

# REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY 2023

*Supporting and  
empowering young  
people on their journey to  
self-reliance*



**YOUTHLINK**



# Letter from our CEO

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“Youth homelessness doesn’t have to carry stigma or shame. YouthLink and our partner organizations tirelessly battle this phenomenon daily on behalf of the young people we serve. There is so much light shining from our work and so many galvanizing stories coming out of our center of service where young people are embracing new lives they only dreamed of before coming to YouthLink. With a staggering 106% increase in visits since 2021, it's clear that word is getting out among young people facing homelessness about the high-quality services and resources we offer every day. In 2024, we're committed to ensuring every young person seeking our assistance continues to have access to the resources and support they need to find housing, wellbeing, and life stability. In the year to come, we will continue to erase the shadows of stigma and shame surrounding homelessness, illuminating pathways to brighter futures for every individual who comes through our doors.”

***Rich Melzer, YouthLink CEO***

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**47%**

*YouthLink experienced a significant 47% increase in youth visits between 2022 and 2023.*

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**86%**

*YouthLink experienced a remarkable 86% surge in youth served from 2021 to 2023.*

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**106%**

*1,945 young people visited YouthLink 17,850 times in 2023. This is a 106% increase in visits since 2021.*

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## VISION

A community in which all youth, without regard to their living situation, have an equal opportunity to pursue their goals and dreams, and an equal likelihood of achieving them.

## MISSION

To support and empower young people on their journey to self-reliance.

# Drop-In Center



**1,945**

youth connected with staff and more than a dozen onsite partners



**17,850**

visits to YouthLink for basic needs and services



**1,456**

undergarments distributed (socks, underwear and bras)



**103**

youth secured or maintained housing with Drop-In Center assistance



**74,871**

hot meals served (11,590 more meals than in 2022)



**313**

youth met with an onsite mental health professional



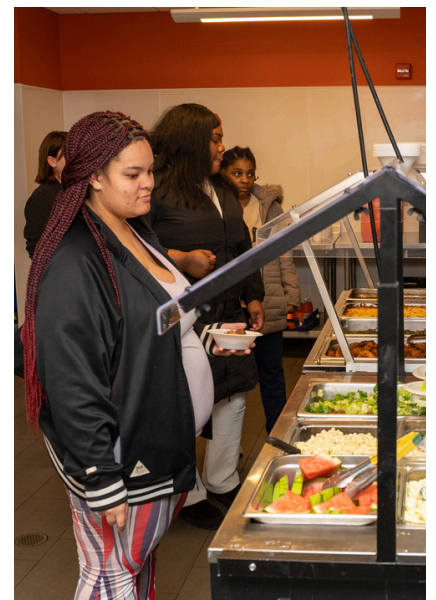
**5,144**

items of clothing distributed from the clothing closet



**4,304**

toiletries distributed from the hygiene closet



# Housing



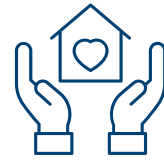
47

new youth moved into long-term housing solutions



90%

of youth housed remained stably housed after 12 months



184

youth in supportive and offsite housing (on average each month)

# Outreach

YouthLink's Outreach Case Manager, Kiki, goes above and beyond to connect with youth experiencing homelessness directly in the community. Clad in her iconic YouthLink blue, Kiki ventures into areas frequented by youth experiencing homelessness, offering essential supplies like hot meals, snacks, water, and hygiene packs. In the harsh Minnesota winters, she ensures warmth with blankets, hand warmers, hats, and gloves. Beyond tangible items, Kiki provides vital connections to resources and facilitates access to services at YouthLink's Drop-In Center. Each encounter with Kiki is a lifeline, offering support and empowerment to those in need.



245

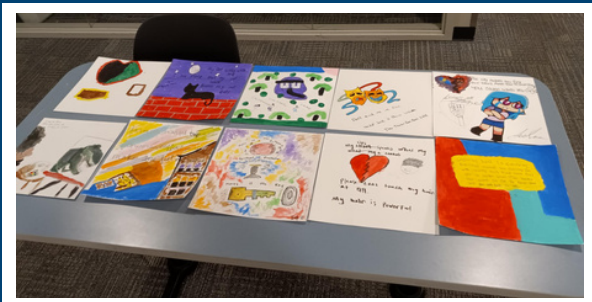
youth contacted on average each month



1,144

supplies distributed, such as hygiene kits, hot meals, snack bags, and blankets

# T.R.U.E Group



**T.R.U.E. Group (Taking Resilience Undoing Endangerment)** is designed to provide a safe space for youth to talk about and process trafficking, exploitation, abuse, and other trauma. This peer-support group, facilitated by specialized YouthLink staff, onsite mental health therapists, Family Tree Clinic, and Annex Clinic, was started in the late fall of 2022 with just a few youth showing up each week. Attendance began to climb as the group established itself and word spread among youth. Throughout 2023, 651 (duplicated) youth came to these evening sessions (dinner and transportation were provided by YouthLink). Many of them attended multiple times throughout the year and have spoken to the value the group holds for them and the healing that it has made possible.

