



SPIN A-THON 2016



MEDIA FACT SHEET

- Event Name:** The Peer Project Spin-A-Thon 2016
- What:** "Spin" Off the Extra Holiday Pounds & Pedal With a Purpose...
4th Annual Spin-A-Thon! Participants will have fun, get fit, and support The Peer Project by fundraising for their proven peer mentoring program for at-risk and newcomer youth. Spin for one hour or all 12 hours of non-stop music, snacks, refreshments, prizes, and a host of enthusiastic instructors! Spinners can register as a Team Captain and organize a team, join an existing team, or sign up as an individual. Teams can have up to 30 members and can choose to spin all together in the same class or split up into any of the 12 classes noon - midnight. BYOB (bring your own water bottle) and join the non-stop spin party to help over 400 kids waiting to be matched with a mentor.
- Where:** Energia Athletics, NEW Location 702 Pape Ave, Toronto, ON, M4K 3S7
- When:** January 30, 2016, 12:00pm – 12:00am EST
- Registration:** \$50 includes a swag bag, t-shirt, and loads of other goodies. Ensures 100% of the money you raise goes directly to creating a match between an at-risk youth and a youth mentor.
- Spokespeople:** Sally Spencer – CEO - The Peer Project
Ed Carlson – Director of Development - The Peer Project
Lawrence Hughes – Board Chair - The Peer Project
- Event Info:** thepeerproject.com/spin2016 416-932-1919
- Social Media:** Facebook: [thepeerproject](https://www.facebook.com/thepeerproject) Twitter: [PeerProject](https://twitter.com/PeerProject) #TPPspinathon
- Infographic:** [How Peer Mentoring Works](#)
- Photo Collection – High Res:** <http://bit.ly/peermediapix>

THE PEER PROJECT - QUICK FACTS:

- Mentors Needed: 400+
- Active Mentors & Mentees: 1200
- Success Rate: 98%
- Founding Year: 1976

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

Shelley Mantei, Mediatonic PR
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Hosted by



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In Support of



- 45% of our youth clients are Newcomers to Canada
- 74% of our youth clients live at or below the poverty line
- We currently service 602 youth clients within our One-to-One Peer Mentoring Program and Group Mentoring Program (kids on our waitlist are eligible for Group Mentoring Program activities while they wait to be matched)
- Based on our 2015 client assessments, 432 of our client youth have social issues; 216 youth have emotional issues; 180 youth have behavioural issues; 40 youth have experienced trauma; and 18 youth have very complex issues (a combination of 2 or more issues)
- 90% of our youth clients have been clinically diagnosed with a Mental Health issue or Learning Challenge
- 10% of our youth clients have been clinically diagnosed with complex issues that typically include more than 1 mental issue or learning challenge
- Our program is evidence-informed and proven to build resiliency in our youth clients
- 98% success rate for keeping kids in school and out of the criminal justice system.
- Youth Mentees: At-risk and newcomer children ages 6-15
- Youth Mentors: Fully trained and dedicated volunteers ages 16-29

Why We Are Different



Peer mentoring leads to a more transformative experience than adult mentoring



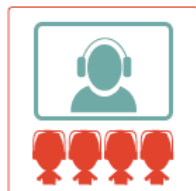
We help children that other mentoring programs don't



We offer expertise to help kids with mental-health diagnoses



We conduct in-home assessments for every mentor and mentee



We offer extensive training for volunteers



We provide 24/7 emergency support



We run dedicated activities at free or low-cost



Our average mentoring match lasts for five years

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THE NEED FOR MENTORING

Although violent crime among youth in Ontario is down by 7% compared to 2012, many youth, especially newcomer, minority and youth suffering from Mental Health issues and/or learning challenges, continue to face barriers to success. At the same time, other youth issues such as obesity, academic failure and bullying are growing to epidemic proportions. Providing mentors for youth ages 6 to 15 will ultimately prevent many of these problems from occurring.

