



Building better futures for women and their families

Introduction

This plan defines high-level strategic directions for Advocacy and all Core Service areas for YWCA Vancouver. It also documents our progress and serves as a guide for departmental activities and program development, as they relate to the ongoing, mission-based work of the organization.

Underpinning our strategic plan is the Balanced Scorecard Performance Measurement System, which tracks performance in YWCA programs and departments. The strategic directions highlighted in this plan will be integrated into our 2009 Balanced Scorecard, translating mission into action and action into outcomes, as we move forward to achieve the desired future for YWCA Vancouver and those we serve.



Vision

To achieve women's equality

Mission

To touch lives and build better futures for women and their families through advocacy and integrated services that foster economic independence, wellness, and equal opportunities

Strategic Plan

ADVOCACY

Universal Early Learning and Care

Women's Safety

Affordable Housing

Support for Single Mothers

Work/Life Balance & Family-Friendly Workplace

CORE SERVICE AREAS

Crabtree Corner

Early Learning & Care Operations

Employment Services

Health + Fitness

Hotel & Housing

International Services

Mentorship

Single Mothers' Services

Youth

Finance & IT

Fund Development

Human Resources

Communications & Marketing

Risk Management

Sustainability

Volunteer Services

Balanced Scorecard

Serve the Client

Run the Business

Learn & Grow

Be Financially Healthy

Our 2009 Strategic Plan At a Glance

| ADVOCACY STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|--|
| | Short-term 0-2 years Mid-term 2-5 years Long-term 5-10 years |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted engagement of business, community & government leaders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support public investment in early learning & care/full-day kindergarten Build understanding of the factors that will ensure successful outcomes | Short to mid-term |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote family-friendly workplace practices to Lower Mainland employers | Ongoing |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate advocacy messages (housing, women's safety, work/life balance & support for single mothers) in YWCA materials & CEO speaking opportunities | Ongoing |

| CORE SERVICE AREA | STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | Short-term 0-2 years Mid-term 2-5 years Long-term 5-10 years |
| Crabtree Corner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess feasibility of capital expansion Expand community programs as funding & early learning & care spaces become available | Mid to long-term Mid to long-term |
| Early Learning and Care Operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess opportunities to expand early learning & care operations without increasing YWCA child care deficit Educate parents, YWCA supporters, & government officials about the true cost of quality care | Ongoing Short to mid-term |
| Employment Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to discussion on the Canada/BC Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) Assess opportunities to expand employment services for women, youth, multi-barriered clients or retirees | Short-term Ongoing |
| Health + Fitness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on member growth & retention to build a loyal & stable membership (emphasis on workplace wellness) Develop business plan for capital improvements & possible locker room expansion Provide training & development for volunteer instructors & coaches Expand Personalized Services to include Life Coaching & additional trainers to accommodate demand | Short-term Short-term Ongoing Ongoing |
| Hotel and Housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build partnerships with housing providers to improve access for single mothers & at-risk women Open Coquitlam single mothers housing project in Spring 2010 Open Surrey single mothers housing project in 2011 Explore new opportunities to develop housing for single mothers & marginalized women Undertake hotel expansion as market conditions or funding opportunities warrant | Ongoing Short-term Mid-term Mid to long-term Mid to long-term |
| International Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement youth-at-risk project in Russia Provide support to the newly formed YWCA of Russia Explore new opportunities to share YWCA Vancouver best practices in other countries | Short-term Ongoing Ongoing |
| Mentorship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new mentorship initiatives as funding & partnership opportunities arise | Ongoing |
| Single Mothers' Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Single Mothers' Services as opportunities arise & funding is available | Short to mid-term |

Our 2009 Strategic Plan At a Glance

| CORE SERVICE AREA | STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|--|---|
| | | Short-term 0-2 years Mid-term 2-5 years Long-term 5-10 years |
| Youth Programs - <i>Welcome to My Life™</i> and <i>Boys 4 Real™</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand <i>Welcome to My Life™</i> & <i>Boys 4 Real™</i> to two new school districts (Richmond & Surrey) Evaluate the <i>Boys 4 Real™</i> pilot program in 2009 Explore additional sources for volunteer Facilitators & Wisdom Champion™ mentors | Short to mid-term Short to mid-term Short to mid-term |
| Balanced Scorecard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new scorecards as new programs are undertaken Move to more effectively integrate the Balanced Scorecard into staff's daily operations | Ongoing Ongoing |
| Communications and Marketing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase print & broadcast coverage to support organizational objectives Leverage new brand & monitor/evaluate impact Leverage new website & monitor/evaluate impact Monitor internal/external communications to address diversity in program delivery & build/retain a skilled workforce Whenever applicable, ensure that the advocacy message (e.g. housing, women's safety, work/life balance & support for single mothers) is included in all YWCA communication materials | Ongoing Short to mid-term Short to mid-term Short to mid-term Ongoing |
| Finance & Information Technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build capital reserve through operating surpluses & undesignated bequests Ensure continuous revenue growth & that the revenue producing areas of the organization are 50% or more of revenue generation Monitor investment performance & alignment of investment policy Ensure annual balanced budgets | Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing |
| Fund Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build endowment through planned gifts Increase major gifts from individuals & corporations Complete capital campaign for Coquitlam housing project Conduct capital campaign for Surrey housing project Plan capital campaign for new second-stage transition housing Assess feasibility of endowment campaign & conduct campaign if volunteer leadership can be recruited | Ongoing Ongoing Short-term Short-term Short-term Mid to long-term |
| Human Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Intranet to enhance interactivity Develop HR Branding strategy to facilitate employee attraction, recruitment & retention Conduct staff survey to assess employees' level of satisfaction & engagement | Short to mid-term Short to mid-term Short-term |
| Risk Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize plan Build a culture of awareness among employees regarding the organization's risk management philosophy & strategy Identify new risk areas as they arise & update risk management plan as needed | Short-term Short-term and ongoing Ongoing |
| Sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete review of purchasing practices Achieve Gold LEED certification in Coquitlam & Surrey housing projects Develop action plan to continuously measure & reduce GHG emissions Ensure reserve funds are invested through socially responsible investment screens | Short-term Mid-term Ongoing Ongoing |
| Volunteer Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize group volunteer opportunities Develop new volunteer appreciation events/materials Develop strategies to improve volunteer experience Engage more youth volunteers | Ongoing Short to mid-term Short to mid-term Mid to long-term |

The Current Environment

In 2008, we conducted research on key issues affecting our clients and analyzed the information in relation to our service delivery and advocacy efforts. The research results reinforce front-line evidence gathered through YWCA programs.

