



Reconnecting Youth, Get Off the Street Program

# RY GOTS 2011



Several G.O.T.S. participants pose outside of David and Mary Thompson Collegiate during summer 2011

## This Summer at RY GOTS

On July 5<sup>th</sup> 2011 The RY GOTS program opened their doors for the 5<sup>th</sup> year through the "Focus on Youth Initiative" with the Ontario Provincial Government. Like years past the RY GOTS program was a great success and the 7 weeks that the program ran seemed to fly by for both participants and staff alike.

Newly this year the program has implemented curriculum from the Reconnecting Youth Program which Regesh is running within 3 TDSB schools through the academic year. This component has allowed participants to focus on self-growth in addition to the fun that GOTS has brought in the past.

We would like to thank all the participants for their continued support and as a result the success of the program this summer

## Why Come to RY GOTS?

We asked the participants why they came to the RY GOTS program and what their favourite parts were...

*"I went 3 years ago and had tons of fun; I wanted volunteer hours; I wanted to get off the streets"*  
-age 16

*"I made friends with people I normally wouldn't meet otherwise. We also got to do things for free, things we probably wouldn't have experienced if it wasn't for RY GOTS"*  
-age 16

*"RY GOTS helped me to stay active & prevented me from staying at home doing nothing, after summer school"*  
-age 16

*"RY GOTS benefited me by letting me spend my free time with new people and the group discussions really helped me."*  
-age 15

*"It's your program! You decide what you want to do, and you run it. And you get to learn from other teens too. I've learned how to do a lot of different things because of RY GOTS."* -age 17

## Special events this

### summer...

- Rowing & Sailing
- Woodbine Beach
- Movies
- Guest Speakers
- Sports
- Movies
- Lyrical Jeopardy
- Science Centre
- Drama Games
- Relay Games
- Tie dye
- Water Balloon Fights
- Creative Drawing
- ... & Wonderland!

**"Basically everything was a highlight because every day was fun and we did something new."**

**-age 17**





Participants play at Thompson Park's annual Ribfest.

## The Reconnecting Youth Component comes to GOTS

This year for the first time the G.O.T.S. program has been combined with the Reconnecting Youth Program which Regesh Family & Child Services is currently running in 3 TDSB schools.

Reconnecting Youth (RY) is a proven, award-winning program designed for students aged 14-18. RY is a high school-based curriculum that uses small group skills training to enhance personal competencies and social support resources.

This "indicated" prevention program meets the needs of participants by helping them develop skills and strategies for dealing with risk factors in four critical areas: At school, with peers, with family and with themselves.

While attending the summer program this year participants have focused on Group Dynamics, Self Esteem enhancement, Decision Making, Personal control and Interpersonal Communication.

*"The RY part of GOTS was really helpful. I learned a lot about myself and better ways to deal with the stress in my life. It will help me this year when I'm in school. It already helped my relationship with my parents"*  
-age 15

*"My favorite part was learning how to talk better to people. Now I know not to get too upset, there are better ways than fighting."*  
-age 14

*"I really liked the discussions we had at RY GOTS. I liked finding out other people deal with the same stuff as me. I'm not the only one."*  
-age 16

## Rowing and Sailing with Hanlan Boat Club

This summer a few RY GOTS participants were given the opportunity to spend a week learning to row and another week learning to sail. We would like to thank 'Hanlan Boat Club' for their generosity and Christina for organizing this for the program.



### A POEM FOR G.O.T.S.

*If u wanna enjoy summer GOTS is the place to be,  
Meet people have fun all for free.*

*Play sports, activities and awesome trips,  
It might be at a school but there are no late slips.*

*Summer only lasts for a tiny little while,  
come to GOTS, we guarantee you will leave with a smile.*

*A place where the fun never ends,  
Become part of our family of friends.*

*Why waste summer when there's a place like this,  
Fill your summer with joy and bliss*

*You will leave at the end without one regret,  
GOTS will make summer something you won't forget*

-Dylon Gonzales



A highlight of the summer program was the water fight day, complete with relay races, super soakers and the infamous Water Balloon Dodge-ball match. Members of the winning teams are pictured above.



The G.O.T.S. program enjoyed a day of thrills at Paramount Canada's Wonderland near the close of this summer's events. Tickets were generously donated by the park

***“Because you GOTS to have fun in the Summer!”***

## A special message from Lindsey, Christina & Brianne

The staff at the RY GOTS program each run the Reconnecting Youth program at 3 separate schools within the TDSB. Lindsey at RH King Academy, Christina at George S. Henry Academy and Brianne at Nelson A. Boylen CI. They left their classrooms behind and moved in together at David and Mary Thomson CI to run the RY GOTS program.

### A message from Lindsey...

It's hard to believe that the summer has come to an end and we are closing the doors on RY GOTS once again. I opened the program 5 years ago, and it is truly my favourite program I have ever put together. This is mostly because of the youth who participate each summer. Each year you come back a little bigger, and a little wiser. And every year we get to meet new faces. Thank you for all of your support in making this program what it is! See you all next year, have a great year at school!

### A message from Christina...

I am so happy I was able to spend my summer facilitating the G.O.T.S. program. We had so many wonderful participants, new and returning, who each brought their strengths to the individual programs that were run. We all jumped at opportunities to try new and exciting things, and each day we had some major sports action, in depth and carefree discussions, and lots and lots of FUN! I hope to see everyone next year at RY GOTS with the same enthusiasm and sportsmanship. A special thanks to Mary Newman at Hanlan Rowing Club and the Kids Up Front Foundation.



### A message from Brianne...

I can't believe the summer is almost over! I had a blast being a part of the RY/G.O.T.S summer program. My favourite day was definitely the water balloon fight because everyone had a great time. The youth were such a wonderful group whom have made a lasting impression. I will miss them when we all go back to school. Thank you to everyone for making my summer one I will never forget



**This isn't good-bye... It's "see you soon!"**

### Regesh Family & Child Services

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**Thank you to for all your support & generosity**

