning fundraising event. This year's events raised \$378,442, or 40 per cent of our operating budget.

There is nothing like the feeling in an elementary school gym when students are dancing, singing, and cheering on their classmates. There's no better team building activity than watching your boss forgo their follicles in support of a great cause. There's no better way to feel connected to your community than sitting in a temporary barbershop while you get the most powerful haircut of your life alongside your neighbours.

"The cheering, the excitement, the parents that came, the tears I saw in parents' eyes—it just said, 'Wow, this was a moving event and everyone should be involved,'" said Mary Queen of the World principal Chris Bartlett.



Razor says "paws up" to Mary Queen of Peace Elementary (pictured) for hosting its sixth Shave, bringing their all time totals to 299 heads shaved and \$117,707 raised!

Special thank you to our Brave Brunch Shavers, brothers Alex and Rob Crosbie, Doug Chafe, and Brian Parsons, who raised \$104,450!

Just in its second year, the Shave for the Brave ambassador program has already grown so much! Our 2018-19 ambassadors repped the Shave in the media, appeared at community events, and much more!

Malik Snook is a five-time Shaver who makes his annual Shave a family affair. His younger brothers, Solomon and Ruben, helped him with fundraising and awareness, and he was joined by his "Granny" and Solomon at his school's Shave this year. "Just do it. Don't really think about it. You know what you're doing it for."

Naomi-Lee Cheeke became a member of the YACC community after being diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma at the age of 22. "I want to inspire people, make new connections, and help people see that your hair and physical appearance is not all of who you are. You are what's on the inside, not what you see in the mirror. Oh, and you're also a lot stronger than you think!"

Dave Steele Shaved at the 2018 Brave Brunch, our annual community leaders' Shave event. "It changed my life, the process of committing to the shave, engaging my network, connecting with YACC and survivors and then the Shave. It hit home with me and helped me better understand YACC's mission, the challenges young adults with cancer face, and how the two come together."