Over the past few years, British Columbia enjoyed a period of vibrant economic activity which boosted BC employment rates and economic security for many residents, but not everyone benefited and single moms remain at a significant disadvantage. Increases to provincial welfare rates in 2006 were most welcome, but BC's wealth gap is still the largest in Canada and new research demonstrates a strong link between income inequality and child mortality rates.

More recently, a combination of factors – rising fuel prices, challenges in the forestry sector, softening in the housing market and a decline in tourism – all indicate that our economy will not continue as strong as it has in recent years. Our low birth rate and aging population compound concerns about long-term competitiveness and sustainability. These factors may generate new financial and human resource challenges for YWCA operations, while increasing demand for YWCA services.

In terms of women's equality, we see that Canadian women enjoy a measure of freedom and legal equality not experienced by many women in most countries around the world. Our equality rights are entrenched in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and we have made great progress on many fronts, including the education of women. As many women as men now have university degrees, and young



women are actually better educated than their male counterparts. Yet, public policy and prevailing social norms still discourage many women from assuming a full and equal role in society.

There is strong evidence of this in the 2006 edition of "Women in Canada," the Statistics Canada report which tracks progress on gender equality. The report shows that, over ten years, there has been little progress towards gender equality on key social indicators, and even a backwards trend on some. For example, although women now comprise half the paid labour force, there has been no change in the gender earnings gap. Women working full-time still earn just 71 cents for every dollar earned by men and numerous studies confirm that women still carry a disproportionate share of unpaid work – housework, child and elder care.

We also see that women's share of senior management positions has actually dropped – falling from 27 percent to 22 percent over ten years. We have long believed that the first female executives would lead the way for other

women to assume these roles, but the statistics show that the path of senior leadership is one that fewer women are able, or are choosing, to follow.

At the same time, employers are increasingly concerned about skilled labour shortages across sectors and executives are naming retention of high caliber employees as a top priority. Yet, work/life conflict and lack of quality early learning and care are key reasons why women are struggling with, and in many cases forgoing, these roles.

The discourse on how best to address the labour shortage has largely ignored the fact that many BC women are under-employed in part-time roles or positions that do not fully utilize their education and experience.

A 2007 report by Goldman Sachs concludes that "reducing [this] gender inequality could play a key role in addressing the twin problems of population aging and pension sustainability. In countries where it is relatively easy for women to work *and* have children, female employment and fertility *both* tend to be higher." It emphasizes

the importance of subsidizing early learning and care to narrow the gender employment gap.

The YWCA understands the economic and social benefits that will result from supporting the best-educated generation of women in our history to use their skills and education fully. There is also much to be gained by assisting women at the lower end of the income spectrum to enhance their employability.

Single moms and their children remain the poorest families in BC; they have the most difficulty finding affordable housing, the least chance of owning their own homes and they are among the most likely to go hungry. This is a common experience for many YWCA clients. Contradictory social policies that force single parents into the workforce without access to child care, housing or training, serve only to reinforce this social inequality and the social costs that result.



Vancouver remains Canada's least affordable City for housing. This means that the provision of affordable housing for women and their families must assume even greater prominence in our advocacy and service delivery plans.

Housing is the foundation of stability for single moms, but employment is the route to economic independence. Single moms often need to improve their employment potential to increase their income. Yet without access to early learning and care for her children, a single mom can't study or work. Without a decent income, she can't afford quality care.

Following a similar move in Ontario, British Columbia has committed in the 2008 Throne Speech to examine the feasibility of making full-day kindergarten available for five-year-olds and eventually extending it to four- and three-year-olds. We believe this is an important opportunity to create the system of early learning and care that is so badly needed in British Columbia and, indeed, throughout the country.

The increasing diversity of the Lower Mainland population is reflected in the YWCA's client base and will continue to be an important factor in the Lower Mainland economy. As soon as 2010, all new labour force growth is expected to come from immigration. We are proud to employ a highly diverse workforce, providing services that respect and meet the needs of our clients and position the YWCA to compete effectively in the competitive labour market.

With federal and municipal elections in Fall 2008, and a provincial election in Spring 2009, we must put special emphasis on establishing and maintaining relationships with key government leaders and bureaucrats.

Research and evidence reinforce the critical role of YWCA Vancouver in the Lower Mainland, providing essential services and advocating for social change, as we build better futures for women and their families.



Advocacy

Profile and Strategies

YWCA Vancouver is committed to advocating for social change to promote the full realization of women's equality. This section outlines key advocacy issues and strategies. Our work aims to address the systemic causes of poverty and social inequality and the particular challenges faced by single moms.

As always, our advocacy positions are grounded in our front-line service delivery and informed by current research and evidence. We will continue to collaborate with key partners such as the UBC Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), the United Way of the Lower Mainland and women's equality organizations, and will help advance the advocacy work of YWCA Canada and its member agencies.

A strategic and sustained approach to advocacy is fundamental to promoting positive, systemic social change. By allocating additional resources to advocacy, we will be positioned to expand our sphere of influence on key issues, and respond to new opportunities as they arrive.



UNIVERSAL EARLY LEARNING AND CARE

Background

YWCA Vancouver has consistently advocated for public investment to build a national system of early learning and care that is accessible for all children. This is fundamental to our mission and will continue to be our primary advocacy focus.

Our goal is to advance the development of a universal system, based on research and evidence and in collaboration with pan-Canadian efforts, in order to:

- support the healthy development of children;
- build a strong economy; and
- achieve women's equality.

A compelling body of research confirms that high quality early learning and care “sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health” (Margaret McCain and Fraser Mustard, the Early Years study: Reversing the Real Brain Drain, 1998). The period from birth to six is the most rapid period of brain development with maximum refinement in social and emotional functioning, language, cognition, vision and hearing.

Numerous studies demonstrate that such investment also generates significant economic benefits. Nobel Laureate and University of Chicago economist James Heckman concludes, based on his study of neuroscience, that “investment in the pre-school years raises the productivity of schooling and training” and attributes broader benefits to individuals and society through better health outcomes and reduced crime (James Heckman, The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children, University of Chicago, 2004).

A universal system of early learning and care – offering a range of options – is fundamental to addressing our labour force challenges and positioning BC as a leader in the knowledge-based economy. The benefits are thoroughly researched – greater employability for all parents, higher income earned, higher taxes paid, enhanced child development and lower costs of welfare and social services. The direct benefits to business are also clear. Labour supply increases. The cost of recruiting new employees – twice an annual salary – is saved. Productivity goes up and absenteeism goes down. Yet, Canada is last among 14 OECD countries when it comes to spending on early learning and care.

