

ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17



10th Anniversary Edition
New Leaf Foundation
Charitable # 854956794RR0001

newleafyoga.org



» 10 YEAR STORY

A young man who had been coming regularly was absent one week from the class. He returned and during check-in, I asked participants to share a highlight and low light from their week. The youth shared that he had been sick and it was a low light because he noticed a difference not having yoga all week; his highlight was being back at yoga this week.

*- Dione, New Leaf Facilitator,
School & Youth Custody Programs*

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» 10 YEAR STORY

For our first month together, one participant would just sit on her mat and look uninterested. Of her own volition, she eventually began to participate and at our final class together she said, "I like how you were always kind even when we didn't participate." It was a reminder that we can make a huge impact with patience and compassion.

*- Dorian, New Leaf Facilitator,
School Program*

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I often tell the story of how New Leaf was a glimmer of an idea for a couple of years before it got started. It was while working in Trinidad alongside a dear friend who I watched build something amazing with very few resources or support that I was inspired to finally start to bring the vision into fruition with some concrete steps forward. Along with New Leaf's co-founder, Jessica Robertson, we formed a dedicated Board of Directors, secured seed funding from a handful of inspired Moksha Yoga studios, and - after a lot of persistence - began one weekly program at a youth custody facility in southern Ontario. From that point forward, our biggest challenge has been keeping up with the demand for our programs across schools, custody facilities and in partnership with other leading youth initiatives.

Every young person we have learned from over the years, every supportive staff person we have worked in partnership with, every incredible team member and volunteer who has served with us, has helped us evolve into the organization that we are - one with strong values and a commitment to continued learning.

Over 10 years we have helped to change the landscape of how yoga and mindfulness-based practices can support youth in some of the most under-resourced communities, becoming a leader in Canada and beyond.

On behalf of our entire team, thank you to everyone who has believed in us and continues to support our work. Please read on to learn about some of the highlights from our 10th anniversary year!



LAURA SYGROVE

New Leaf Foundation
Co-founder & Executive Director

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

A DECADE OF SUPPORTING THE MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND PHYSICAL RESILIENCE OF YOUTH

For over a decade, New Leaf Foundation has been a leader in Canada offering innovative programming that supports the mental, emotional, and physical resilience of youth in marginalized communities where barriers to resources often exist.

6

In addition to offering mindfulness and yoga-based programs in schools, custody facilities, and under-resourced communities, our program model has expanded to include leadership and training opportunities that share our best practices and stretch our impact beyond the reach of our frontline programs.

Our 10-year anniversary was an important time for us to explore the ways in which our organization will continue to evolve what we

do and how we make a difference. With this, we are placing increased attention on influencing systemic change. With funding support from Ruth & Lewis Sherman Foundation, McCall MacBain Foundation, CSI Agents of Change Grant, and Lululemon's Here to Be program, we have been able this year to take the first steps towards a vision we've had for years, namely the creation of our "Whole Schools Initiative." This endeavor involves the development of a training to support school teachers in building their own resilience, as well as helping them to better support the emotional regulation of their students. This will be an important way for New Leaf to have a greater impact throughout entire schools and to encourage trauma-informed and mindfulness-based practices to become a part of the whole school culture.

"I learned to calm myself in difficult situations"

- Program Participant

OUR MISSION

To bring mindfulness and yoga-based tools into spaces that are least-served and often most stigmatized, increasing access to positive resources and providing opportunity to build resilience, self-empowerment and leadership.

WHERE WE WORK

We started our work with a focus on the least-served and often most stigmatized environments including youth custody facilities and gang-exit initiatives. In 2011, we expanded to include prevention programs in priority schools and drop-in programs in low-income communities.

