YOUTH

NANAIMO YOUTH SERVICES ASSOCIATION

When we look forward we see partners in our future.



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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01 | A message from our leadership

To our dedicated community of supporters,

Thank you. In a time of economic uncertainty and growing need, your belief in Nanaimo's youth has been our bedrock. Your generosity enabled every success story in these pages.

This past year, we faced rising costs and increased demand, yet our community stepped up. By focusing on strong relationships, donations to NYSA grew, a result we're deeply proud of and grateful for.

That support allowed us to deepen our impact. We provided safe housing, life skills, and career training to hundreds of young people on their path to independence. We also laid the groundwork for our boldest initiative yet: FirstFuture, a strategy to tackle youth homelessness head-on, right here in our community.

This work is demanding, and the pressures on our incredible staff are real. Their well-being remains a top priority, and we continue to advocate for the resources they need to support youth.

Looking ahead, our focus is clear. We will continue to deliver excellent programs, strengthen partnerships, and demonstrate the return on your investment through healthy young people contributing to Nanaimo's vibrant future.

With sincere gratitude,

Allan Beaudry
President & Chair

Keith Wilson
Chief Administrative Officer



02 | 2024-2025: A year of impact

Our vision

To foster a culture where young people are empowered with independence, self-worth, and agency they need to thrive in a welcoming, secure, and respectful environment.

Number of youth helped in 2025

250+

Youth certified in RentSmart since 2021

125+



Youth living in NYSA Housing

36

Youth graduated from BladeRunners

70

Youth earning drivers' licenses

28

Increase in donor support

255%

Our mission

To provide learning opportunities and holistic support to youth on their path to independence, acknowledging the interconnectedness of their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

One story: Johann Suarez



When Johann arrived in Nanaimo from the Philippines at 20, his goal was simple: find work and build a new life. Through NYSA's BladeRunners program, he gained job skills and confidence that led to positions at Blenz Coffee and The Bay while he conitnued attending school.

After university, Johann returned to NYSA to join the L2N Driver Support program, earning his full license with the steady guidance of his mentor, Les. Now 27, he's a computer science graduate working as an embedded systems programmer at Shift Coastal Tech — and part-time in NYSA's youth housing, helping other young people begin their own journeys.

"I'm not indebted to this organization; I'm ingrained in it," Johann says proudly.

03 | How we help: our programs & services

For over 56 years, NYSA has helped young people navigate the path to adulthood through two cornerstone areas: Training & Development and Housing.

Training & development

We equip youth with the skills and confi dence to build independent, successful futures.

BladeRunners: Employment training for youth aged 17–25 facing barriers to work. Participants complete three weeks of intensive life and job skills training, earn certifi cations such as FoodSafe and First Aid, and gain a supported work placement with wage subsidy.

RentSmart: A national certification that builds tenancy skills for both tenants and landlords, helping prevent conflict, reduce evictions, and promote stable housing.

L2N Driver Support: In partnership with Snuneymuxw First Nation, this free program pairs youth with a vehicle and mentor to log the driving hours needed for their license, a vital tool for work and independence.

Coming soon: **Bridge Centre**: A community hub offering volunteer-led programs in skill-building, creativity, collaboration, and belonging in a welcoming space.

Safe & stable housing

We provide secure housing and supports that prevent youth homelessness and build a foundation for success.

Waddington House: A 22-unit residence for youth aged 16–19, referred primarily by MCFD, where residents gain life skills for independent living. It also houses our Supportive Living Program, offering outreach, mentorship, and health supports to at-risk youth across Nanaimo.

Rowe House: A 14-unit heritage home providing affordable, stable housing for youth over 19 who are employed or in school, living in a safe, supportive community as they transition to adulthood.





04 | Our people & partners

Our team: the heart of NYSA

Our employees are our most important asset. Their engagement, skill, and deep compassion are the driving force behind every youth we support. Working in social services presents unique challenges, including long hours and emotionally demanding situations. That is why we are committed to fostering a healthy, supportive work environment through employee assistance programs, continuous learning, and an ongoing focus on well-being.

Our community partners

Collaboration is at the core of our approach. We believe that by working together, we can build a stronger, more comprehensive web of support for Nanaimo's youth.