YWCA Vancouver has established itself as a credible, leading voice on this complex issue. Over the past few years, we have implemented a three-part strategy of government relations, business engagement and public education. We developed information materials and engaged a network of supporters through our “ambassadors” program.

We worked with UBC HELP to conduct a literature review on the economic benefit/cost of universal child care, concluding that the benefits outweigh the costs. With YWCA Canada, we costed Vancouver’s vision for a comprehensive child care system, and demonstrated a two to one return on investment in quality programs.

When significant Federal investment in a child care system appeared likely, we directed our advocacy efforts to ensuring evidence-based investment and accountability for these public funds. We were disappointed when the federal government moved to a different kind of investment, canceling bi-lateral transfer agreements and implementing a taxable direct payment of \$1,200 a year per child. While this income support has some value, it has not generated additional spaces or produced the benefits of direct investment in a system of early learning and care.

Following a similar move in Ontario, in 2008 British Columbia has committed to examine the feasibility of making full-day kindergarten available for five-year-olds and eventually extending it to four- and three-year-olds. We believe this is an important opportunity to create the system of early learning and care that is so badly needed in British Columbia and, indeed, throughout the country.

While supporting this initiative, the YWCA Vancouver will work to build

understanding of the factors that will ensure its success, such as:

- an integrated vision of learning and care that provides a seamless day for children;
- the need for play-based learning and qualified educators; and
- careful consideration of the impact on existing community services.

We will also emphasize the importance of developing services that meet the needs of children and their families. For some, this may mean part-time programs that are shorter than a school day, but for many this will mean programs that are longer than the school day to accommodate the needs of working families.

The growing importance of women's participation in the economy has also created an important opportunity to educate employers who are feeling the impact of the current labour shortage and are concerned about attracting and retaining female employees. We will maintain our focus on engaging business and community leaders in supporting our advocacy work; we will continue to collaborate with pan-Canadian advocacy efforts and UBC HELP; and we will build on our ambassadors initiative.

We know that a long-term commitment is required to realize our vision of a universal system of early learning and care. We will continue to carry the message that such a system – offering a range of options – is the key to leveling the field for all women and children, positioning BC as a leader in the global knowledge-based economy and achieving BC's goals as they relate to literacy, healthy living and supporting children and families with diverse needs.

WORK / LIFE BALANCE & FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

At the YWCA, we understand that work/life conflict is a societal issue, requiring a systemic response. Most families today need two incomes to manage, and frequently both partners are under pressure to work increasingly long hours.

We know that both women and men are affected by role overload, but research shows that it is women who are affected to a greater degree. Although more men are playing a more active role at home, women still carry a disproportionate share of responsibility for unpaid work – housework, child and elder care. Surveys show that half of female executives would change jobs to achieve better balance and

that flexibility is valued over salary. Flexibility is also emerging as a major concern for students and young graduates.

We will continue to encourage broader acceptance of family-friendly workplace practices, offering expertise to organizations seeking to improve productivity, retention and the working environment. As well, we will advocate for changes that address the imbalance in unpaid care – such as universal early learning and care and pension or parental leave reforms that encourage men to play a stronger role in the domestic sphere.

WOMEN'S SAFETY

Violence against women is a systemic social problem that transcends class, culture and socio-economic conditions. In the absence of supports that enable women to live autonomously – early learning and care, housing, training and legal aid – many women return repeatedly to abusive partners.

We know that domestic violence is a key factor that drives women into welfare dependency. It also has long-term, inter-generational implications and children who witness abuse are much more likely to be overtly aggressive.



The YWCA will continue to raise awareness of the implications of violence in society and to educate youth about the behaviours and attitudes that are fundamental to healthy relationships. We will advocate for reforms and supports that enable women to make a successful transition to economic independence and ensure their safety.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Vancouver remains Canada’s least affordable city for housing. With limited rental stock suitable for families – and virtually no new rental construction – the need for affordable family housing has never been greater. This problem is particularly acute for single moms. At the YWCA, we are seeing lengthy waiting lists at our three housing communities and longer crisis stays at the YWCA Hotel/Residence.

We have recently been successful in brokering partnerships with governments to develop new social housing for single moms. Nonetheless, funding programs are overwhelmingly geared to people living with addictions and mental illnesses. While such investment is most worthy – without addressing conditions for women and children – it cannot create permanent, systemic change.

The YWCA believes that we must do more than deal with the victims of poverty and social inequality. We must attack the root causes, by providing single moms and their children with



services such as affordable housing and quality early learning and care.

The YWCA will continue to build understanding of the importance of housing to creating a healthy society and supporting the autonomy and independence of women.

SUPPORT FOR SINGLE MOTHERS

In BC today, 20% of families are headed by single moms – half of whom live in poverty. They have great difficulty obtaining affordable housing and are among the most likely citizens to go hungry. These are common experiences for many YWCA clients.

Research by Dr. Paul Kershaw, UBC Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), documents what single moms and the YWCA have known for some time – the poverty in which many single moms and their children live is not a result of poor personal choices, but rather a combination of factors,

including lack of child care and housing, low minimum wage rates, reductions to funding for education, as well as the challenge of balancing parental and work responsibilities. The YWCA has a special role to play in advocating on behalf of single mothers to reduce the barriers to their full participation in education, employment and economic independence.

LEGAL EDUCATOR

Many of our clients need support in addressing a range of legal issues, such as restraining orders, child custody and access, eligibility for income assistance or social housing, and many others. YWCA Vancouver provides such assistance on an individual basis, and also seeks to educate employees, volunteers and clients through ongoing workshops on a range of relevant topics.

| 2009 ADVOCACY STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|-------------------|
| Targeted engagement of business, community & government leaders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support public investment in early learning & care/full-day kindergarten • build understanding of the factors that will ensure successful outcomes | Short to mid-term |
| Promote family-friendly workplace practices to Lower Mainland employers | Ongoing |
| Integrate advocacy messages (housing, women’s safety, work/life balance & support for single mothers) in YWCA materials & CEO speaking opportunities | Ongoing |

Core Service Areas

This strategic plan gives direction to our external and internal Core Services in working towards their respective objectives, as they relate to the ongoing mission-based work of the organization.



CRABTREE CORNER FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

Profile and Strategies

YWCA Crabtree Corner provides a healthy and secure environment for women and their families in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, one of Canada's most impoverished neighbourhoods.