WHY YOGA & MINDFULNESS

Yoga and mindfulness practices are becoming increasingly recognized as tools vital to supporting the overall mental and physical health and well-being of individuals, including youth experiencing adversity and trauma. Studies show that mindfulness-based programs yield “positive outcomes on factors such as emotional balance, attention control, cognitive efficiency, anxiety, negative thought patterns, reactivity and negative behavior.” (Best Practices for Yoga in Schools, ed. T. Childress, J. Cohen Harper, 2015)

MAJOR MILESTONES

We have reached close to 7000 young people since starting our work in 2007



Increased our programming to
8 project sites

Implemented an 8-week trial
research program at a youth
custody facility in Goderich where
an entire unit of youth was taught
twice per week

Mobilized 20 yoga studios
to raise close to \$20,000 in
our first **Warriors for Peace**
fundraising campaign

Incorporated on March 1, 2007

2007

2009

2011

2008

Implemented our **second program**
at a youth custody facility in
London, Ontario



We worked several months to negotiate our first program at a **youth custody facility** in Ontario. After some initial skepticism, there was such a positive response from youth that we grew to 4 classes per week at this site.

Started working with an amazing project called **Trails Youth Initiatives**

First program started outside of youth custody with Toronto-based gang-exit initiative, **Breaking the Cycle**

2010

Launched a **pilot initiative** where youth had the opportunity to be partnered one-on-one with yoga teachers and practitioners

Piloted programs at Youth Without Shelter in Rexdale and youth justice program, St. Leonard's Attendance Centre





Piloted an 8-week initiative at the former Duke of York Public School in Regent Park, **first school program**

Featured in the **Toronto Star**

Launched a **child and caregiver program** in Regent Park

Hosted our first **Still We Rise Gala** at The Gladstone Hotel

Centre for Social Innovation & Green Shield Canada Foundation's **2016 Agents of Change** grant recipients

Increased our offerings to 30 programs at 21 project sites

Launched our second free **drop-in program** in Regent Park

Increased our programming to 15 project sites

2013

Received funding from LUSH Cosmetics to start our third free **drop-in program** located in Scarborough

2015

2012

Formed a long-term partnership with the **Toronto District School Board**

Launched our first free, long-term, **drop-in program** in Rexdale

Created a **part-time employment** position for a youth who had participated in our program

2014

Started a program at a secure mental health treatment and custody facility in Oakville

Held our first day-long, silent, yoga and meditation **retreat** at a youth custody facility in Brampton

2016

Offered the first **online version** of our yoga for youth training

Began **curriculum development** for a training to equip school teachers to offer resilience-building practices in their classrooms

First secondary school program started at Bendale BTI in Scarborough

Held our first day-long **youth yoga retreat** with participants from our Rexdale drop-in program

Held our first **yoga for youth training** open to the public, sharing our best practices with others

Undertook a **Social Return on Investment** study

Awarded Toronto Foundation's prestigious **Vital Ideas Grant**



2016/17 PROGRAMS

New Leaf Foundation facilitates in-person programs within the Greater Toronto Area and across southern Ontario, as well as online courses and trainings that reach people around the globe. Our programming is built around unique trauma-informed methodology that utilizes yoga- and mindfulness-based practices to foster emotional regulation and resilience.

Our facilitators are all certified yoga instructors and also receive an initial 20-hour mandatory training from New Leaf which covers making mindfulness and yoga practices accessible to youth as well as anti-oppression, trauma informed and strengths-based frameworks. Facilitators receive ongoing training and mentorship from the organization in order to ensure the highest quality of program delivery.

10

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

We offer 25-30 week programs in “priority” schools and alternative education initiatives which support youth ages 9-20.

Westview Centennial Secondary School
Thistletown CI
School of Experiential Education
Nelson Mandela PS
Lord Dufferin PS
Fairbank Attendance Program
Etobicoke Alternative School
Eastdale CI
Downsview SS
CW Jeffreys CI
Central Technical School
Bendale BTI

YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAMS

We offer 45 week programs in open and closed custody and alternative sentencing programs for youth ages 12-20.

