



**Youth
Unlimited™**
YFC QUINTE

OBSTACLES TO OPPORTUNITIES



**WINTER
2021**

Inside this issue:

EXECUTIVE NOTES

An Ant's Perspective by Colin
Weak Strength by Andrew

YOUTH CENTRES

Overcomers by Mike Fuller

PERFORMING ARTS

Courage For Change by Rikki-Anne

GRAPHIC WORD

Technical Goals by Mike Wilson

STUDENT OUTREACH

Health from Hardship by Eli
Common Goals by Ben

INTERNATIONAL

Escuela De Vida by Don & Tania

★ **BONUS!** Click the star next to staff photo to see their family pic, prayer list, finances & more!



Can you "Find Mike Fuller" hidden in this newsletter? Tell us when you find him and we'll buy you a treat in a socially distant kind of way.

Online or on paper? You can update how you receive this Newsletter at www.QYU.ca/newsletter



AN ANT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Colin Leaver
Executive Director

I'll never forget the day I learned that my youth pastor had been caught in adultery, and decided to leave his family and the church. That day inspired the direction for the rest of my life.

Remember when Joseph was stuck in jail, and Moses was watching sheep in the desert? Both were great leaders, but both at some point faced major obstacles and felt hopeless. How did they get past such obstacles?

Teens today are struggling with emotional, mental, social, and spiritual obstacles. I know one teenager with mental health challenges was kicked out of his house at 17, evicted from an apartment and is now homeless during a pandemic. With news like this, it's no wonder people ask 'How can God deliver us? Does He even care? Does He even know?'

Often I have to remember that my perspective is often like that of an ant to a city planner. The Bible says that God is all powerful, all knowing and always present. With that truth, we can trust that God's Word, will and timing are good for us. With God's help, here's how to move from obstacles to opportunity:

First, **believe past the barriers.** Joseph said that what others meant for harm, God intends for good. Second, **be willing to go** and God will send help. Moses met God in that desert and was called to lead Israel out of slavery. God even sent Aaron to help Moses speak. Third, don't be the problem, **be the solution.**

When leaders have let me down, I take it as an opportunity to become a better leader myself.

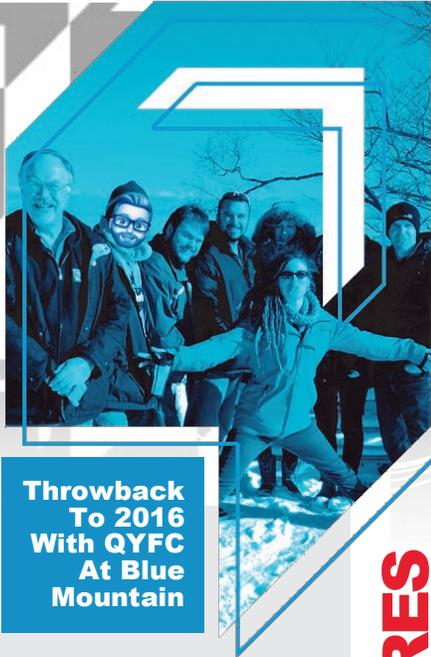
The church today faces significant obstacles indeed - lockdown and isolation - but it is also an incredible opportunity for us to believe as Joseph and Moses did: that nothing is impossible for God. Instead of focusing on how big the obstacles are, we should remember how small the obstacles are compared to God!

For teens hurting at home alone right now, QYFC is still reaching out. We have 5 services for youth that are actively supporting them through the obstacles. You can read stories about how our ministries are serving youth in this newsletter. You can also read our NEW strategic plan to reach youth in Quinte with the Gospel at www.QYU.ca/strategy.

"With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Mark 10:27



**Teens
Can Make
You Smile
Funny**



Youth Unlimited depends on PARTNERSHIPS
Everyone has something to give.
Connect with us to see how you can make a difference for local youth!

WINTER 2021 NEWSLETTER

Throwback To 2016 With QYFC At Blue Mountain



WEAK STRENGTH

by [Andrew MacKay](#)
Associate director

"If you make me wear glasses, I'll throw them on the ground and stomp on them!" I shouted in a typical preschool aged tantrum. That's right, not only did I have to wear glasses, but I had a stubborn streak that probably caused a lot of stress for my parents at the time.