At Crabtree Corner, we serve a diverse and challenging population, with about 75% of clients identifying as Aboriginal. In addition we serve women and children from Chinese, Vietnamese, Iranian, Latin American, Afro-Canadian, Korean and European backgrounds.

Crabtree Corner is unique in its innovative approach to holistic service delivery. We offer a rich array of programs to improve quality of life for our clients including transition housing, food and nutrition programs, clothing, parenting support, family recreation and early learning and care for infants and toddlers.

In 2008 we introduced a new Violence Prevention Worker to address the significant level of violence against women in the community. It takes time to establish trusting relationships with our clients to encourage them to take action against abuse, but we are encouraged by the positive outcomes for the women who have participated so far.

Our Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Prevention Project is designed to provide support to parents and inter-generational caregivers who are raising children with FASD. An Aboriginal Infant Development Program (AIDP) Consultant supports families with infants who may have developmental delays. In 2008, we piloted a Family Support Group, assisting participants to cope with the challenges of raising children with FASD. We also added an FASD Key Support Worker to assist families with diagnosing, supporting and living with children with FASD. We also developed an early childhood literacy program – *Books, Bags and Babies* – which incorporates storytelling, drumming, acting and other traditions of Aboriginal peoples.

We are also proud to house the Sheway Program, a pregnancy outreach initiative that provides health and social service supports to pregnant and parenting women who have substance use issues. In 2008, we worked with our partners on Sheway Council – Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance

and Vancouver Native Health Society – to conduct a governance review which will shape key decisions about the future of Sheway.

YWCA Crabtree Corner employs a peer support model of service delivery. Many Crabtree Corner employees are women who have overcome challenges similar to those faced by our clients. Our employees are outstanding role models for the women they serve, and their personal example helps to reduce barriers to women accessing services at Crabtree Corner. As well, parents are actively involved in all aspects of Crabtree Corner programs, from planning and implementation to evaluation.

We anticipate demand for Crabtree Corner services will remain strong, but we are limited by a lack of space for additional community programs and early learning and care spaces. There is the potential to build an additional 1,450 square feet on the third floor of the building. We will explore the feasibility of building expansion and implementation of a case management system to increase service capacity and meet the needs of this community.

| 2009 CRABTREE CORNER STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|------------------|
| Assess feasibility of capital expansion | Mid to long-term |
| Expand community programs as funding and early learning and care spaces become available | Mid to long-term |

EARLY LEARNING AND CARE OPERATIONS

Profile and Strategies

High quality, affordable early learning and care is a top priority for parents across Metro Vancouver. At the YWCA, we strive to fulfill this need for a wide range of families.

We currently operate four licensed facilities for children under six:

- Emma’s Early Learning and Care Centre focuses on supporting teen mothers.
- Citygate Early Learning and Care Centre specializes in integrating children with special needs.
- Leslie Diamond Early Learning and Care Centre serves working families in Downtown Vancouver.
- Crabtree Corner Early Learning and Care offers short-term care in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside.

Historically, the YWCA has specialized in infant/toddler care because the first three years are the most critical period for child development. However, this is also the most expensive early learning and care to operate. We remain committed to quality care delivered by qualified, professional employees who are compensated appropriately, but parent fees and government funding do not cover the full cost.

The shortfall that must be funded by the YWCA is currently about half a million dollars annually. It is important that we continue to evaluate our ability to provide these services on an ongoing basis. We are also committed to edu-

cating government officials, parents and the YWCA network about the true cost of early learning and care.



The formation of BC’s new Early Childhood Learning Agency, the Province’s commitment to assessing the feasibility of full-day kindergarten, and additional investment in “Strong Start” programs present important opportunities to advance an integrated system of early learning and care. The YWCA will continue to advocate for public investment in the early years (see Advocacy section) and assess opportunities to build on the valuable early learning and care services we currently offer.

| 2009 EARLY LEARNING AND CARE OPERATIONS STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|-------------------|
| Assess opportunities to expand early learning and care operations without increasing YWCA child care deficit | Ongoing |
| Educate parents, YWCA supporters, and government officials about the true cost of quality care | Short to mid-term |

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Profile and Strategies

YWCA Vancouver is one of the largest and most respected employment service providers in the Lower Mainland. Our innovative programs encourage youth, job seekers and professionals to secure meaningful employment.

Consistent with other YWCA programs, we are seeing an increasingly diverse client population, which we are proud to serve with an equally diverse staff team. Many of our clients also face additional barriers to successful integration in the labour force. Because our approach to service delivery is inclusive of all, we are particularly successful in helping clients integrate in the Lower Mainland community.

Most YWCA employment programs are currently funded through Service Canada. However, plans are in place to devolve authority for employment services to BC, through the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) effective February 2, 2009. Our current funding agreements have been extended for two years and, in some cases, three years. We will continue to seek opportunities to participate in discussions about the future of BC's employment services and work to ensure that the needs of YWCA clients are considered when key decisions are made.

With unemployment at historically low rates, YWCA clients with multiple barriers are benefiting from new opportunities to access meaningful employment. However, these clients require more intensive supports to make a successful and sustained connection with the labour market. Our expertise in working with youth, marginalized women, aboriginal women and immigrants equips us well to link

employers with these less traditional sources of labour. We will continue to build on this area of strength, as we position YWCA services in the context of the changing federal/provincial landscape.

Any period of change may also open new doors and we will continue to seek opportunities to support our clients in achieving economic independence. Priorities for new employment programs include:

- Services for women and youth.
- Initiatives that link employers with non-traditional sources of labour, such as multi-barriered clients or retirees.
- Programs that improve core competencies – such as document use and numeracy – that affect ability to achieve and maintain employment.

New initiatives will be assessed in terms of alignment with our mission and existing programs and impact on the proportion of government funding in the organization's operating budget.

| 2009 EMPLOYMENT SERVICES STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|------------|
| Contribute to discussion on the Canada/BC Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) | Short-term |
| Assess opportunities to expand employment services for women, youth, multi-barriered clients or retirees | Ongoing |



HEALTH + FITNESS

Profile and Strategies

The YWCA Health + Fitness Centre is a revenue generating, co-ed fitness facility that provides members with services that are consistent with the YWCA’s core values. Our 30,000 square foot facility provides innovative personalized services, 70+ group fitness classes, an ozone pool and the latest in cardio & weight equipment.

In 2008, we refined our land and aquatic programming by developing diverse new programs to meet the needs of our membership. Our operation has grown by 9% in the past 12 months. We now serve more than 3,000 members, while providing subsidized access for YWCA clients and others in financial need.