Syl Apps Youth Centre
Sprucedale Youth Centre
Roy McMurtry Youth Centre
Hope Manor
Genest Youth Centre
Brookside Youth Centre

DROP-IN PROGRAMS

We run free, long-term, drop-in programs and leadership initiatives in low-income communities serving youth ages 13-24.

Scarborough Drop-in

Rexdale Drop-in

Regent Park Drop-in

LEADERSHIP & TRAINING

We offer workshops and trainings for youth leaders, educators, school administrators, social workers & yoga teachers to access and learn our best-practices.

MLSE Launchpad Leaders in Training Program

Reaching In, Reaching Out: Yoga for Youth Online Training

OUTREACH

We reach many more youth each year through our community-level outreach efforts where we are able to provide education and information about our programs. This year we provided additional sessions through:

Pathways to Education Rexdale

Westview Centennial Secondary School's Day of Peace

Albion Collegiate Institute

Beaumonde Heights Junior Middle School

Winston Churchill Collegiate Institute

Rex Pride

"I'm aware of my breathing and it kept me stress-free"

- Program Participant

» 10 YEAR STORY

During class one of the guards who regularly wore steel toe boots during his shift, took them off to practice alongside the youth. Initially, the guys appeared surprised by his actions, but the moment the boots came off a shift happened. It was as if the guard's willingness to be with his own vulnerabilities created space for the youth to be with theirs.

*- Carrie, New Leaf Facilitator & Mentorship Lead,
Youth Custody Program*

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

The year was filled with too many wonderful accomplishments to count, but here are a few that stand out!

- Partnered with MLSE Launchpad initiative and delivered a curriculum for their leaders in training, introducing yoga and mindfulness-based sessions into the curriculum.
- Piloted a new program with TDSB alternative school SEE (School of Experiential Education) in south Rexdale. This was partially funded by a student-driven grant called Speak Up through the Ministry of Education written by the SEE students looking for effective mental, physical and well-being strategies.
- Participated in TDSB-wide Mental Health week, providing drop-in classes at our partner schools as well as taking part in large-scale assemblies focused on student wellness.
- Developed curriculum for a training to support school teachers and their students in building resilience.
- Offered our third *Reaching In, Reaching Out* online training and successfully engaged close to 150 people with our best practices and trauma-informed approach.

1400

YOUTH REACHED

30

PROGRAMS

12

SCHOOL SITES

6

**CLOSED-CUSTODY
FACILITIES**

3

**COMMUNITY DROP-
IN PROGRAMS**

IMPACT OF PROGRAMS

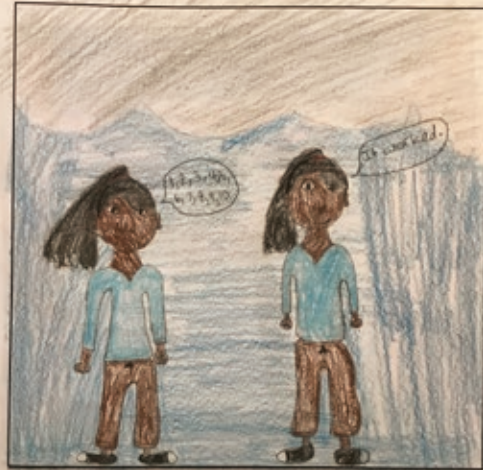
A collection of reflections from our participants, facilitators and staff

It's been a pleasure working with the youth at Eastdale this past semester. The learning has truly been a two-way street. In each class, I plant the seed that yoga is so much more than a physical practice, rather one that benefits oneself mentally and emotionally. One of the youth said to me after class one day, "I feel less stressed now!" I'm so proud of the effort and kindness they bring to each class.

- Faith, New Leaf Facilitator, School Program



How Yoga Helps Me



Yoga helps me because I can count in my head when I am mad and I calm down.

