



YOUTH IN NEED:

THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGES
2013



Giving
Hope
Today

YOUTH IN NEED: THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGES



If you asked most adults, they'd be able to provide you with at least one example of how the recession has personally affected them. But what if you asked their children? They might tell you that they've missed out on music lessons, sports or other activities. During this economically turbulent time, many Canadian families have had to make sacrifices. They've cut out any expenses deemed unnecessary so they could pay bills and put food on the table.

That's why The Salvation Army strives to offer alternatives to the often expensive extracurricular activities or daycare programs that have been cut out of many families' budgets. From after-school clubs and music lessons to athletics and food classes, The Salvation Army has a program for just about everyone. Since the recession began, the majority of Salva-

tion Army youth activities have seen an increase in need, with more than half of those programs expanding or adding new services since 2008.

The following report, "**Youth in Need: The Economic Challenges**," is based on responses from a March 2013 survey of more than 180 representatives from youth and family service programs at Salvation Army facilities nationwide. The report was done to gain a better understanding of how the recession has directly impacted youth assisted by The Salvation Army.

The report revealed trends in demand, program viability, volunteerism and donations, as well as how The Salvation Army has responded over the past several years to help alleviate some of the financial burden on families and provide a safe and educational environment for youth.

Since 2008, 66 percent of programs reported seeing an increase in demand for their services. During this time, The Salvation Army expanded its youth programming by 53 percent.

The Salvation Army is committed to providing safe, educational and fun spaces for Canadian youth. Through the generous gifts of time and money, these programs can continue to thrive and offer an inexpensive option for Canadian families.



GENERAL INFORMATION ON YOUTH PROGRAMS

the **DIGNITY PROJECT** SalvationArmy.ca/dignity



For more than 130 years, The Salvation Army has provided Canada's young people with opportunities to learn, experience and grow in over 400 communities across the country. Thousands of youth, of all ages, come through the doors of The Salvation Army each year, seeking a place where they can be valued and supported.

Each year, The Salvation Army declares May to be dignity month to promote the goal of providing dignity and hope for Canada's most vulnerable, including youth in need.

The Salvation Army offers programs to meet the diverse needs of the population they serve. Although services are offered to infants, pre-teens and teenagers,

the majority of children attending Salvation Army programs are between the ages of 10-12.

The Salvation Army provides a variety of activities and services that appeal to the vast age ranges in attendance. These include: health education, camping, life skills, Sunday school, team sports, school lunch programs, counseling.

PROGRAM PROFILE: RED CAP

Red Cap is an anger management program geared to children aged eight to 12. The goal of Red Cap is to have participants come to the point where they can learn to effectively manage their anger.

Problems arise when people don't deal with anger properly. Teaching children how to deal with their emotions significantly reduces the amount of self-harm, violence within schools and communities, and hurtful conduct like vandalism. With more than 12 Red Cap programs across the country, The Salvation Army is helping young people mature into responsible adults.



FAMILY BUDGET LEADS TO NEW DEMANDS



66

Percentage of Salvation Army youth programs that saw demand for services increase since 2008.

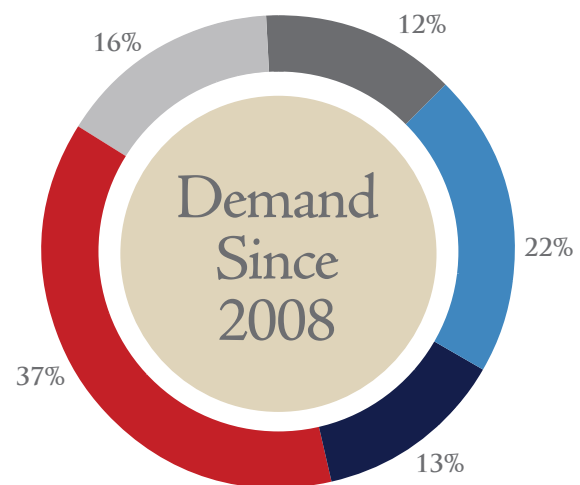
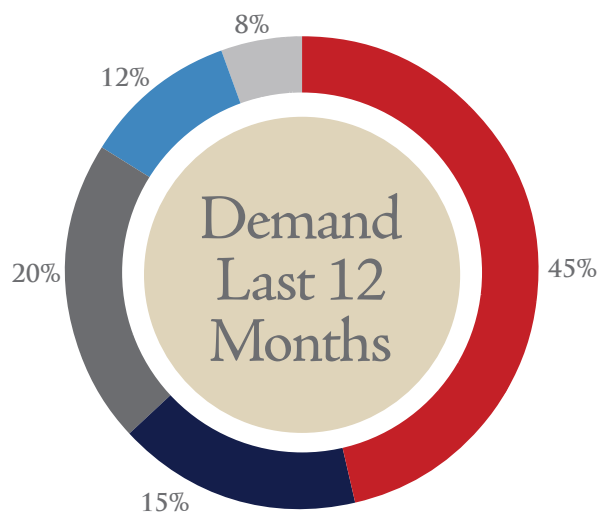
Due to the economic recession, many families couldn't afford to pay for their children's extracurricular activities, such as sports and music. Money was needed for rent and other household expenses.