We continue to sponsor the First Nations Snowboard Team by holding three weekend training camps annually for 26 aboriginal athletes who are working towards their ultimate goal of participating in future Winter Olympic Games. These young athletes travel from Lillooet, Westbank, Vancouver Island, Whistler and Vancouver to participate. Athletes were hosted at the YWCA Hotel/Residence and the camps engaged YWCA trainers and contractors to provide expert advice on nutrition and training. As well, a special mentorship program has been established to support these promising young athletes.

We are currently investigating options for a renovation and expansion of the men’s & women’s locker rooms.

A stable membership base is fundamental to the success of our facility. We will build on strategies currently in place to engender loyalty among current members, despite increasing competition in the marketplace. We will also build our group/corporate business clientele, linking our Health + Fitness service with our advocacy on workplace wellness and work/life balance.



| 2009 HEALTH + FITNESS STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|------------|
| Focus on member growth & retention to build a loyal & stable membership (emphasis on work-place wellness) | Short-term |
| Develop business plan for capital improvements & possible locker room expansion | Short-term |
| Provide training & development for volunteer instructors & coaches | Ongoing |
| Expand Personalized Services to include Life Coaching and additional trainers to accommodate demand | Ongoing |

HOTEL AND HOUSING

Profile and Strategies

At the YWCA, we work to ensure that women and families in need have shelter. Support for single moms is a key focus for us. These women and their children are at great risk of living in unsafe and unhealthy environments. In Greater Vancouver, we address the hardships faced by single moms through a range of integrated services that includes affordable housing. We operate Munroe House, a second-stage transition house for women who have experienced abuse, and three housing communities for single moms: Semlin Gardens, Fraser Gardens and Crabtree Corner Housing.

YWCA Crabtree Corner Housing is a unique program, providing supportive housing for pregnant and parenting women with substance use issues. Work continues on a long-term study with the BC Centre of Excellence for Women’s Health to determine the impact of supportive housing on these mothers and children in the perinatal period, and on key life domains related to longer-term health and well-being.

Vancouver remains the least affordable location for housing in the country, and there has been virtually no new construction of rental accommodation suitable for families in recent years. Consequently, we are seeing longer waiting lists for our housing, and longer crisis and residential stays at the Hotel/Residence. As the need for housing for our clients has never been greater, our longer-term strategy involves developing more social housing for women in locations throughout the Lower Mainland.

In 2008, we advanced plans to develop two new projects: a 30-unit housing project in Coquitlam for single moms; and a similar 36-unit project in Surrey, which will also include six second-



stage transition units. The cities of Coquitlam and Surrey will contribute land through 60-year leases at nominal rent; the YWCA will contribute \$1.0 million towards the construction of each project; and BC Housing will contribute capital funding and subsidize rents so that residents pay no more than 30% of their household incomes. Both projects will incorporate “green” building features and will meet Gold LEED environmental standards. The Coquitlam project is scheduled for completion in Spring 2010, with the Surrey project completing in 2011.

Preliminary discussions are also underway to develop an East Vancouver project that will comprise 12 units of second-stage transition housing and 24 units of long-term housing for single mothers.

The YWCA Hotel/Residence is an excellent example of a mission-related social enterprise, providing affordable

accommodation for travellers and generating revenue that sustains our community service work. It is also an important source of emergency and temporary housing for people in need.

In the past year, the YWCA Hotel/Residence provided about 24,000 room nights of subsidized accommodation to women in crisis, families in transition, students, seniors and refugees. Consistent with our commitment to social, economic and environmental sustainability, we implemented capital improvements at the YWCA Hotel/Residence that will significantly improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75%.

The YWCA Hotel/Residence is located on land owned by the YWCA and current zoning will allow for a 70-room addition to be constructed above the existing main-floor platform. We are assessing the feasibility of developing Phase II of the Hotel/Residence.

| 2009 HOTEL AND HOUSING STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|------------------|
| Build partnerships with housing providers to improve access for single mothers & at-risk women | Ongoing |
| Open Coquitlam single mothers housing project in Spring 2010 | Short-term |
| Open Surrey single mothers housing project in 2011 | Mid-term |
| Explore new opportunities to develop housing for single mothers and marginalized women | Mid to long-term |
| Undertake hotel expansion as market conditions or funding opportunities warrant | Mid to long-term |

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

Profile and Strategies

Work continues on a four-year project in Russia, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and in partnership with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). The YWCA Employment and International Services Director is serving as the youth advisor for this project which is aimed at developing program models and services for youth-at-risk.

We continue to host senior delegates from various countries, including Ukraine and Korea who are interested in developing their own employment programs. As these opportunities unfold, we will determine how best to participate.

YWCA Vancouver was proud to support the Russian Association of Christian Women in forming the first ever YWCA of Russia, which was officially inaugurated at YWCA World Council in July 2007. Plans are underway to host a training/internship opportunity for the newly appointed President of the YWCA of Russia. Final negotiations are taking place to bring three people from Serbia to Vancouver for a similar experience to begin the development process for the Apatin Women’s Centre.

YWCA Vancouver will also extend support to a project in Guyana, in partnership with other member agencies of YWCA Canada. We will work with CESO (Canadian Executive Services Overseas) to support the work they are doing with women’s programs in the Ukraine.

We are in discussions with the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan, to bring YWCA best practices in mentorship and employment services to women facing multiple barriers in Pakistan when the timing is right.

| 2009 INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|------------|
| Implement youth-at-risk project in Russia | Short-term |
| Provide support to the newly formed YWCA of Russia | Ongoing |
| Explore new opportunities to share YWCA Vancouver best practices in other countries | Ongoing |

MENTORSHIP

Profile and Strategies

Since 1991, the YWCA High School Mentorship Program has served over 1,200 young women from 15 to 18, by matching them with professional women in one-to-one mentoring relationships. This program is currently offered in select schools in the Lower Mainland – including Coquitlam, Langley and Vancouver – and is recognized as one of the pre-eminent school-to-career mentoring programs in Canada. In September of 2008 we will launch a pilot program at Templeton Secondary School to provide mentorship for young aboriginal girls in Grades 9 and 10.

Our *Welcome My Life™* and *Boys 4 Real™* Programs provide a school-based, inter-generational mentorship experience for Grade 7 girls and boys (see page 17).

The YWCA also operates mentorship programs to help men and women in their search for work. For more than five years, YWCA Career Links has been connecting YWCA employment clients with professionals and potential employers in their fields.

In 2006, we launched YWCA Connect to Success, a program that assists women to enter or re-enter the workforce with the help of a mentor. Last year this program served 75 women, including many single mothers and immigrants. In 2008, we added a single mom’s group for participants in this program. We also provided mentors for members of the First Nations Snowboard Team, which is sponsored by the YWCA Health + Fitness Centre (see page 13).