"Yoga has helped me find relief in stress in a way I never knew existed"

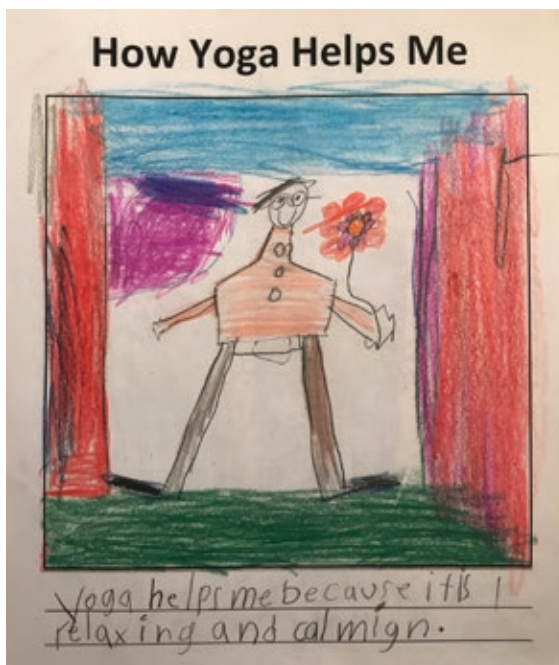
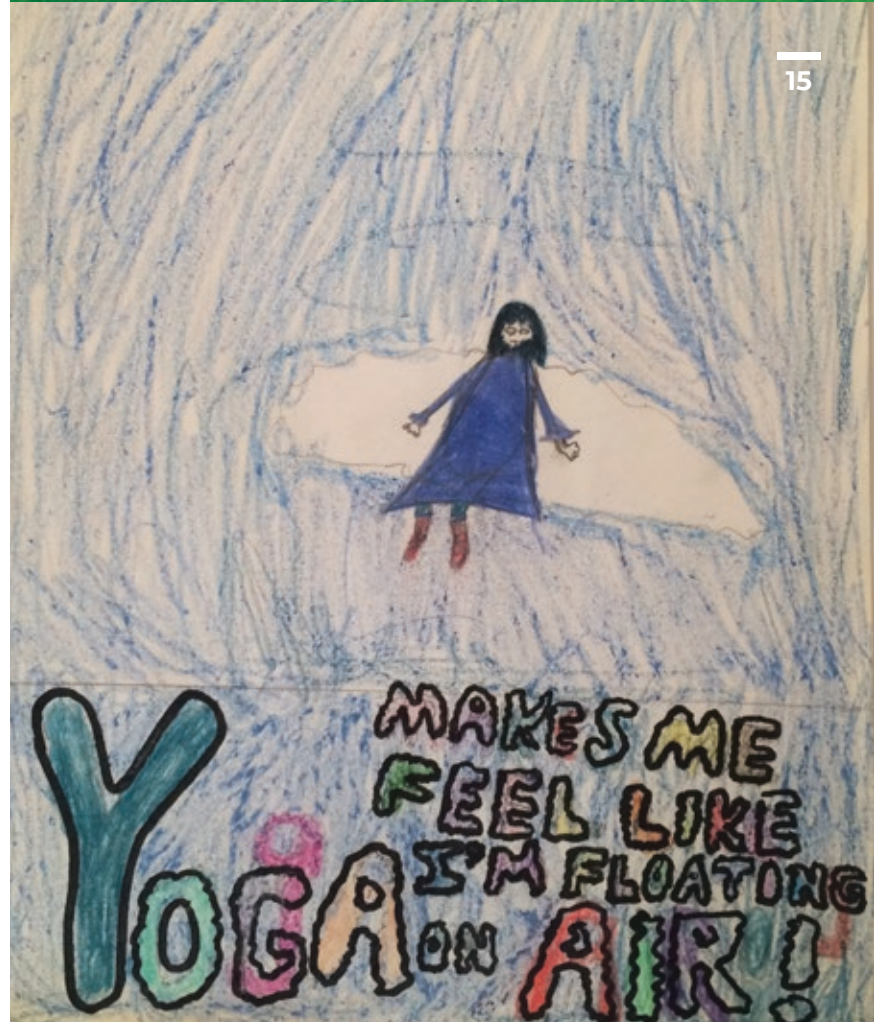
"I know how to calm myself down now"

