

F A L L 2 0 1 3

Innovation Youth

Helping kids integrate harmoniously into family, spiritual,
community and academic life

In this letter...

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Highlights from the summer

For the fourth year running, **Neighbourhood on the Move** took place. There are so few safe, child-friendly public places for families living downtown that we have to create them! This is what we do during our summer block party. Our street closes down, we pull out the picnic tables and chess games and have daily concerts. The kids are safe and we get to meet our neighbours!

Last year, we launched our **collective kitchen** for six families of the neighbourhood. The group meets regularly to cook together, share recipes and create better bonds in between neighbours. This summer, the families gardened together with their children.

This has been a huge step for Innovation Youth in promoting a better community environment in our neighbourhood!

Back to school !!!

We have 14 new students this fall. Some have been out of school for a few months, some haven't cracked open a book in years. All of them are a little nervous about their future. "I'm finishing my high school for my daughter," one young mother told us. "I want to be able to tell her that studying is important, and I know what I'm talking about because I got my degree." Well said! At Innovation Youth we have made it our mission to ensure that every student receives the care and attention they need in order to achieve their goals.

Coming up this fall...

Greenhouse gardening

There are 42 kids back in the Greenhouse! We are gardening four times a week and cooking with the produce. The food is given to the homeless. We love seeing our kids involved in the community and giving back!

Halloween party

For the fourth year running, we will help out with the neighbourhood Halloween party. This is a great way for families living downtown to ensure a safe and happy celebration of the fall!



Summer employees in the garden

The garden

This summer, we ran our first ever internship program with six youth in need of summer jobs. Not only did they receive employability skills training and a small stipend for all their hard work, they also learned how to grow a garden in the city, from A-Z! Judging by the size of our zucchinis, the project was a huge success! The kids did great, and it was a wonderful collaboration with Concordia University, who lent us the plots of land.



Rebekah, Yuki and Alex, three of our summer employees at the garden

Right: *Nicole helps Melicia, one of our students, with her physical science assignment. Melicia only has one more class to complete before obtaining her high school diploma! When she graduates she would like to study esthetics and social science.*

Innovation Youth on CTV news!

The garden internships were such a success that CTV news did a feature of us on “The Power of One”. The video is on our website:

www.innovationjeunes.ca



A word from the executive director of Christian Direction...

The snapshots my colleagues are giving you underscore three felt needs we seek to address in the lives of adolescents and their families – social and relational skills, accessibility to the primary institutions of the city and the ability to manage resources for success in life.

Kids learn about grace – getting a second chance when they “blow it”. We have the opportunity week after week to help shape their goals and their dreams. We help them manage stress, discouragement and conflicts. They learn how to reconcile, ask for and grant forgiveness. They are learning about life.

Would you consider partnering with us again as we head into the last two months of the year? Our goal is to raise \$25,000 in donations by Christmas. Your gift of \$100 covers the expenses of one week of work in the collective kitchen initiative. Your gift of \$250 covers expenses in the Greenhouse. Your gift of \$500 provides funding for a week in our school program. Thank you so much!

Glenn Smith