Over the past five years, 66 percent of Salvation Army youth programs

reported an increase in demand for services. In the last year alone, those same programs saw a 68 percent increase.

Many variables account for the increase in youth turning to Salvation Army programs, but the most common reasons provided by respondents include:

- Families are looking for safe and inexpensive programs for their kids
- Added stress to families due to financial pressures
- Recession created a new class of working poor
- Cost of gasoline has inhibited ability to get to alternative programs



1 TO 20 PERCENT
21 TO 49 PERCENT

50 PERCENT OR MORE
NO CHANGE

UNSURE

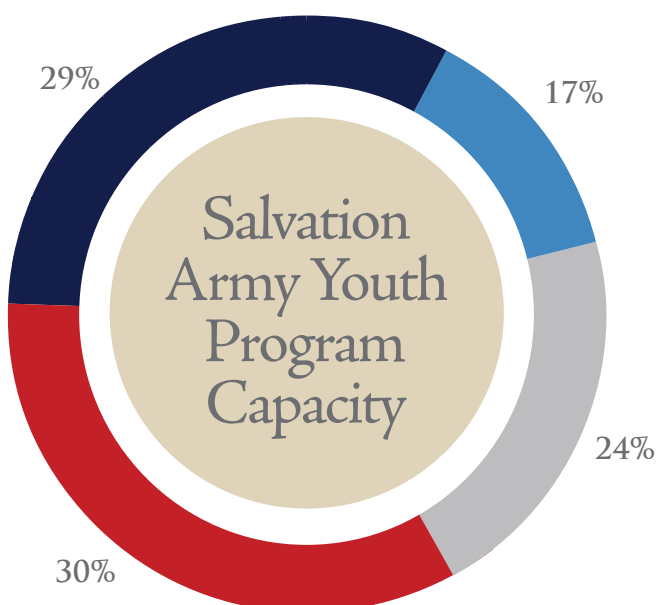
DEMAND PUSHES CAPACITY



30

Percentage of Salvation Army programs currently full or beyond capacity.

As a result of the increased demand for Salvation Army services, many programs are approaching capacity, with nearly **60 percent of programs reporting to be half-full to full.**



“We will always endeavor to be a place where children can come, be safe and have fun regardless of what their economic standing is.”

- SHONA BURDITT
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND
CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES,
OSHAWA, ONTARIO



NOT ALL PROGRAMS CAN KEEP UP WITH DEMAND



30

Percentage of Salvation Army programs that cut back services or discontinued.

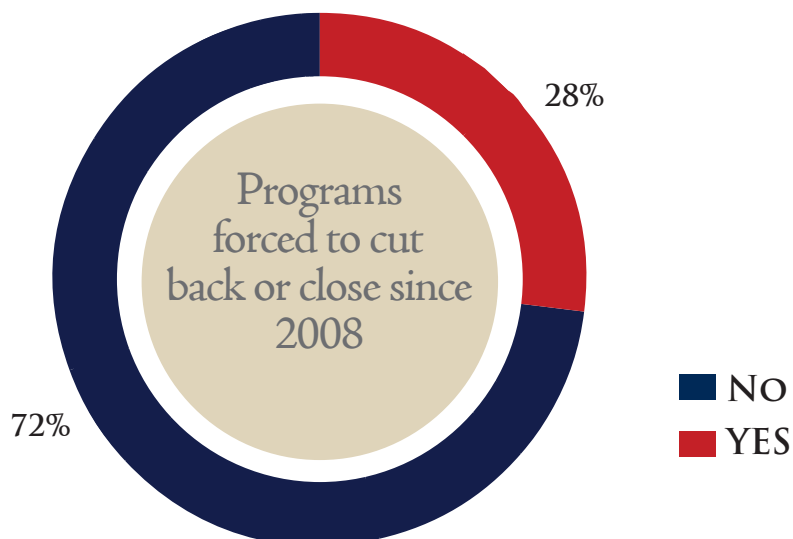
Although the recession began five years ago, the effects are still visible within Salvation Army youth programs. Since 2008, nearly 30 percent of programs were cut back or closed. The cutbacks involved reducing program size, laying off staff, and reducing hours/days and programs available. While some closures or cut-

