

Carmen's Story

I have struggled with my mental health since I was a child. I have two parents who showered me with love and safety but internally, I felt conflicted. As a child I would dream about dying. I still recall writing my first suicide note at 8-years-old: "I'm sorry, Mom and Dad. I love you, but I don't want to live anymore." Growing up, I didn't know mental health was a "thing" and I continued to grapple with difficult emotions as I grew older. I felt alone, separated from my surroundings, friends and family.

At 12-years-old I took a trip to Lebanon with my family. It was the summer of 2006 and war broke out. We were stuck in Lebanon, and I quickly became familiar with the sounds of bombs and gunshots. Each night before I went to sleep I wondered if I would wake up or die in a pile of rubble. Eventually my family escaped, returning to Canada just a few weeks before I started grade 7. School was an odd experience for me. I was thankful to be alive, but I was also confused and angry. My mind and body had been exposed to something horrific, and now I found myself sitting in class trying to conjugate French verbs. It was a drastic change.

In the years that followed more bad things happened. I experienced health challenges, developed an eating disorder, was raped by a classmate and began to self-harm and use alcohol and drugs to numb myself to my excruciating emotional pain.

I was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder. I was prescribed medication but it didn't help. I continued to try to take my own life and eventually I was connected to Nexus' counselling services.

Counselling changed my life and helped me reclaim my identity. I was able to sit down and tell someone my story without being judged. It made me feel vulnerable and nervous, but it was a profound step towards healing.

Before counselling, I saw myself as a mirror that someone had destroyed. I worked hard to glue all the pieces back together again, but you can't un-crack a mirror. Through counselling I learned to appreciate the cracks in the mirror. I now see them as beautiful, intricate pieces that are a reflection of me. I am proud to hang this mirror on the wall because it's not broken – *I am not broken*. Counselling taught me to accept myself and my reality. My future is bright.





Annual Report 2017-2018

“Nexus is an amazing place to meet new people, relax and hang out. • My clinician worked with me to develop a plan. • My counsellor makes me feel like my emotions and thoughts are valid. • I would recommend Nexus to everyone and I would love to give back one day as a volunteer. • Nexus gave me a safe space to work through the problems I had going on in my life. • My clinician is kind, understanding, friendly and respectful.”

For You. With You.



 nexusyouth.ca
 905.795.3518
 foryou@nexusyouth.ca
 facebook.com/nexusyouthservices
 twitter.com/youthnexus
 youtube.com/nexusyouthservices

Main Office
85A Aventura Court
Mississauga, ON L5T 2Y6

Charitable Donation No.:
13039 7631 RR0001



OUR MISSION

Nexus Youth Services creates opportunities for youth by providing high quality services that are inclusive and responsive to the needs and voices of youth.

In 2017-18, Nexus Youth Services (NYS) continued to work together with youth and our community partners to strengthen mental health services for youth in Peel Region. We are proud to share highlights from the past year with you in our annual report.

This year NYS was re-accredited by the Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA) for an additional four-year term, achieving 100% of both mandatory and leading practice standards. In its final report, CCA commended NYS for continually striving to provide high quality services that are inclusive and responsive to the needs and voices of youth.

NYS' commitment to Youth Engagement (YE) means creating a community that values the diverse voices of youth through action, partnership and growth. We put our commitment into action as one of the Core Service Providers of child and youth mental health (CYMH) services in Peel, supporting Moving on Mental Health, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services' (MCYS) plan to transform CYMH services in Ontario. We also championed YE as part of Peel's YE Working Group and throughout Peel's Brief Services model review. NYS' own YE Worker Jesse Murray was honoured with the Bhayana Family Foundation's Dedication Award in recognition of his commitment to youth.

NYS youth and staff attended the Collaborative State of Mind and Disable the Label conferences, and shared learning about trauma-informed care with the Youth-at-Risk Advisory Committee. We received generous support from the Community Foundation of Mississauga, and a grant from the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund allowed us to launch Nexercise, a program designed to support the mental and physical well-being of youth.

We extend our thanks to our principal funders – the United Way of Peel Region, MCYS, the Region of Peel, and the City of Mississauga. Thanks also to the PosVibes Project, YES!, Air Canada, and Marble Slab Mississauga for fundraising on our behalf. Thank you to our donors, students, volunteers, and staff. Carmen's story on the back cover of this report is one example of how your support makes a difference. In 2017-18 we:

- Counselling 175 youth
- Provided volunteer opportunities for 427 youth, totalling 2271 volunteer hours
- Offered four cycles of group programming that engaged youth in skill-building, physical activity, self-expression, making healthy choices, and adopting safe coping strategies
- Served 1708 youth at our Youth Centre
- Achieved overall youth satisfaction and global quality ratings of 94%
- Collaborated with youth to provide numerous workshops and events on topics such as human trafficking, Black History Month, mindfulness and mental health awareness.

To the youth who are our partners, thank you for trusting us and sharing your journeys with us. We are proud to work alongside you to improve the lives of youth in Peel Region.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Rudy Riske (President), Patricia Grady (Past President), David Herzstein (Vice-President), Guneet Hansrani (Secretary/Treasurer), Karen Adams, Nainesh Kotak, Tammi Lisson, David Maylor, Susan Mohos, Sue Prouse, Jessica Roselli



Rudy Riske
President



Humphrey Mitchell
Chief Executive Officer

Message from the Pro-Ject Leadership Group

In 2017-18 the Pro-Ject Leadership Group (PLG) supported a lot of new initiatives. In the summer we organized the 4K4Youth walk/run to raise funds and awareness for Nexus's services for youth. We exceeded our fundraising goal and raised \$4700! During Child and Youth Mental Health Week we organized daily events at the Youth Centre to support youth in caring for their mental health. We crafted stress fighting tools, practiced yoga and met a pair of furry therapy dogs. Thank you to the patient and kind Nexus staff who supported our work. We look forward to what next year will bring!



Statement of Revenue and Expense

Year ended March 31, 2018

Funders	Revenue	Expenses	Excess Revenue over Expenses
United Way of Peel	328,608	373,950	(45,342)
Ministry of Children and Youth Services	229,508	250,313	(20,805)
Region of Peel	88,990	88,990	-
City of Mississauga	40,115	40,115	-
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport	49,951	49,978	(27)
Fundraising/Other Revenue	73,244	-	73,244
Draw from Retained Surplus		7,070	(7,070)
Total	810,416	810,416	-

NYS greatly appreciates the generous support we have received and we would like to recognize the following exceptional financial commitments. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to local businesses for in-kind donations, as well as to those who have contributed to NYS through the United Way. To all of our 2017-18 funders and donors, thank you for your continued support.

\$18,000+

PosVibes Project
Community Foundation
of Mississauga

\$5,000+

The Hustler Young Men's
Bible Class Foundation

\$2,500+

The Cadillac Fairview
Corporation
YES! Youth Mental Health
Awareness

\$1,000+

Cineplex
Entertainment LLP
List 2 Close Sign Posts,
Milton
Walmart Canada
Humphrey Mitchell

\$600+

Ceri Harnden
Karen Anslow

\$300+

Linda Berkowitz
Tammi Lisson
Air Canada