## Mental Health

A lack of culturally responsive and relevant mental and chemical health care contributes to the persistent gap in access for BIPOC youth. YouthLink closes this gap by partnering with culturally responsive providers, ensuring tailored support. Lack of understanding and stigma are major barriers for young people seeking care, which we overcome through services at our Drop-In Center, residential locations, and via telehealth. Prioritizing empathetic communication, we build trust before discussing care specifics.



**313**

youth engaged with mental and chemical health therapists at the Drop-In Center



**70%**

of young people continued to engage in individual and group sessions after their initial session

# Voices of Youth Advisory Council

"As the Voices of Youth Advisory Council Program Manager, 2023 was a year of growth and evolution at YouthLink. VOYAC hit the ground running. In a short time, the council was able to have a big impact – revising organizational Policies and Procedures, fostering community Partnerships, influencing Programs, and hosting events in the Drop-In Center. I can't wait to witness the continued growth and innovation that the Council brings in 2024."

*KJ Rolenc, Youth Council Program Manager*



## POLICY

VOYAC influences and advises on internal policy decisions at YouthLink. They also engage and educate on the legislative process. Their goal is to affect policy in both YouthLink and the greater community.

## PROGRAMS

VOYAC helps determine what programs are offered and how they are implemented. VOYAC ensures that programs are culturally-responsive and providing transformative experiences and opportunities for young people coming through YouthLink's doors.

## PROCEDURES

VOYAC influences and advises on internal procedures at YouthLink. They help determine how processes are run and how services are delivered within the organization.

## PARTNERSHIPS

VOYAC helps build and develop a network of partnerships that support and nourish the growth of YouthLink and its clients. Partnerships help provide a wide range of skill development and educational enlightenment for youth coming to YouthLink.

# Partners

Strong community partnerships are essential to YouthLink's ability to serve and resource youth. Thank you to the following partners:



## 2023 ONSITE YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CENTER PARTNERS

- Avivo**  
Mental health care
- The Soul's Apothecary**  
Licensed alcohol and drug counselor
- Healthcare for the Homeless**  
Full service medical clinic
- Hennepin County**  
Benefits eligibility team
- Hennepin County Red Door Clinic**  
Sexual health
- Kulture Klub Collaborative**  
Arts and recording studio, self expression through art
- Goodwill Easter-Seals**  
Job placement while completing GED or diploma
- HIRED**  
Career training, job placement, GED services
- The JK Movement**  
Mentorship, group coaching, anger management, life skills
- Family Tree Clinic**  
Reproductive and sexual health care
- Annex Clinic**  
Sexual health services and education

YouthLink staff are also well-connected to other service organizations, working closely with partner agencies including The Link, The Bridge for Youth, Avenues, Ain Dah Yung Center, Brittany's Place, StreetWorks, Face-to-Face, Minnesota Internship Charter High School (MNIC), Youth Services Network, and others to do outreach and connect youth to specialized services including overnight shelter and housing. YouthLink participates in local, state, and national networks and coalitions to better identify trends and service gaps and share resources. We believe that by strengthening partnerships across the continuum of care, we are strengthening the safety net and scope of services for youth.





"In 2023, three key areas stood out for me. First, our youth drop-in services surged by 47%, showing how YouthLink is effectively providing hope and empowering youth to build stability and self-esteem through meals, clothing, mental health support, employment, case management, and housing. Second, our Executive Leadership Team has faced new challenges head-on. Their focus and passion have opened new doors within the community by ensuring youth voices are being heard. This is strengthening and unifying our communities. Third, every young person who comes through our doors finds caring staff ready to offer the resources and services they need to build stability and a brighter future. Serving youth and collaborating with YouthLink's dedicated leadership fills me with immense pride."

