

YMCA Single Parent Family Memberships



BACKGROUND

British Columbians are facing far greater challenges post-pandemic in all aspects of their lives, from health and safety to the ability to make ends meet. Challenges such as housing affordability, food insecurity, and the rising cost of living are hindering post-pandemic recovery. Making life more affordable, reducing poverty, and keeping people healthy are top priorities for the province; these priorities are shared with the YMCAs of BC.

THE PROBLEM

Community spaces, like YMCA facilities, are essential for community health and wellness. However, the post-pandemic return of lower-income families to our facilities and programs has been slow—we are only seeing 50% of these members return. These are families who, even before the pandemic, had struggled to make ends meet and received financial assistance to participate at the YMCA.

Single-parent families face some of the greatest struggles from the pandemic and the affordability crisis. The 2022 BC Child Poverty Report Card shows the poverty rate for children in lone-parent families is 38%. When budgets are tight and pressures increase, single-parent families may feel they have no choice but to reduce involvement in their community. This impacts the mental and physical health of the entire family and reduces recreation options for children and youth.

THE YMCAs OF BC

The YMCA is a charity that provides vital community services to advance the health and well-being of all British Columbians. We are more than gym and swim. People find that when they come to the YMCA through one door, they open many more doors to helpful and fun programs and services for the whole family such as camps, chronic disease prevention, employment/training, and youth mental wellness.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

The YMCA seeks support from the Government of BC to fund 1-year family memberships for low-income, single parent families.

This partnership would reduce the barriers for these families to access health, wellness, and belonging in our YMCA centres of community.

The YMCA already contributes over \$1.6 million in financial assistance each year so no one is turned away; this partnership will allow us to increase memberships for this specific population.

BUDGET

Funding of **\$1,650,000 per year** will:

1. Re-engage **3,000 children and parents** from low-income, single parent families across BC.
2. Scale up our **child-minding services** to ensure that these parents, and others, can take full advantage of their time at the YMCA, knowing their children are being cared for in high quality, play-based programs with staff trained in healthy child development.
3. **Measure the health and social impact** of this engagement through evaluation; data can be used to inform other policy and programs.

Membership at the YMCA includes:

- Swim lessons
- Gymnasium
- Sports
- Child minding
- Group fitness
- Aquafit
- Livestream classes
- Fitness consultation
- Lockers & change rooms
- Child and family programs
- YMCA at HOME – free on-demand digital programs



Read stories from single parent families supported by the YMCA.
gv.ymca.ca/single-parent-family-stories

YMCA of Southern Interior BC | YMCA BC | YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island

YMCAs of British Columbia

BUILDING HEALTHY, VIBRANT, AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

The YMCA is a charity that provides vital community services to advance the health and well-being of all British Columbians.



Our reach and impact in BC over the past year:



5,000 child care spaces

The Y is BC's largest provider of **high quality, affordable early learning and child care**

1,669 child care spaces are \$10/day, helping more parents join the workforce

126 Y child care centres in rural, remote and urban locations



21 Indigenous partnerships

The Y is committed to **equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging** while supporting **healthier outcomes**

39,308 members get active in our centres of community

13,234 children and youth go to camp

19,112 children and youth build leadership, resilience, and employment skills

3,265 youth have improved their mental health through Y Mind

494 Indigenous youth participated in YMCA Mind Medicine through 21 Indigenous partnerships

1,214 adults prevent and manage chronic diseases, and ensure healthy aging



8,699 children and youth learn swimming and life saving skills

The Y contributes to **poverty reduction and building a stronger BC economy**

1,976 youth and adults in employment and training programs

2,343 newcomers are supported, welcomed, and find training and employment services at the Y

5,202 full time and part time staff

\$1,604,270 in financial assistance to ensure everyone can participate at the Y



The Y contributes \$68 million to BC's economy through payroll/benefits

The Y in BC and across Canada has deep roots in **safe, affordable housing**

Vancouver Island transitional and affordable housing: 45 youth, young moms and children housed and supported. 92% (youth) and 100% (moms) moved to secure housing within 1 year.

Kamloops Women's Emergency Shelter: 319 women and children stayed an average of 3 months.



Langara re-development in Vancouver will include below-market rental housing

The Y works with partners to **plan, build, and operate valuable community spaces**

The Y works with partners to **provide and expand community infrastructure** that **grows employment, achieves economic efficiencies,** and responds to **urgent, local needs.**

The Y has expertise to **operate municipal health, fitness, and aquatics facilities.**

The Y uses **environmentally sustainable building practices.**

YMCA data from 2022



We work with all levels of government and community partners to help British Columbians connect and thrive.

YMCA of Southern Interior BC | YMCA BC | YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island