backs occurred due to lack of demand, many cited a lack of resources (financial and volunteers) that prevented the program from continuing to operate.

Notably, in those programs forced to make cutbacks, The Salvation Army served 50 percent fewer children.

“We had to close many of our youth programs. When these programs were open, they provided a safe environment for youth, but now that we do not have these programs, there is greater opportunity for children to become susceptible to gangs in our community.”

- JUDI WICKENS
SALVATION ARMY CORPS
OFFICER,
ERIN MILLS, ONTARIO



DONATIONS & VOLUNTEERISM BRING HOPE TO PROGRAMS



36

Percentage of Salvation Army programs that saw donations increase.

Despite the number of cut-backs and closures, it's not all bad news. Many programs saw increases in donations and volunteerism that helped keep them viable.

In fact, 36 percent of Salvation Army youth services reported an increase in donations to their programs since 2008. In addition, another third reported that donation levels remained unchanged year over year, allowing their youth activities to continue.

Volunteerism for Salvation Army youth programs also increased within the past year, with 47 percent reporting growth. Notably, only 13 percent witnessed decreases in volunteerism in 2012.

PROGRAM PROFILE: SUMMER CAMPS

Summer camp experiences can impact the rest of a young person's life.

Last year 4,500 children from low-income families had fun, made new friends and explored the outdoors at Salvation Army day and week-long camps.

But Salvation Army camps are more than just a pleasant vacation.

With support from trained counsellors who understand their emotional needs and help them to mature, children learn new skills such as archery, canoeing and swimming that promote self-confidence and social interaction. Salvation Army camps seek to make kids feel loved, capable and included so that they have a sense of hope for their future.



PROGRAMS EXPAND IN FACE OF RECESSION'S IMPACT



53

Percentage of Salvation Army programs that expanded since 2008.

Although faced with tremendous demand, The Salvation Army has been able to provide services to youth with the backing of donations and volunteers. Since 2008, more than half of Salvation Army programs expanded or added components to accommodate the growing need.

PROGRAM PROFILE: BREAKFAST PROGRAMS

Many children go to school on empty stomachs. Ten percent of Canada's population is food insecure, meaning families don't have continual access to sufficient quantities of nutritious food.

Salvation Army school breakfast programs are free and nutritionally balanced. This means so much to low-income parents who are often forced to choose between paying the rent and putting food on the table.



In addition to meeting increased demand, Salvation Army youth programs cited expanded growth due to:

- Need for a safe area for community youth
- New leadership with a new vision for the ministry or centre
- Growth in Youth Ministry

- Efforts to reach out to local youth

The development of new programs indicates that The Salvation Army is assisting more youth. These services strive to offer a low-cost option for Canadian families and provide a holistic environment for children. As long as resources allow, The Salvation Army will continue to provide activities that challenge and encourage young people.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY



Every young person deserves to be cared for and supported. Thanks to our generous donors, The Salvation Army is reaching out to Canada's most vulnerable youth.

Youth in Need: The Economic Challenges is based on data collected during an internal audit of Salvation Army youth programs between March 11th and March 29th, 2013. The audit examined the recession's impact on child services and programs provided by The Salvation Army.

One hundred and eighty four staff members and administrators with first-hand experience working within The Salvation Army's youth programs provided input on their specific programs. Salvation Army youth programs and services include church activities, meal/food services, arts/theatre/music, athletics, health/nutrition and tutoring/education programs.

The internal survey received a national sample set from each of the six regions served by The Salvation Army in Canada: British Columbia; Alberta and Northern Territories; the Prairies; Ontario; Quebec; and Atlantic Canada.



This is first year that The Salvation Army has looked specifically at programs and services directed at youth. Additional surveys done by The Salvation Army can be found at www.salvationarmy.ca.



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