I was diagnosed with "lazy eye". My left eye wasn't working properly (that's right, even my eyes were being stubborn). The doctor's solution was for me to wear glasses and a patch over my good eye which would force my bad eye to work properly. **Even as a youngster I was concerned about my public image. It really bothered me that I was different and weak.**

I didn't realize it then, but that humbling experience along with many more to follow were preparing me for ministry. The Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 talks about how God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. Feeling weak actually made God's power look totally awesome! As I learned to rely on God's strength and not my own, great things began to happen.

I developed empathy for those around me who were suffering in various ways. I grew to love looking out for the 'little guy', or being a listening ear for the lonely and broken hearted. I believe my desire to help others, and willingness to share my weaknesses comes from God as I rely on his strength and guidance. If it weren't for Him, I'd probably still trying to deny or hide my weaknesses.

So many teens these days are "stomping on their glasses". They are discarding the very thing that they need most in an attempt to cover their weakness. We at Youth Unlimited make every effort to show teens that God can meet them in their weakness, and He can be their strength. There is freedom in showing the world the real you (scars and all). God's strength will shine through us like stars in the darkness. 🗨️



OVERCOMERS

by [Mike Fuller](#)
Brighton Beacon director

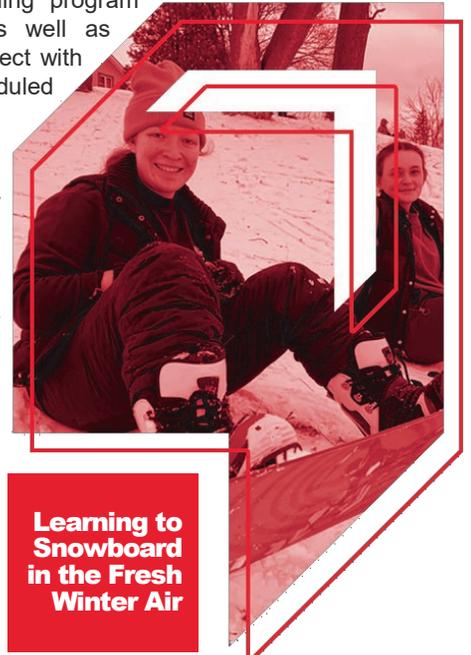
One of the things I touched on in my last ministry update was about the biggest challenges the Beacon ministry has faced so far. This is our inability to have the Beacon open because of the COVID restrictions. To overcome this I, with some amazing volunteers, started meeting the high school youth during their lunch hours at King Edward Park. Being outdoors we are meeting safely and adhering to social distancing guidelines. People generously started donating Tim Horton's cards to buy Timbits and hot chocolate to offer the students! **We have been able to reconnect with many of the 'regulars' as well as new faces. Said one young man, "this is the guy I was telling you about, I can't wait for the Beacon to be open again so I can come back and show you guys."**

Another example of God working was when a young lady approached us seeming quite upset. As we chatted she opened up about how she had been lying to her grandmother who she lives with. We were able to encourage her to tell the truth and how by doing so she would be able to break free from carrying the burden of those lies. She returned the following week and was so excited to tell us that she felt so much better; she had told her grandmother the truth and had been able to work things out with her!

It is my goal and prayer once the lockdown is lifted that we will again be able to safely continue our outdoor meeting to connect, encourage, and pray with these youth.

Besides having these outdoor meetings I am still pursuing the Youth For Christ credentialing program through online courses, as well as doing practical work to connect with youth online through scheduled organized gaming nights.

Recently God encouraged me through a song called Champion (by Maverick City Music and UPPERROOM). God reminded me of His call on my life to minister to the youth of this generation. Despite all the obstacles COVID has presented I am an overcomer because He is my champion! God is undefeated and we have the victory, the authority, that that Jesus has given us! 🗨️



Learning to Snowboard in the Fresh Winter Air

YOUTH CENTRES





COURAGE FOR CHANGE

by [Rikki-Anne McNaught](#)
Performing Arts director



Remember Back When Winter Meant Fun Retreats?

"Hi Rikki! I just thought I would let you know that today I was praying and as I was praying, I actually thought of the Serenity Prayer we have been doing at Spirit Borne. It was actually a super helpful prayer at that moment. I was able to write it down and [sincerely] pray it. Anyways, it was really nice and I am glad it was introduced at Spirit Borne!" ~ Kiersten

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

(Reinhold Niebuhr)

The Serenity Prayer was introduced to Spirit Borne, our high school performing arts team in September as a prayer to help develop RESILIENCE in our faith journey during this pandemic.

It helped students to identify what they could and could not control. This led to helping them identify what are their responsibilities in their faith walk and what are God's responsibilities in their faith walk and how this leads to peace.

