

MMMM COOOOOKIES!

By: Melodie Telfer

We prepare and serve **A LOT** of food at The Dam, but the youth definitely have their favourites! In a recent Instagram poll, garlic bread, pizza, and macaroni and cheese were among the most popular (we do serve healthier options, I promise!). One response from a Meadowvale youth was **“Cooookies!”**. I knew immediately which cookies this youth meant! Not boxed but home-baked, delivered weekly (sometimes still warm) by one of our volunteers, Tracy Staring. I've seen the eyes of youth light up when Tracy's cookies are on the menu and I've watched as trays of them disappear in minutes. There's nothing like home-baked goodness after a long day!

Suddenly, I was a student again, walking into the sandwich shop across the street from my high school, hoping there would be a banana chocolate chip muffin left for me. *Terry's* was a place my friends and I could spend hours at even if all we purchased was a 75¢ muffin. Baked fresh daily with the perfect ratio of mini chocolate chips melting into the buttery banana cake, these muffins didn't last long, and (clearly) they made a lasting impression on me!



Tracy delivering home-baked cookies

Food and memory are so closely connected. Dam alumni visit us years after high school and often reminisce about all the food they enjoyed at The Dam...for free! I'm sure that, for many of our Meadowvale youth (and staff), Tracy's cookies will elicit the same feelings of nostalgia for many years to come! Thank you, Tracy, for delivering your trays of **cookie-kindness** week after week. Food truly has the ability to satisfy the soul and the belly.

Tracy's Ginger Cookies

INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS
2/3 cup salad oil	Mix salad oil with sugar
1 cup sugar	Add eggs and beat well
1 egg	Stir in molasses
4 Tbsp molasses	Add all dry ingredients and mix well
2 cups flour	Make sure flour on bottom gets mixed
1 tsp baking soda	Roll into balls, dip in sugar
1 tsp baking powder	Place on ungreased cookie sheet
1/2 tsp salt	
1 tsp cinnamon	Bake at 350 12 minutes
2 tsp ground ginger	

ENTER TO WIN A MYSTERY PRIZE PACK!

1. FIND THE COOKIE CRUMBS.
2. COMPLETE THE MISSION.
3. STAY TUNED!



MAKE TRACY'S COOKIES OR SHARE YOUR OWN RECIPE & TAG US ON INSTAGRAM @THE DAM DROP IN

EMPOWERMENT

THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Invest in youth... Invest in the future!



Empower a Youth: \$50/Month

Since it's beginning,

33 youth

have been employed!

389 Youth have received job-skill training and mentoring!

Your monthly donation equips a youth with interview clothes, training, mentorship, transportation and more.

Empower them with the skills to succeed!



GIVE YOUTH A LEG UP!

Hi everyone, my name is Deanna, though the youth know me as Dee. I have the privilege of assisting with the **Youth Employment Program (YEP)** at The Dam. I believe helping youth find employment is not just about landing a job—it's about providing a crucial stepping stone to develop essential life and interpersonal skills.

The rewarding part is building relationships with youth. Supporting them with resume writing, interview prep, and other critical job-readiness skills, makes YEP truly unique. I learn of their backstories which highlights their incredible resilience and determination. Seeing their joy when they get that callback is unforgettable.

One of the youth was so excited after getting a job, he sought us out during lunch just to share the news. His enthusiasm and gratitude were inspiring. These are the moments we live for! It's an honour to support these youth as they achieve important milestones.

Deanna Vongsaly



Deanna (right) learning from one of our youth leaders

You can give one of the 20 youth waiting for support a leg up!

WHO HELPED YOU GET YOUR FIRST JOB?

Who helped you write your resume? Who prepped you for interviews?

Who was your moral support? Who showed they cared?

With little support at home, lack of funds for training, work clothes, or reliable transportation, many youth have to figure it out on their own.



Give youth a leg up! Empower a youth for \$1.60 a day! (\$50/month) →



← EMPLOYERS—ask us how you can get involved.



PREVENTION OVER “CURE”

Planet Youth is a research consultancy that runs a guidance program in adolescent substance use prevention throughout the world. Employing a collaborative approach called, *The Icelandic Prevention Model*, the focus is on holistic community building and long-term progress rather than standard short-term solutions.