Our mentorship programs continue to be seen as leaders in the field and we are often asked to share our expertise with both private and not for profit organizations.

| 2009 MENTORSHIP STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|---------|
| Implement new mentorship initiatives as funding & partnership opportunities arise | Ongoing |





SINGLE MOTHERS' SERVICES

Profile and Strategies

In partnership with community agencies across Vancouver, YWCA Single Mothers' Services provides group support, information, and referral to community services for women who are dealing with the challenges of parenting alone. We aim to support our clients' goals related to enhancing their economic independence – an approach that is yielding tangible results like new jobs, career and educational planning, and training opportunities.

In 2008, we launched a partnership with Langara College and the Langara Student Union, to provide lunch-hour meetings for students who are single mothers. As well, a new partnership with Burnaby Family Life will bring our program to Burnaby for the first time. Our single mothers' self-employment group, Passion Works, continues to explore small business opportunities and build on our relationship with the EMBERS small business training program. We also continue to work with the Partners Task Group – a coalition of organizations working to better coordinate and expand services for young parents.

As well, we have an important role to play in advocating for public policy reforms that address the social inequalities that limit opportunity for so many single moms.



| 2009 SINGLE MOTHERS' SERVICES STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|-------------------|
| Expand Single Mothers' Services as opportunities arise & funding is available | Short to mid-term |

YOUTH

WELCOME TO MY LIFE™ AND BOYS 4 REAL™

Profile and Strategies

YWCA Vancouver has long been committed to supporting youth as they make the challenging transition from childhood to adulthood. *Welcome to My Life™* and *Boys 4 Real™* build on our long history and solid reputation for providing innovative and supportive programs.

Welcome to My Life™ – an interactive program designed to help Grade 7 girls make a successful transition to high school – was initiated in 2006 through a partnership with the Vancouver School Board and the University of British Columbia’s Learning Exchange.

In Spring 2008, we piloted a parallel program for Grade 7 boys – *Boys 4 Real™* – in two Vancouver schools. This groundbreaking program addresses boys’ concerns about entering the complex world of high school, examines issues of gender and the prevention of violence against women, and helps define attitudes and behaviours that are fundamental to healthy relationships.

Girls and boys participate in seven after-school sessions, each focusing on a different theme, and then work together on a community project specifically designed to address issues in their school, local or wider community. *Welcome to My Life™* and *Boys 4 Real™* also engage parents through one evening session and the provision of chat-time booklets to encourage discussion with their children.

The programs are facilitated by university/college students who receive 25 hours of facilitation training from YWCA staff. Some earn academic credits towards the completion of their undergraduate degrees. The university/college facilitators are supported by mature, male and female volunteers and by Grade 10 and 11 students who serve as mentors and role models for the Grade 7 participants, creating a unique, inter-generational mentoring framework.

Since inception, 23 programs have been delivered to over 250 participants. The majority of participants are from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Accordingly, our training program includes workshops on Cultural Diversity and Special Needs provided by Vancouver School Board consultants.

In fall 2008, we will expand *Welcome to My Life™* and *Boys 4 Real™* into New Westminster School District. We hope to deliver as many as 28 programs in 2009.

A major impediment to the expansion of both initiatives is the limited supply of volunteer facilitators from UBC Learning Exchange. To support the growth of our youth programs, we have initiated new partnerships with UBC faculties, Langara College, Douglas College and corporate and community organizations. In the time ahead, we will continue to develop these relationships and engage new community partners.

Over the long-term, we will continue to assess opportunities for new programs that reflect the themes of social responsibility and equality that are fundamental to YWCA values and youth programming.

| 2009 YOUTH STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|-------------------|
| Expand <i>Welcome to My Life™</i> and <i>Boys 4 Real™</i> to two new school district (Richmond and Surrey) | Short to mid-term |
| Evaluate the <i>Boys 4 Real™</i> pilot program in 2009 | Short to mid-term |
| Explore additional sources for volunteer Facilitators and Wisdom Champion™ mentors | Short to mid-term |



BALANCED SCORECARD

Profile and Strategies

The Balanced Scorecard Performance Measurement System is a tool for the YWCA to communicate with internal and external stakeholders about the program outcomes and performance drivers through which we achieve our mission and strategic objectives.

The Balanced Scorecard strikes a balance among four financial and non-financial perspectives: Serve the Client, Run the Business, Learn and Grow and Be Financially Healthy. The YWCA recognizes the importance of balancing these components to effectively implement organizational strategy.

Through the Balanced Scorecard, we monitor our current performance – including finances, client satisfaction, and business processes – as well as our efforts to improve processes, motivate and educate employees, and enhance information systems.

The Balanced Scorecard system is now fully implemented across the organization, with scorecards in place for all core programs. We have aligned program scorecards to reflect the objectives in our strategic plan, allowing us to focus on those measures that are most critical to achieving success.

The Balanced Scorecard also engages employees throughout the organization in monitoring results and trends and evaluating program efficacy. Program scorecards are also used to report results to donors and funders. In this way we can demonstrate the success that clients achieve through the support of YWCA services.

| 2009 BALANCED SCORECARD STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|---------|
| Develop new scorecards as new programs are undertaken | Ongoing |
| Move to more effectively integrate the Balanced Scorecard into staff’s daily operations | Ongoing |

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Profile and Strategies

The Communications and Marketing department is responsible for internal and external communications including oversight of our websites, guidance on strategic marketing initiatives, and support for media relations. Our goals are

to promote awareness of YWCA programs and services and increase donor support. The department also assists with advocacy and public education to support the achievement of the YWCA mission and vision.

In 2008, we fully implemented the new YWCA brand that had been launched the previous year, which highlights our holistic approach to helping single mothers make a successful transition to economic independence. Our new websites, ywcavan.org, ywcahealthandfitness.com, and ywcahotel.com deliver more on-line resources and information.

In 2008 we established a dedicated media relations resource which we hope will bring increased media exposure in print and broadcast media.

Internally, we kept our employees informed through our internal e-newsletter, personal messages from the CEO, Communications Council meetings for all managers, Information and Referral Roundtables for front line staff, and Staff Appreciation Breakfasts. Through the fourth annual Management Team on the Road, members of the senior management team visited all program staff at their work sites.