"Yoga has helped me to restrain myself from conflicts that come my way"

One important value at New Leaf Foundation is accessibility. To ensure the needs of participants and the communities in which we serve are being met, New Leaf's program design is informed by research evidence and evaluation practices, including focus groups, art projects and survey methods.

Other youth should have access to this program because so many people deal with so much on a daily basis and yoga is the best way to drop everything and really focus on yourself and your needs, mind and body.

- Shania, Youth Intern, Drop-in Program



"Yoga has helped me release stress and negativity"

EVENTS & FUNDRAISING

STILL WE RISE GALA

New Leaf Foundation's 4th annual Still We Rise Gala was a celebration of our 10th anniversary. We had a full house of over 300 people, speakers that inspired every heart in the room, and together we raised \$60,000! The evening featured music by DJ Carmelinda, appetizers by the amazing culinary team from Bendale BTI secondary school in Scarborough (home of our longest-running high school program), a film highlighting a decade of New Leaf programming, silent auction, and more. Thanks to all of our sponsors, lead sponsor NLI Solutions, and our amazing team of over 30 volunteers.

LULULEMON HERE TO BE

New Leaf is grateful to have partnered with Lululemon stores in Toronto, Oakville, and Vaughan to increase the impact we're making within our programs. With the support of Lululemon's Here to Be program, New Leaf was able to deepen our impact by supporting the frontline workers in schools and custody programs who work with youth on a daily basis through the creation of yoga and mindfulness-based sessions and training opportunities. Here to Be is a community-based social impact program with a mission to make the healing benefits of yoga and meditation accessible to underserved communities around the world.

"Since doing the program, I've become aware of my breathing. I'm nicer to everyone."

- Program Participant

This was an exceptional year for engaging with both old and new community partners! We were so grateful to not only raise important funds but also for the significant opportunity to participate in events that allowed us to be on the ground meeting new people and spreading the word about the impact of our work.

DIANNE BONDY WORKSHOP

We were honoured to host celebrated yoga teacher, social justice activist and leading voice of the Yoga For All movement, Dianne Bondy, for a fundraising workshop. Dianne lead close to 30 participants through a practice exploring the radical act of learning to love the skin you're in. She also offered a training for New Leaf staff and facilitators covering yoga, body image and empowerment, language, and yoga pose breakdowns for different abilities and larger bodies.

TORONTO WATERFRONT 10K

Lululemon and Canada Running Series teamed up for this year's Toronto Waterfront 10k Run, and New Leaf is honored to have been their charitable organization of choice. Thanks to the support of over 150 participants, this event managed to raise \$16,500!



FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS

The Lewis & Ruth Sherman Foundation
McCall McBain Foundation
Donald Bainbridge Family Foundation
Sir Joseph Flavell Foundation
Intact Financial Corporation
Centre for Social Innovation

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GRANTS & FUNDERS

WE ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS AND VISION OF THE COMPANIES, GRANTERS, AND INDIVIDUALS THAT MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE

DONORS \$999 - \$500

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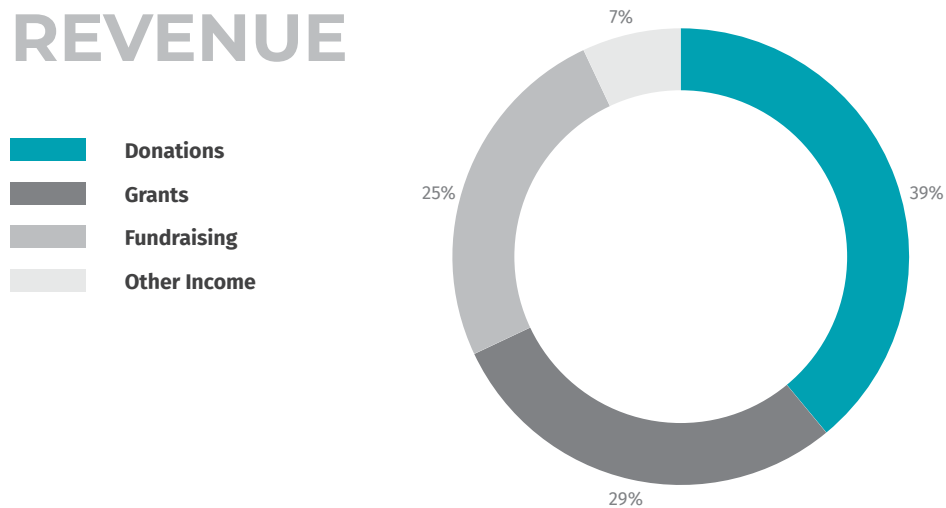
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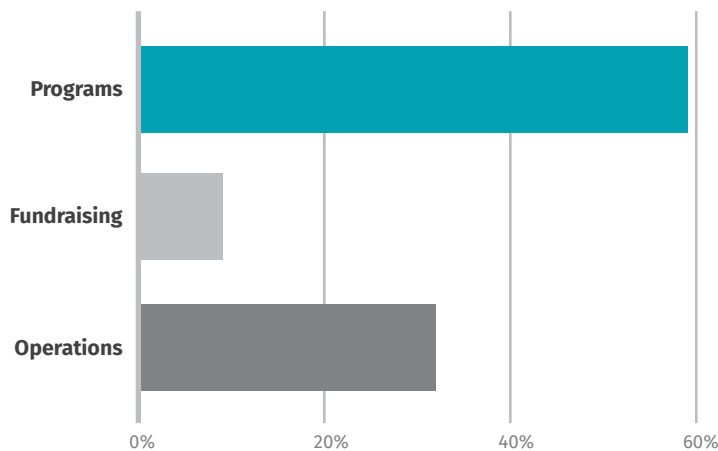
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FINANCIAL REPORT

REVENUE



EXPENDITURES



**FOR THE
YEAR ENDED
AUG 31, 2017**

TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET
\$ 246,228

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS & NET ASSETS

	2017	2016
Revenue		
Donations	\$ 121,234	\$ 26,451
Grants	\$ 90,100	\$ 144,941
Fundraising	\$ 76,603	\$ 73,100
Other Income	\$ 20,205	\$ 11,837
	\$ 308,142	\$ 256,329
Expenditures		
Programs	\$ 144,880	\$ 142,707
Wages	\$ 53,943	\$ 43,545
Fundraising	\$ 23,163	\$ 14,752
Rent & Utilities	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200
Office & General	\$ 4,959	\$ 5,264
Insurance	\$ 4,102	\$ 3,138
Professional & Consulting Fees	\$ 3,066	\$ 3,066
Bank Charges & Interest	\$ 3,634	\$ 2,576
Telephone	\$ 1,281	\$ 1,516
	\$ 246,228	\$ 223,764
Revenue Over Expenditures	\$ 61,914	\$ 32,565
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$ 59,102	\$ 26,537
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 121,016	\$ 59,102

OUR TEAM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shaka Licorish, *Chair*

Balaji Swaminath

Felicia Ross

Angelika Gollnow

STAFF

Laura Sygrove, *Executive Director & Co-founder*

Nicole Madison, *Director of Operations & Communications*

Julia Gibran, *Educational Director*

Kate Love, *Program Director*

Faith Jones, *Administrative Coordinator*

Claudia Francis, *Bookkeeper*

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Catalina Moraga

Andre Talbot

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