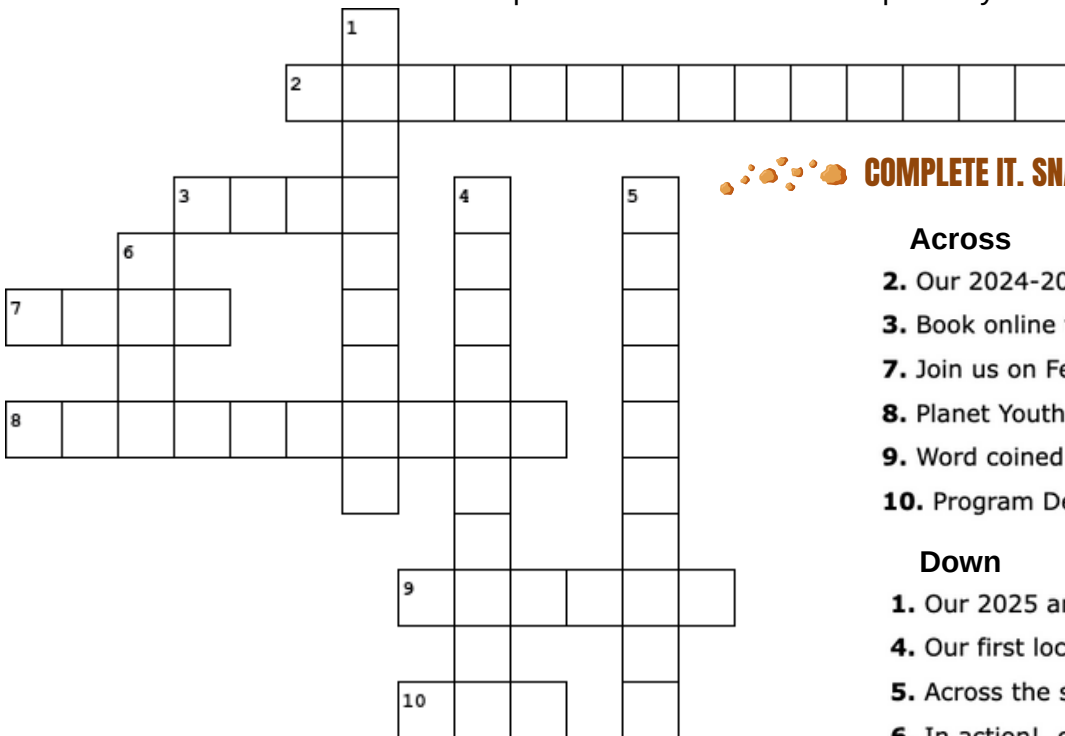
[Learn More](#)

Imagine if we had a cure for youth addiction and substance abuse! We could help young people overcome their addictions and carve out healthier pathways for their lives. But how do we solve this problem? Perhaps we are asking the wrong question. How do we prevent addiction in the first place? And we’re not talking about the “just say no” campaigns from the 80s or those frying pan demonstrations - “This is your brain on drugs”. These tactics have shown only nominal success rates. What truly works is prevention—fostering support and providing resources for children and youth who desperately need them. This has always been the mission of The Dam and the partnership we’re embarking on with Planet Youth will help bring us to a new level of prevention to barricade the pathways that lead to addiction.

[CLICK HERE](#)



COMPLETE IT. SNAP IT. TAG IT @THEDAMDROPIN



Across

- 2. Our 2024-2025 theme.
- 3. Book online to visit us
- 7. Join us on February 22, 2025.
- 8. Planet Youth focus
- 9. Word coined by our youth
- 10. Program Deanna leads

Down

- 1. Our 2025 anniversary
- 4. Our first location
- 5. Across the street from TLK
- 6. In action!, greatest of these, ___ wins!

Support Our Youth Programs

You can empower us to continue vital youth outreach and support. Here’s how you can give:

Interac e-Transfer: Send to office@thedam.org

Online: Visit www.thedam.org/mailling

Mail a Cheque: P.O. Box 21217, RPO Meadowvale, Mississauga, ON L5N 6A2



TOGETHER, WE RAISED
\$25,480
TO FEED HUNGRY YOUTH!
THAT'S **6,370 LUNCHES!!!**

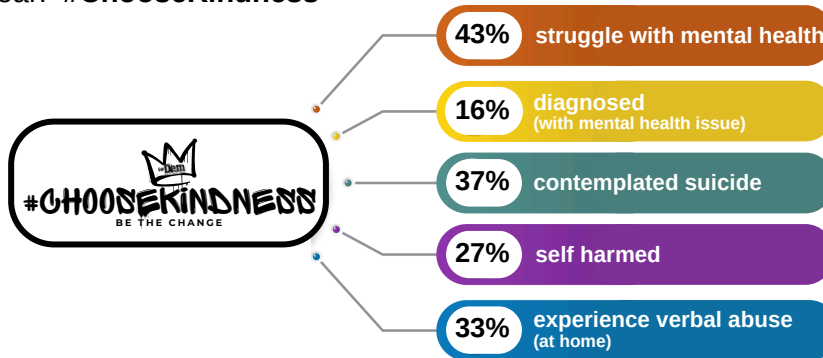


Our Mission

Partnering with youth in Mississauga to create inclusive community where all are welcome, valued, and respected.







WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO TOGETHER?

Our spring 2024 survey revealed higher than usual figures in the areas of food insecurity, housing insecurity and mental health issues. Our 10x10 Event raised needed funds for our food budget which will help us continue to be a consistent source for food for youth and their families! Our Youth Employment Program and CASP Housing subsidy will also help us support food and housing needs! It's no wonder that youth living with so much insecurity, who experienced the COVID pandemic during formative social years, are living with increased mental health struggles. To support youth mental health we came up with theme for the 2024-2025 School Year: **#ChooseKindness**



We think youth need an extra measure of kindness in their lives. Don't you?

CHOOSE KINDNESS!

-  [Link](#) Buy a gift from our Holiday Registry.
-  [Link](#) Provide dinner for one of our Youth Holiday parties.
-  [Link](#) Adopt-a-youth or family this season.
-  [Link](#) Volunteer as a Rama Gaming House Host.
-  [Link](#) Become a monthly donor as part of your year-end giving.
-  [Link](#) Register for The Coldest Night of the Year 2025 (Saturday Feb 22).

I'LL WALK FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH ON THE COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR!
[HTTPS://CNOY.ORG/THEDAM](https://cnoy.org/thedam)