We are proud to partner with organizations like the Snuneymuxw First Nation on our L2N Driver Support program and maintain strong ties with the local business community through our BladeRunners placements. Our historical connection with Vancouver Island University is a testament to our long-standing role in the community.

Looking ahead, partnerships will be vital to the success of our Bridge Centre and our FirstFuture housing initiative, where we will collaborate with fellow agencies to create a seamless path from homelessness to long-term, stable housing.

Our foundation

For over 56 years, our work has been built on a foundation of core values and proven strengths. This is our promise to the youth we serve and the community that supports us.

Deep expertise: We leverage more than five decades of institutional history and the dedication of our skilled team to deliver life-changing programs.

Community trust & collaboration: We meet young people where they are, building trust and working with community partners to create a seamless web of support.

Financial prudence & stability: We are responsible stewards of every dollar, ensuring your support is maximized for the greatest possible impact on the lives of young people.

The power of prevention:

Twenty years of turning a chance into a future



When Chris Lakusta joined NYSA in 2005, he was a criminology student planning a career in youth probation. Nearly two decades later, as Director of Housing, he leads programs that offer a different path and help young people change the course of their lives.

"I planned to work in probation, which is punitive," Chris says. "But programs like BladeRunners create opportunities. What NYSA does is preventative work, providing the skills, tools, and housing that keep youth out of the criminal justice system."

That prevention is most visible in the stability housing provides. "When youth get the key to their own place, they can finally take a breath," he explains. "We're the friendly landlord. We hold them accountable and then move forward positively."

Chris believes that real change comes from empowerment. "We teach practical skills, confidence, and responsibility," he says. "Our role is to help young people stand on their own and see what's possible when someone believes in them."

05 | Our path forward

To meet the challenges ahead, NYSA is focused on a multi-pronged strategy that maximizes our impact while ensuring our long-term sustainability.

Financial resilience: We are committed to diversifying our funding through a healthy mix of government grants, corporate partnerships, and grassroots community fundraising. Our storytelling will continue to focus on the powerful, life-changing impact of a donor's investment.

Holistic, youth-directed programs: We are prioritizing programs that address the root causes of youth challenges, such as offering mental health supports alongside employment training. Crucially, we are committed to involving young people in the co-design of our services to ensure they are relevant and empowering.

Investing in our team: To combat burnout and retain our talented staff, we are focused on offering mental health supports, professional development, and greater flexibility. A supported staff is better equipped to handle the demands of their vital work.

Strengthening partnerships: We will continue to build strong relationships with schools, governments, and fellow non-profits to avoid duplicating services and ensure youth receive the right support at the right time. By acting as a community hub, we can connect young people to the resources they need, wherever they exist.



Strategic housing initiative: FirstFuture

The housing crisis is the single biggest barrier for many young people. To address it, NYSA is launching *FirstFuture*, a groundbreaking initiative to combat youth homelessness in Nanaimo.

Our objectives:

Immediate access: Provide swift access to safe housing for youth experiencing homelessness.

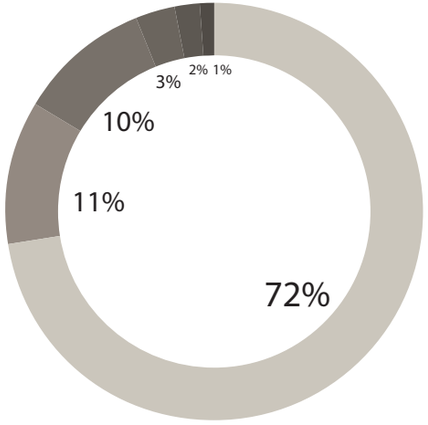
Affordability: Develop sustainable, affordable housing options to prevent homelessness.

Cultural integration: Integrate culturally appropriate housing options for Indigenous youth.

Our first step is a research project to understand the true scope of youth homelessness in Nanaimo. Current estimates suggest as many as 125 youth may be homeless on any given night, but these numbers don't include the 'hidden homeless': young people temporarily staying with friends, couch-surfing, or sleeping in vehicles. With accurate data, we will work with partners to build programs that provide a clear path to a safe, stable, and affordable future.