Statistics:

- Over 125,000 youth ages 12 to 17 were accused of a *Criminal Code* offence in 2012 (*Statistics Canada – 2012 Police Reported Crime Statistics*)
- A total of 3,802 youth ages 12 to 17 committed a violent crime in 2011 (*Toronto Police Service 2012 Annual Statistical Report*)
- Youth ages 12 to 17 account for 42.9% of all robberies committed in Toronto during 2011 (*Toronto Police Service 2012 Annual Statistical Report*)
- 49.5% of students surveyed within 33 Toronto junior high and high schools reported being bullied online (*"Cyberbullying Behaviors Among Middle and High School Students" 2010*).
- 65% of respondents reported having been the targets of cyberbullying at least once (*"Cyberbullying: Reality Check 2012", Kids Help Phone*).
- Those most at risk of cyberbullying are children aged 12-14 years old (*Tokunaga, 2010; "Cyberbullying: Reality Check 2012", Kids Help Phone*).
- A 2013 study of children 10 to 14 years old in 16 diverse GTA schools confirms earlier research in finding that less than 1% (0.5%) of boys and no girls were meeting the recommended level of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity at least 6 days per week (*Toronto Foundation. 2013. Toronto Vital Signs Report*).
- Mentored youth earn about \$315,000 more in income over their lifetime than youth who are not mentored (*The Mentoring Effect, Big Brothers Big Sisters*).
- Girls with a Mentor are 2.5x more likely than girls without a mentor to be confident in their ability to be successful at school (*CAMH Study 2013*).
- Boys with a Mentor are 3x less likely than boys without a mentor to suffer peer pressure related anxiety, such as worrying about what other children think or say about them (*CAMH Study 2013*).
- Mentored boys are 2x more likely to believe that school is fun and that doing well academically is important (*CAMH Study 2013*).
- Mentored boys are also 2x less likely than non-mentored boys to develop negative conducts like bullying, fighting, lying, cheating, losing their temper or expressing anger (*CAMH Study 2013*).

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QUOTES

"Our annual Spin-A-Thon inspires our supporters to make an impact in their local community by fundraising for a proven peer mentoring program that makes a huge difference in the lives of youth," says **Sally Spencer, CEO of The Peer Project**. "Mentoring is one of the most powerful gifts you can give to both someone else and yourself. It changes your life when you unleash the motivation of youth to achieve their full potential."

"I can't imagine my life in Canada without this program. I get to meet new friends, I don't feel lonely, and I get to participate in events that I would otherwise not have known about," shared **Peer Project Mentee, Tommy S.**

It is the "best decision I've ever made," says **Peer Project Mentor, Jim H.** "We have both learned from each other." Paired with a kid in his neighbourhood, Hronis was surprised the need was so close to him. "That kind of hit home, there is a kid in need and he literally lives right down the street from me," added Jim.

"Your childhood can be a make or break time, and I feel that given my experiences in my life, I am able to help kids in similar situations," said **Peer Project Mentor, Mick D.** Mick emigrated from Jamaica to Toronto and is now a martial arts instructor and security guard at the AGO. He is giving back to help a newcomer kid get settled in a new city and a new country.

More Stories:

<http://thepeerproject.com/category/stories/mentor-stories/>

<http://thepeerproject.com/category/stories/mentee-stories/>

About The Peer Project | Youth Assisting Youth (YAY) thepeerproject.com

The Peer Project | Youth Assisting Youth is a non-profit charitable organization that matches at-risk and newcomer children ages 6-15 with fully trained and dedicated Volunteer Youth Mentors ages 16-29. Operating since 1976, The Peer Project has helped over 30,000 newcomer and at-risk kids. There are over 600 active kids matched with mentors who act as positive role models, but a wait list of over 400 kids. The organization operates with a 98% success rate for keeping kids in school and out of the criminal justice system.

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