**Brian Johnson**  
*Board of Directors, Treasurer*

# 2023 Leadership

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Steve Cramer, Chair**  
*President and CEO*  
Minneapolis  
Downtown Council

**Chris Garcia, Vice Chair**  
*Principal*  
Lee & Associates

**Brian Johnson, Treasurer**  
*Executive Director of Banking and Business Development*  
Choice Bank

**Jay Belsito**  
*Civic Engagement*  
Gender Justice

**Alicia Berger**  
*Director, Gas Operations*  
Xcel Energy

**Jared Brewington**  
*Founder/CEO*  
Improv Hospitality  
*Owner*  
Brick & Brew  
Properties, Official  
Fried Chicken

**Ethan Casson**  
*CEO*  
Minnesota  
Timberwolves and  
Lynx

**Dan Coleman**  
*Real Estate Agent*  
First and Third  
Properties

**Mike Mills**  
*Director of Construction Management*  
Ryan Companies

**Quincy Powe**  
*Youth Opportunity Network Manager*  
Youthprise  
Co-Founder  
VOYAC

**Rachael Scherer**  
*Retired*  
EPIQ Partners LLC  
and Scherer Bros  
Lumber

**Patrick Troup**  
*Vice President of Student Affairs*  
Minneapolis  
Community and  
Technical College

## YOUNG PROFESSIONALS BOARD

**Ilwad Ali**  
Target

**Rhea Barrow**  
Root Down Realty

**Lexi Byler**  
Office of U.S. Senator  
Tina Smith

**Aubrey Hamilton**  
Allegion

**Bea Hanson**  
Fabian May &  
Anderson PLLP

**Cassidy Patrick**  
Schwan's Company

**Lindsey Phillips**  
Eide Bailly LLP

## VOICES OF YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Clyde Quarles**  
*Chair*

**Joseph "J Cole" Cole**  
*Vice Chair*

**Malik "DES" Thomas**  
*Advocacy Advisor*

**Manny Bekoe**  
*Secretary*

**Kenneth "Tre" Savage**  
*Events Advisor*

**Starr Pate**  
*Communications Advisor*

**Htoo "Sky" Paw**  
*General Council Member*

For a full list of YouthLink staff, please visit [youthlinkmn.org](https://youthlinkmn.org)

# Financials

## STATEMENT OF REVENUES & EXPENSES

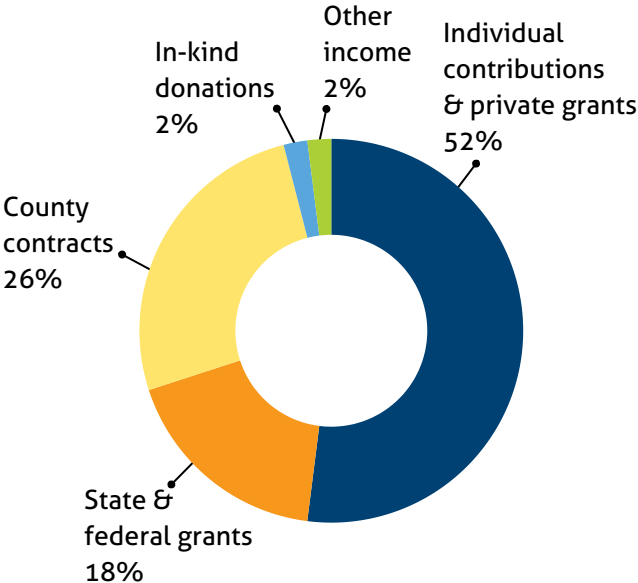
October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023

Please contact Heather Haynes, Director of Development, at 612-252-1226 for YouthLink's Fiscal Year 2023 audited financial statements.

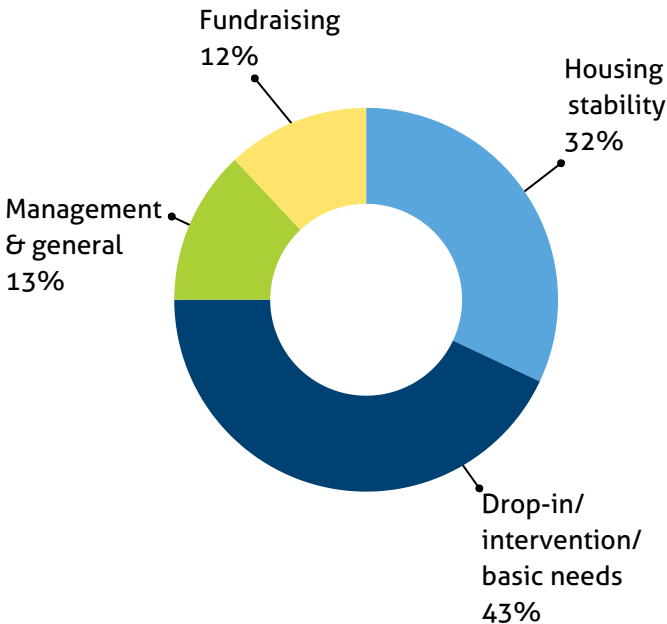
Revenue	FY 2023
Individual contributions & private grants	\$ 2,480,083
State and federal grants	862,154
County contracts	1,252,981
In-kind donations	85,354
Other income	80,575
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$ 4,761,147</b>