47 events

523 participants

7 Community Shaves

28 School Shaves

12 Office Shaves

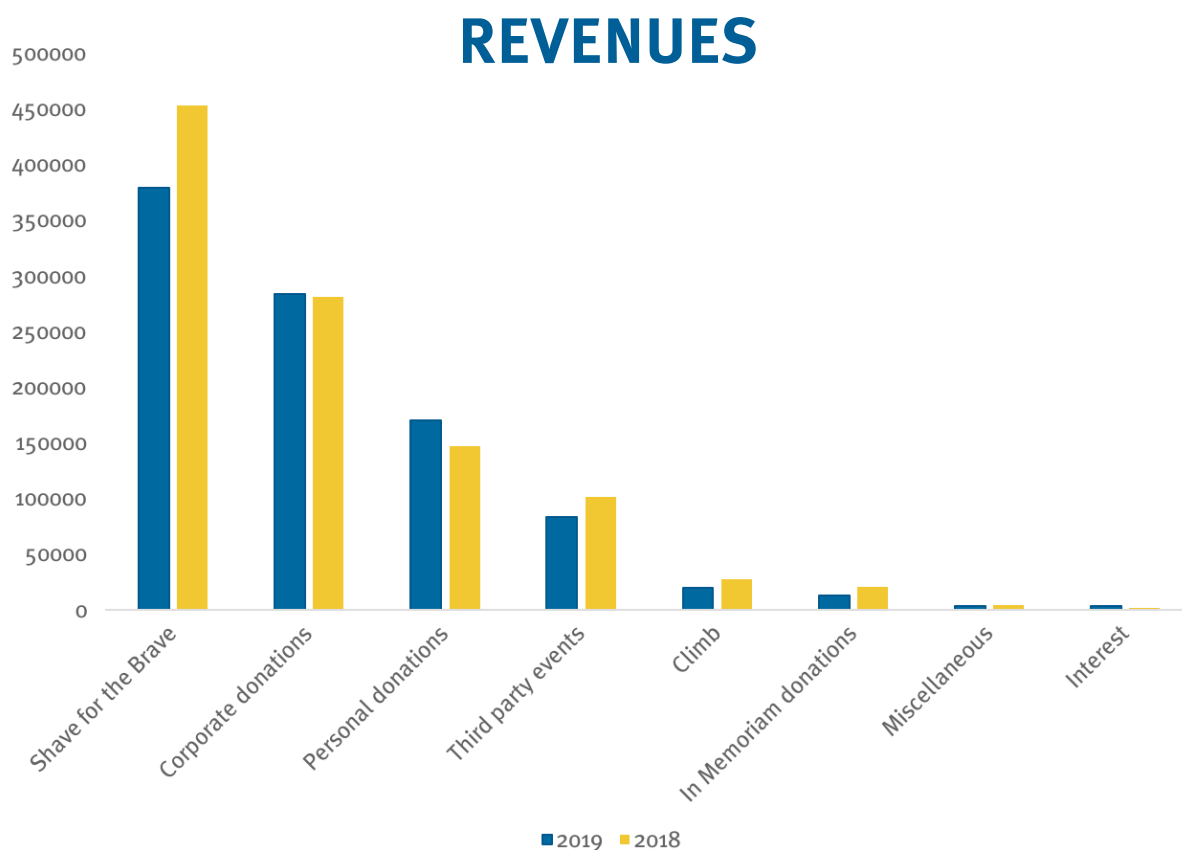
51 Solo Shavers

\$723.59 raised on
average per Shaver

Visit shaveforthebrave.ca to learn
more!

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

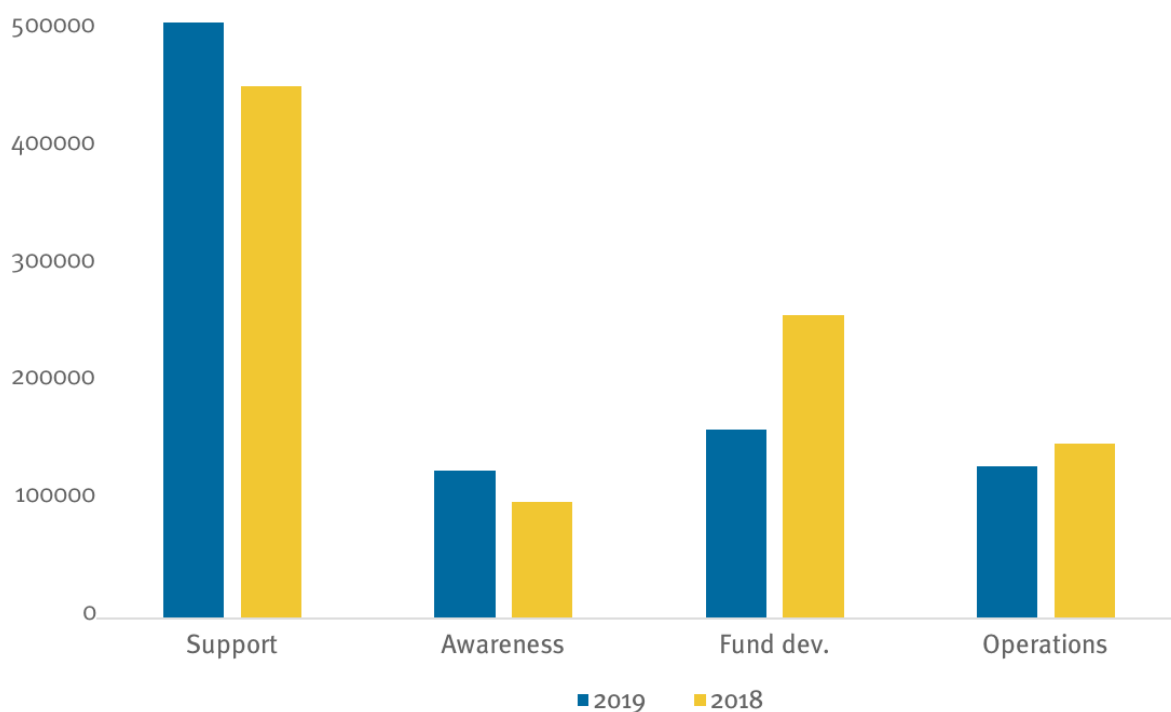
	2019	2018
REVENUES		
Shave for the Brave	\$378,442	\$452,474
Corporate donations	\$282,940	\$280,530
Personal donations	\$169,687	\$146,537
Third party events	\$83,350	\$100,898
Climb	\$19,297	\$26,920
In Memoriam donations	\$12,343	\$20,492
Miscellaneous	\$3,183	\$4,388
Interest	\$ 3,391	\$1,115
	\$952,633	\$1,033,354