In 2009, we look forward to building on the implementation of the new YWCA brand and we will place special emphasis on monitoring and evaluating its impact. Also a priority will be the ongoing monitoring of our internal and external communications to ensure we are addressing diversity in our workplace and service delivery.

| 2009 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|-------------------|
| Increase print & broadcast coverage to support organizational objectives | Ongoing |
| Leverage new brand & monitor/evaluate impact | Short to mid-term |
| Leverage new website & monitor/evaluate impact | Short to mid-term |
| Monitor internal/external communications to address diversity in program delivery & build/retain a skilled workforce | Short to mid-term |
| Whenever applicable, ensure that the advocacy message (e.g. housing, women’s safety, work/life balance & support for single mothers) is included in all YWCA communication materials | Ongoing |

FINANCE & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Profile and Strategies

The Finance department continues to focus on streamlining workflow processes and updating reporting systems to comply with evolving requirements from funders, donors and regulatory agencies.

In 2007, the Finance and IT department expanded the availability and use of electronic systems and electronic transaction processing. This expanded capacity will support the organization’s family-friendly workplace practices by facilitating telecommuting, when appropriate.

Because long-term reserves are critical to ensuring the stability and sustainability of the organization, the YWCA continues to grow its reserves while diversifying its funding to build a strong financial base. This diversification ensures that the YWCA is not dependent on any one source of funding, the loss of which could seriously impact the organization.

The YWCA has assets in land and buildings appraised at close to \$52.2 million. The annual contribution target to our capital reserve is reviewed every year. This contribution is required to maintain and appropriately replace our physical infrastructure. We will build our capital reserve primarily through annual contributions from operating surpluses and, to a lesser extent, through a portion of undesignated bequests and planned gifts, within the parameters established by Board policy.

The YWCA has an investment portfolio of over \$4 million, with the funds invested in socially screened instruments. The long term growth and security of this portfolio is critical to the operations of the organization. Adherence to the investment policy and careful monitoring of the investment performance, in light of challenging developments in the financial markets, will be a major focus in the coming year.

Over the past few years, the YWCA has engaged consultants to audit controls for our three largest revenue-producing areas: Hotel/Residence, Fund Development and Health + Fitness. These audits have confirmed that there are no significant weakness in internal controls within the revenue/cash receipts functions in these operations. Going forward, we will annually assess the need for further audits and will continue to stress with staff the importance of being vigilant with controls.



| 2009 FINANCE & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|---------|
| Build capital reserve through operating surpluses and undesignated bequests | Ongoing |
| Promote continuous revenue growth and that the revenue producing areas of the organization are 50% or more of revenue generation | Ongoing |
| Monitor investment performance and alignment of investment policy | Ongoing |
| Ensure annual balanced budgets | Ongoing |

FUND DEVELOPMENT

Profile and Strategies

To ensure long-term financial viability, the YWCA’s Fund Development strategy is diversified and includes monthly giving, direct mail, major gifts, planned giving, special events and a thrift shop. The department exceeded its fundraising goal in 2007, and continues to work to increase community financial commitment to our mission by facilitating gifts in kind, legacy gifts, and membership in the YWCA Inner Circle.

In 2007/2008, funding was secured to pilot a Violence Outreach Program at YWCA Crabtree Corner, reflecting the fact that about 90% of the women we serve at that location either have been, or are currently, in violent relationships. Funding was also secured to undertake a legal analysis of the challenges faced by immigrant women with Canadian children who are without legal status in Canada, and to develop recommendations for policy changes.

Our \$1.0 million capital campaign for the 30-unit Como Lake Gardens housing project for single moms, located in Coquitlam, is nearing completion. In Fall 2008, a similar campaign will be launched for a 36-unit project located in Surrey. The balance of funds required to develop

these projects will be provided by BC Housing, with land contributed by the Cities of Coquitlam and Surrey.

In 2008, YWCA Munroe House has been fortunate to benefit from the hands-on involvement of a team of dynamic, philanthropic women. Their interest in addressing the needs of women leaving abusive relationships coincides with the goals of the YWCA. These volunteers will assume leadership of a significant capital campaign to support the development of new second-stage transition housing. Planning is underway.

Over the past five years, we have increased emphasis on planned giving, allocating additional staff in this area, with the knowledge that results will be realized over the long term. This strategy is beginning to produce results and remains appropriate.

The major proportion of undesignated planned gifts are allocated to the YWCA Endowment Fund and this currently constitutes the primary method of building this Fund. We remain interested in undertaking an endowment campaign in the future, provided appropriate volunteer leadership can be recruited.

Federal tax exemptions for gifts of publicly listed securities have recently resulted in the YWCA seeing an



increase in gifts of stocks. We will continue to promote this opportunity to save capital gains tax to our individual donors and prospects.

The Fund Development Department also manages the YWCA Thrift Shop and oversees the YWCA’s special events. These include the YWCA Women of Distinction Awards, an event that celebrates and recognizes the achievements of exceptional women, and the Real Story competition, through which high school students write stories about women who inspire them.

| 2009 FUND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|--|------------------|
| Build endowment through planned gifts | Ongoing |
| Increase major gifts from individuals & corporations | Ongoing |
| Complete capital campaign for Coquitlam housing project | Short-term |
| Conduct capital campaign for Surrey housing project | Short-term |
| Plan capital campaign for new second-stage transition housing | Short-term |
| Assess feasibility of endowment campaign and conduct campaign if volunteer leadership can be recruited | Mid to long-term |



HUMAN RESOURCES

Profile and Strategies

Our employees mean everything to the YWCA. Their skill and commitment is crucial to achieving our mission and delivering excellent service to more than 53,000 clients every year. In today's competitive labour market, creating and maintaining a dynamic, collaborative, highly-skilled and diverse workforce must remain a top priority for YWCA Vancouver.

In 2007, we achieved an employee retention rate of 90% and were ranked the 12th best employer to work for in BC and the top non-profit. Our success is largely due to our exceptional culture and workplace practices, which ensure respect for employees, create a family-

friendly environment and facilitate work/life balance. In 2009, we will conduct a comprehensive employee survey to assess employees' level of satisfaction and engagement.

Our Human Resources practices are grounded in employee needs and reflect employee input. Our workplace wellness initiatives ensure that employees are physically and mentally fit, and focus on individual, community and environmental wellness.

We are also proud to employ a highly diverse workforce. Forty-three percent of our employees identify as being from visible minorities, and 4% identify as Aboriginal. This compares favourably with 2006 Census Canada data, which records a national average of 16.2%

visible minorities and 3.8% Aboriginal peoples.

Diversity also means attracting an intergenerational workforce. Currently, 21% of our staff are Generation Y, 39% are Generation X and 40% are baby boomers. In 2009, we will develop a succession plan for critical positions and identify any significant retention risks.