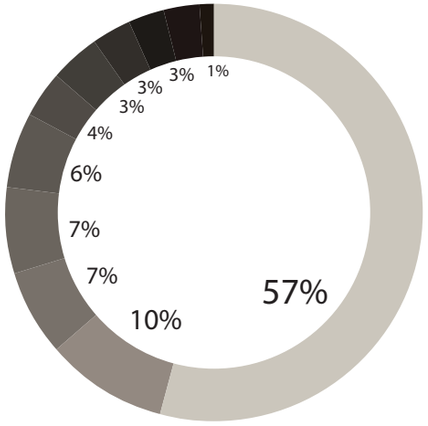
06 | Financials & governance

Key financial takeaways



Revenue

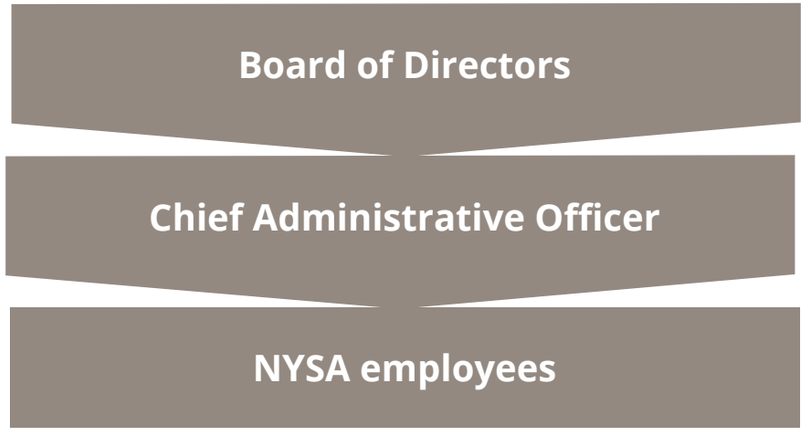
- Provincial & federal funding
- Program revenue
- Tenant fees
- Donations
- Deferred capital contributions
- Interest income



Expenses

- Salaries & benefits
- Program costs
- Repairs & maintenance
- Amortization
- Administration
- Utilities

Our commitment to accountability



NYSA is a community-based, not-for-profit charitable society governed by a volunteer Board of Directors representing a cross-section of our community. The Board provides strategic oversight and ensures fiscal responsibility, delegating day-to-day management to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

This governance model ensures we remain focused on our mission and accountable to our clients, our funders, and the community we serve. All directors serve without pay and are committed to upholding the highest standards of ethics and prudence in service of Nanaimo's youth.

Revenue excluding government funding increased by

21%

Unrestricted revenue increased by

255%

Overall operating expenses decreased by

11%

Cashflow improved by

4%

Long Term Debt reduced by

8%

07 | Our team

Board of Directors



Allan Beaudry
President & Chair



Don Stedeford
Corporate Secretary



Leana Pellegrin
Acting Treasurer



Sheila White
Director

Employees

Kim Agnew-Jones, Program Director, Employment & Training
Kourtni Dzugan, Residential Housing Worker
Allison Evans, Controller
Jessie Gallant, Residential Housing Worker
Chris Lakusta, Director, Housing & Supportive Living
Anthony Maki, Job Coach and L2N Coordinator
Savanna Moore, Youth Outreach Worker
Les Pangborne-LaHue, L2N Driver Accompanist
Amanda Pitts, Youth Outreach Worker
Brianna Purdy, Housing Coordinator
Michelle Ripka, Youth Outreach Worker
Jacqueline Salvino, Director, Development & Communications
Johann Suarez, Residential Housing Worker
Keith Wilson, Chief Administrative Officer

Supporters

Government of Canada
Government of British Columbia
Home Depot Canada Foundation
Rotary Clubs of Nanaimo
BC Housing
United Way
Loaves and Fishes
Co-op Mid Island
Royal Bank
Nanaimo Foundation
Dawn Walton & Associates
Stu & Erin Setch
Cynthia Spencer
Tom Harris Foundation

“In my time here, I have learned that one of the toughest things in life is becoming an adult. Because of NYSA, I can live my life the way I always wanted to, but never believed that I could”

- 2024 Waddington House resident

YOUTH

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