Expenses	FY 2023
<i>Direct program expenses (75%)</i>	
Housing stability	\$ 1,658,098
Drop-in/intervention/basic needs	2,242,511
<i>Supporting services (25%)</i>	
Management and general	674,919
Fundraising	614,423
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$ 5,189,951</b>
<i>Total revenue less total expenses</i>	<i>\$ (428,804)</i>

### 2023 REVENUE



### 2023 EXPENSES



# 2023 DONORS

## Foundations & Corporate Partners

Your support, in all its forms, is deeply appreciated at YouthLink. From the financial contributions that help us plan for tomorrow, to the practical socks, hats, and hygiene supplies that meet today's needs, your generosity builds a foundation of independence for young people experiencing homelessness. Thank you.

### LIFE CHANGER

#### \$100,000+

Allianz Life Insurance  
Company of North  
America  
Andiamo Fund  
Buuck Family Fund at the  
Minneapolis Foundation  
Greater Twin Cities United  
Way  
Otto Bremer Trust  
Pohlad Family Foundation

### DREAM MAKER

#### \$50,000- \$99,999

B & H Way Foundation  
Carlson Family Foundation  
Grotto Foundation

### BELIEVER

#### \$25,000- \$49,999

Anonymous (1)  
3M Foundation  
Ameriprise Financial  
Choice Financial Group  
Hugh J. Andersen  
Foundation  
MN Timberwolves & Lynx  
FastBreak Foundation  
Patrick and Aimee Butler  
Family Foundation  
Richard M. Schulze Family  
Foundation  
Scherer Brothers Lumber  
Company  
The WCA Foundation

### INSPIRER

#### \$10,000- \$24,999

Anonymous (1)  
Connexus Credit Union  
Hunger Solutions  
Minnesota

John W. Mooty Foundation  
Trust  
Nuveen Investments  
Pax Christi Catholic  
Community  
Peregrine Capital  
Management, LLC  
Reclaim the Block  
Ryan Companies US  
United Way Arise Project  
Walser Foundation funded  
by Walser Automotive  
Group  
Xcel Energy Foundation

### ENCOURAGER

#### \$5,000- \$9,999

Amazon  
Best Buy Foundation  
Bogart Family Foundation  
Comcast  
Minnesota Timberwolves  
and Lynx  
Peter J. King Family  
Foundation  
The Elizabeth C. Quinlan  
Foundation, Inc.  
The Kind World  
Foundation  
The Minneapolis  
Foundation

### MOTIVATOR

#### \$1,000- \$4,999

1335 Foundation  
BOMA Greater  
Minneapolis  
CarVal Foundation  
Dorsey & Whitney, LLC  
Minneapolis Downtown  
Improvement District

Old National Bank  
Presbyterian Church of the  
Apostles  
Red Cow Uptown  
Roxy's Cabaret  
SFM Mutual Insurance Co.  
Success Computer  
Consulting  
The Saloon  
United Properties  
Upsher-Smith  
Laboratories  
Wanner Engineering, Inc.  
Xcel Energy  
YMCA of the North

### ADVOCATE

#### \$500- \$999

Bell State Bank & Trust  
Church of St. Joan of Arc  
Grace University Lutheran  
Church  
Liberating Spirit Christian  
Community  
Power Play Marketing  
Group  
The Judson Memorial  
Baptist Church  
Tradition Capital Bank  
Twin Cities Habitat for  
Humanity  
Walmart

### HELPING HAND

#### Up to \$499

Atonement Lutheran  
Church  
Delta Kappa Gamma,  
Alpha Kappa Chapter  
EPIQ Partners  
First Christian Church  
Gemini, Inc.