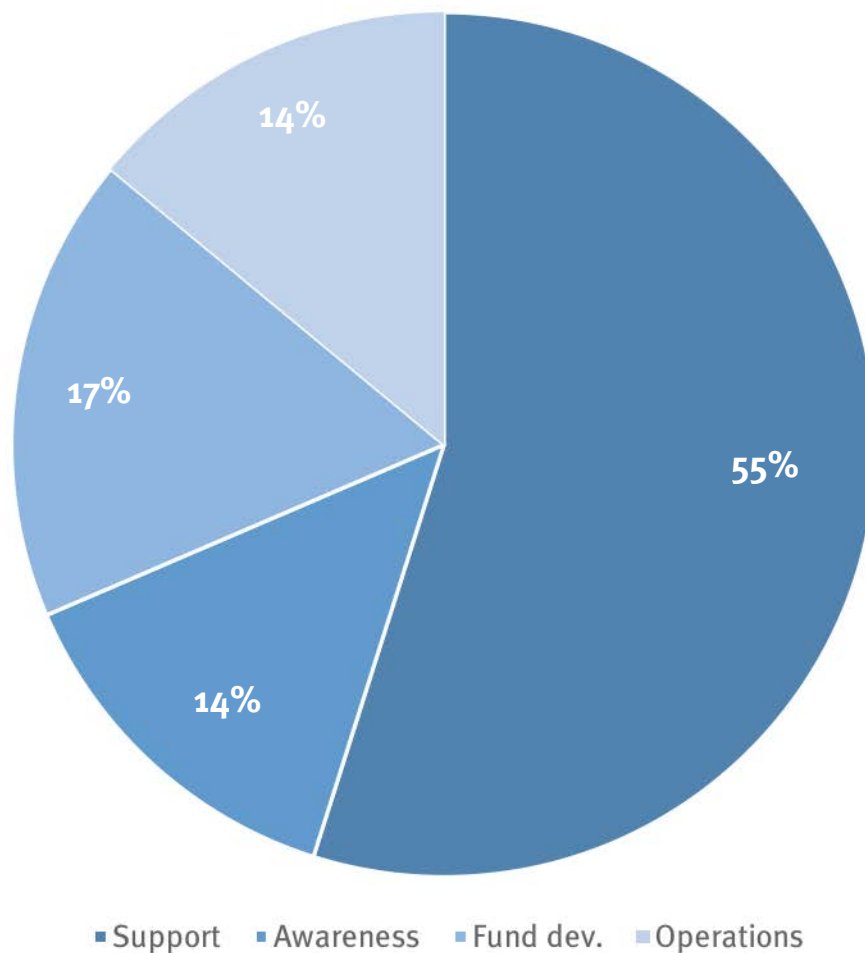
	2019	2018
EXPENDITURES		
Support	\$508,277	\$453,989
Awareness and advocacy	\$126,564	\$99,728
Fund development	\$161,641	\$258,927
Operations	\$129,615	\$149,161
	\$926,097	\$961,805
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES	\$26,536	\$71,549

Visit youngadultcancer.ca/impact-reports to review the full financial statements as prepared by Harris Ryan Professional Corporation.

EXPENDITURES



EXPENSES OVERVIEW



Support

Support expenditures cover all resources required to deliver YACC's web-based, social, and four-day programs.

Awareness involves building and maintaining YACC's network of health professionals and community organizations, and participation in national advocacy efforts where we raise the issues and speak on behalf of all young adults dealing with cancer in Canada.

From Shave for the Brave toques to online giving platforms, fund development expenses ensure we can connect with more donors, show them our gratitude, and deliver on these essential programs for young adults who are facing the end of their life just as they're getting started.

Operations at YACC encompass the day-to-day magic of getting things done and the governance of our organization. These expenses are the glue that keeps any organization together.

Get involved!

- YACC is best when shared. Twenty-two young adults will be diagnosed with cancer in Canada today, one will find out about YACC. Please make sure all the young adults dealing with cancer in your life know about us!
- Become a regular donor (visit youngadultcancer.ca/donate to sign up!)
- Host a third party event (email connect@youngadultcancer.ca to learn more!)
- Face the roar of the razor by signing up or hosting a Shave for the Brave (email info@shaveforthebrave.ca for more details!)
- Sign up to volunteer at youngadultcancer.ca/volunteer!

Questions? Email connect@youngadultcancer.ca!

Thank you!

This was another exciting, rewarding year, and we can't wait to connect with even more young adults affected by cancer in 2019-20. In addition to making improvements to our existing programs and services, we will relaunch our YACCtivist program across the country, explode our YAC Prime Study data dissemination, and connect even more people to the supportive community they crave and begin to rebuild their lives because of you.

yacc

YOUNG ADULT
CANCER CANADA

youngadultcancer.ca