To acknowledge these different generations and their values, we offer a broad spectrum of employee benefits. Access to professional development and new technology are key concerns for younger workers, while flexible work schedules and employee family assistance programs appeal greatly to employees seeking to balance family and work responsibilities.

Women comprise the majority of our workforce and we are proud of our success in facilitating their participation, especially when so many employers are struggling to engage female employees. We will continue to encourage broader acceptance of family-friendly workplace practices, offering expertise to organizations seeking to improve productivity, retention and the working environment.

A tremendous source of pride are those employees who began their involvement with the organization as clients, successfully completed our programs, further developed their skills and education, and were ultimately hired by the YWCA. These employees are key contributors to our work and serve as role models for our clients.

| 2009 HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|-------------------|
| Update Intranet to enhance interactivity | Short to mid-term |
| Develop HR Branding strategy to facilitate employee attraction, recruitment and retention | Short to mid-term |
| Conduct staff survey to assess employees' level of satisfaction and engagement | Short-term |

RISK MANAGEMENT

Profile and Strategies

In order to protect the health, safety and integrity of the YWCA, an Organizational Risk Management Plan is being developed. This plan will identify the strategic, operating, compliance, environmental and reputational risks that are inherent to the activities of the YWCA and may expose the organization to loss. It will also identify the controls and systems required to manage these risks.

Part of the risk management plan is the development of a Business Continuity Plan for the organization. The Business Continuity Plan will enable the organization to limit losses and ensure that critical business operations can continue, in the event of a disruption or loss of a critical service (e.g. power loss, telecommunications breakdown), a physical catastrophe (e.g. earthquake, fire), or a pandemic.

The plan will also emphasize the employee communications and training required to build a culture of awareness and vigilance with respect to risk management, and to protect the organization against reputational risk.

| 2009 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|------------------------|
| Finalize plan | Short-term |
| Build a culture of awareness among employees regarding the organization's risk management philosophy & strategy | Short-term and ongoing |
| Identify new risk areas as they arise and update risk management plan as needed | Ongoing |

SUSTAINABILITY

Profile and Strategies

At the YWCA, we know that creating a healthy society requires an integrated vision, linking our social, economic and physical environment. We are committed to innovation that supports sustainability.

In June 2008, the YWCA Vancouver hosted the 2008 National YWCA Conference. The theme of this event was sustainability, with keynote speakers addressing the need for change at the individual, organizational and societal level.

By year end 2008, various capital improvements at the YWCA Program Centre and Hotel/Residence will be completed, all of which will save energy, reduce water

consumption and greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and achieve significant operating savings over time.

In June 2008, we completed the measurement of our organization-wide carbon footprint, based on 2007 data, and we have established a goal of reducing this footprint by 12% by June 2009, with smaller reductions to be realized in subsequent years. Our goal is to strive for a reduction of 25% by 2013.

To support our GHG reduction plan, educational awareness initiatives - such as a housing residents educational package and the Go Green Work Towards Wellness initiative – for staff, volunteers and clients will be key. An action plan to take advantage of other GHG reduction opportunities is currently under development.

In 2008 and 2009, purchasing policies will be revised to ensure the most economical and environmentally sustainable products and suppliers are selected.

The value we place on sustainability is reflected in the conversion of our ornamental rooftop garden, located at the Hornby Street Program Centre, to a productive farm garden, providing fresh fruits and vegetables for women and children in YWCA programs. In 2008, through our “One Tonne Challenge,” we aim to harvest more than a tonne of produce from the garden.

YWCA Vancouver is also committed to ensuring that any new YWCA development is “green” and we are pleased that our new housing projects for single moms in Coquitlam and Surrey will meet the Gold LEED environmental standard.

| 2009 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|------------|
| Complete review of purchasing practices | Short-term |
| Achieve Gold LEED certification in Coquitlam and Surrey housing projects | Mid-term |
| Develop action plan to continuously measure and reduce GHG emissions | Ongoing |
| Ensure reserve funds are invested through socially responsible investment screens | Ongoing |



VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Profile and Strategies

Consistent with world-wide trends, YWCA Vancouver is experiencing a significant shift in the interests and expectations of volunteers. In general, volunteers are less interested in regular assignments and prefer short-term projects that do not require ongoing commitment. In Health + Fitness, there is a shift away from physically strenuous activities conducted in group settings, to more gentle forms of exercise and personal training.

In 2008, Volunteer Services continued to work with program managers to develop meaningful volunteer opportunities that support our mission and programs, as well as provide leadership and skill development opportunities for our volunteers.

Our group volunteer experiences have been particularly successful. We will continue to facilitate these opportunities as they meet the needs of the YWCA and provide outside organizations with team building and staff development opportunities.

In the coming year, we will place special emphasis on volunteer opportunities for young people that will enable them to gain skills and knowledge working alongside our professional and experienced staff. Our new website will provide excellent opportunities to inform and engage these special volunteers.

We will also review our recognition program to ensure it acknowledges volunteers in a manner that is meaningful to them. We will also seek feedback on the quality of the volunteer experience provided by the YWCA, as well as suggestions for improvements and new approaches.



| 2009 VOLUNTEER SERVICES STRATEGIES | RANGE |
|---|-------------------|
| Utilize group volunteer opportunities | Ongoing |
| Develop new volunteer appreciation events/materials | Short to mid-term |
| Develop strategies to improve volunteer experience | Short to mid-term |
| Engage more youth volunteers | Mid to long-term |

YWCA Canada and World YWCA

This document is a strategic plan for YWCA Vancouver. However, it is important to mention our considerable work with YWCA Canada. In our role as one of its larger member agencies, we have consistently taken leadership in a variety of important areas.

Our goals are to:

- support the leadership development objectives of YWCA Canada through the Emerging Leaders Program, a program initiated by YWCA Vancouver that has now been adopted by YWCA Calgary and YWCA Toronto.
- support the International Cooperation Committee of YWCA Canada by providing expertise and advice to projects in Romania and Guyana.
- play a leadership role in the Western Region by providing support to Member Associations.

We are also strong supporters of the World YWCA and member countries around the world. Our ongoing work is highlighted in the International Services Section of this plan.

Conclusion

YWCA Vancouver's annual strategic planning process provides an excellent framework for planning and implementing major new initiatives. The strategies outlined in this plan position us to build better futures for women and their families, and create a more open and equal society. Combined with the Balanced Scorecard, we have a comprehensive planning and performance measurement system to guide the organization in achieving its desired future.





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