This prayer also helped students to recognize that change takes courage from God. Courage to obey, to change, to be a peacemaker at home, to serve, to have hope. Courage to accept and live in the truth that the only SECURITY we have in this world is that Jesus has overcome the world (John 16:33)

The second part of the Serenity helped our students to see that Serenity, Acceptance, Courage and Wisdom come from a life of daily surrender to the will of Christ.

It is always a joy to receive notes, texts (as above) and messages from teens that help us to see God at work in their life. Their courage inspires courage. But they can't do it alone!

During this time of isolation, I encourage you to be an encourager! Be intentional to send notes, cards, texts to teens you know sharing with them the courage God has given you!

Please, above all else, continue to join with us in prayer for a generation of teens with resilient faith. 🙏

COPING WITH SOCIAL ISOLATION

A recent article listed several tips for helping kids to cope with social isolation and uncertainty. Here is a summary below that we think you will find helpful:

1. In the face of change, **remind those you care about that you love them** and that will never change. I would suggest expressing your love more often using their love language.
2. Remember that separation and isolation can cause **intense feelings of sadness**. Identify the sadness and then brainstorm ways to connect with people.
3. **Try to keep some routine or schedule** as routine promotes feelings of security.

If you are struggling with how to cope with anxiety, financial issues, or need more ideas to engage your students, visit: [focusonthefamily.ca](https://www.focusonthefamily.ca) 🗣️

To read the full article, visit: <https://www.focusonthefamily.ca/content/helping-your-kids-cope-in-this-time-of-social-isolation-and-uncertainty>.



TECHNICAL GOALS

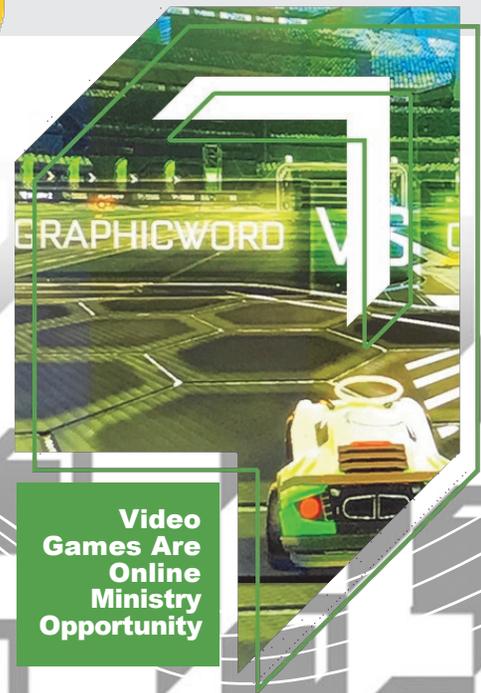
by [Mike Wilson](#)
Graphic Word

You've gotta love technology. Thanks to it, we've been able to connect with friends, family, and do programs with our youth via online gaming. However, there can be drawbacks to it... like when you move to a new home & have no internet for two weeks. I know — it's not the end of the world, but it can feel like it when this is your main way of maintaining ministry. When we moved recently, I dreaded not having our gaming program going on. It had just starting to pick up, drawing in youth from other communities.

On the last week that I had before I was temporary disconnected and I would not be able to connect with these youth, one teenager jumped at the opportunity of spearheading our gaming program while I was absent. **What was even better was that this student really invested in the other youth, developing their skills and even had the group compete in some tournaments.**

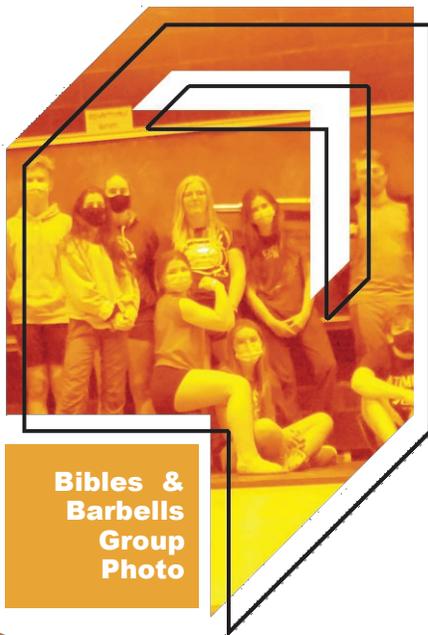
After coming back on and hearing how the group had "managed" while I was gone, I was floored. I had the privilege to see one of our youth excel in something they were good at, and take on a strong leadership role that has continued on to this day.