Grace Lutheran Church  
IBEW Local Union #110  
Insite Architects  
Katun Corporation  
Minnesota Association of  
Professional Employees  
(MAPE)  
Naas Chiropractic Clinic  
NFP  
Northmarq  
St. Matthew's Episcopal  
Church  
Temple Israel Minneapolis  
The Atons of Minneapolis

YouthLink is deeply grateful to ALL our funders and donors, at all levels and amounts, for your support of the young people we serve. We heard overwhelmingly in our community survey last year that our individual donors are not interested in being listed in annual reports. If you are an individual donor and want to be recognized and share your story in a blog post or newsletter segment, please reach out to us at [donations@youthlinkmn.org](mailto:donations@youthlinkmn.org) or by calling 612-252-1226. Thank you!

# 2023 DONORS

## Employer Matching Gifts & In-Kind Donations

### EMPLOYER MATCHING GIFTS

3M  
Abbott Laboratories  
Ameriprise Financial  
Best Buy  
Blue Cross Blue Shield  
Cargill  
CHS Inc.  
CoBank  
Ecolab  
Eide Bailly LLP  
General Mills  
LinkedIn  
Mechdyne Corporation  
Medtronic  
Microsoft  
Mortenson Construction  
News Corp  
Piper Sandler  
Pohlad Family Foundation  
Polaris  
Prudential Financial  
RBC Capital Markets  
Ryan Companies US  
Thrivent Financial  
TIAA  
Travelers  
Trustmark  
UnitedHealth Group  
Unum Insurance  
US Bank  
VISA  
Voya Financial  
Wells Fargo

### IN-KIND DONATIONS

Accenture  
Backpack Project MN  
Bellisio Foods  
Bethel University  
Community Health Program  
Bi Worldwide  
Big Box of Razors  
Bilisumma Organization  
Blind Havoc  
Calix, Inc  
Cerberus Ministries  
Ceridian  
Courage Kenny  
Rehabilitation Institute (CKRI)  
Delta Kappa Gamma, Alpha Kappa Chapter  
DotCom Printing  
Familia Skateshop  
FOX 9  
GEM Health  
Goodwill-Easter Seals  
Hennepin County 4-H Ambassadors  
Hibar  
Hidden Pines Ranch  
Hilton Hotels  
Holy Angels' Girls Soccer Team  
Huntington National Bank  
HyVee  
Jack Link's

Land O' Lakes  
Living Faith Spiritual Community  
Lionsgate Academy  
M Health Fairview Hospital- Care Suites  
Medica  
Minneapolis Parks & Recreation  
Minnesota Department of Human Services  
Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx  
Modern Mystery School- Minneapolis- St. Paul  
Mount Olivet Lutheran Church  
Northmarq  
Nuveen  
Performance Foodservice  
ProDrivers  
Ridwell  
Rogers Behavioral Health  
Shalom Hill Church  
SHAPESHIFT Theatrical  
State Farm/ Cassandra Spear  
Success Computer Consulting  
Surest  
Target Corporation  
The Drawer  
Temple Israel  
The Need In Deed  
The Residents of 1200 on the Mall

The Saloon  
The Vikings Table  
Tootsies- A Maranatha Ministry  
Trader Joe's - St. Paul  
United HealthGroup  
United Properties  
Upsher-Smith Laboratories  
Walser Foundation funded by Walser Automotive Group  
Xcel Energy  
Youth in Action

We sincerely apologize for any errors or omissions in our list of funders. Please call 612-252-1226 or email [donations@youthlinkmn.org](mailto:donations@youthlinkmn.org) with any corrections.

Funders are listed based on their gift or pledge category made during the 2023 calendar year.

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY!**

## ONSITE VOLUNTEER GROUPS



Breck School  
Choice Bank  
Medica  
Minnesota Lynx  
RBC Capital  
SPS Commerce

SureScripts  
Target  
Temple Israel  
Thrivent Financial  
Xcel Energy

# Thank you!

Thank you for supporting young people to transition out of homelessness and reach for their goals and dreams.

This report is a snapshot of what you made possible in 2023. Please contact Heather Haynes, Director of Development, at [haynes@youthlinkmn.org](mailto:haynes@youthlinkmn.org) or (612) 252-1226 if you have questions about the full scope of your impact or would simply like to learn more about YouthLink's work.



**YOUTHLINK**

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Minneapolis, MN 55403  
612.252.1200

[donations@youthlinkmn.org](mailto:donations@youthlinkmn.org)  
[YouthLinkMN.org](http://YouthLinkMN.org)



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