Maybe you've been given an opportunity to help by being a leader, or a volunteer, in your community, but are not too sure if you should take it. Trust me; if you have the opportunity, go for it! **Graphic Word** is always looking for people who are willing to turn obstacles into opportunity. 🗣️



Video Games Are Online Ministry Opportunity

WE SEE THE HOPE & POTENTIAL
IN EVERY YOUNG PERSON



Bibles & Barbells
Group Photo

INTERNATIONAL



ESUELA DE VIDA

by [Don & Tania](#)
Volunteer Leaders

Our YFC friends in Bolivia found opportunities to deliver the Escuela de Vida program (translated School of Life). Here is a summary of how it went from the YFC Bolivia directors, Richard and Paola:

The first virtual School of Life occurred in August through Youtube and Facebook live. 120 youth participated in discussions about Dreams and Realities, Cyberbullying, Loneliness and Depression, Super agents of Peace, True love and principles from the Word of God to transform darkness into light. 2500 people were part in the letters to God, and we received 350 interactions, with around 40 volunteers who committed themselves to taking the message "Everything changes when you change".

In November we did another School of Life aimed at only one school using Zoom. Approximately 70 students participated from 1st to 6th grade. Many ministry volunteers were able to participate by sharing in a workshop, praying, and answering questions from the students. In both School of Life programs we could see God's mercy working in both the students and volunteers. There are 6 School of Life programs planned for 2021, hopefully moving the program from Zoom to in person, as well as moving youth from obstacles to opportunities.

QYU is committed to support YFC Bolivia. If you would like to donate to help them, please select International on the response form included. 🗨️

PARTNER WITH US

YFC supports and provides the Gospel to youth. Do you support and provide for YFC?

Quinte Youth Unlimited (YFC) needs your help to engage and equip every young person to know and follow Jesus. Follow the link below to partner with us to accomplish this vision.

www.DONATE.QYFC.com

STUDENT MINISTRIES



HEALTH FROM HARDSHIP

by [Eli Verkuyl](#)
Student Outreach director

The entire premise of weight training is built upon resistance. Believe it or not your muscles don't know how much weight is on the bar, so much as "they" experience increased resistance based on the load, or the increased time under tension. Its common knowledge that the way to encourage growth over time is to increase the resistance.

While this is easily trackable in strength and muscle gains (physically) it is a much more difficult experience when applied to our Christian lives (spiritually). Perhaps the difficulty lies in the belief that there is a means of growth that doesn't require some element of resistance. **However, as I survey older saints whose faith I admire; people who have the depth of relationship with God that I aspire to, one commonality emerges: At one point or another they've all embraced hardship as necessary for growth;** they've stepped out of their comfort and stepped into uncertainty.

At Bibles and Barbells we strive hard to create a culture of growth. It is impossible for growth to be "ingrained in the DNA" without simultaneously creating a place where it's safe to fail. What this means practically is that we'll allow students to (safely) push the limits of their strength, even to the point of failure (with a spotter). This is how we can measure our current strength levels.

It is my hope that as we teach these lessons to students we can simultaneously create a community culture in which it is safe to fail spiritually. I obviously don't desire for any student to sin or become enslaved, however I invite them to challenge comfortable normatives, to delve deep into the mysteries of God, and to think through the radically different message of the Gospel. Growth is not comfortable but joy is greater than comfort anyways. 🗨️

Curious where donations to Student Outreach Ministry will actually go? Read all about it at www.QYU.ca/SOM



COMMON GOALS

by [Ben McEwen](#)
Student Outreach director

Sometimes we don't realize the opportunities we have in front of us. Recently I had the chance to connect with a student who needed my experience in fundraising. He planned to take on a six month mission trip. This student has all kinds of ability, skills and a heart for missions but he got stalled when it came to asking other people to get involved in prayer support and fundraising. I was asked to come alongside this young person to help him develop skills in funding such a trip.

We were both pleasantly surprised that those who were contacted wanted to get involved. **They all saw that the student has so much to offer in being part of the mission work.** As well, they understood that this experience would be beneficial for the student.

I was grateful that my advice took this student from fearing fundraising to a successful start in his quest for support. After some help it wasn't long before the student was making phone calls to friends and family explaining the mission work, along with his heart's desire to contribute to the good of others.

The work isn't over but with the goal in sight and a good plan in place, I am confident that he will get the needed support and gain some important life skills along the way.

I continue to see that God's hand is in difficult circumstances, often in those areas we wouldn't choose for ourselves. But God often uses those obstacles to help us grow for future success. 🗨️

