

Supporting and equipping children and our communities

SDG 4, 10, 12, 16

Today's young people face challenges that did not exist for earlier generations. To support young people navigating these challenges, Bell partners with a wide range of youth-oriented organizations such as **Kids Help Phone**, **Strongest Families Institute**, **Fondation Jeunes en Tête**, the **Canadian Centre for Child Protection** and **MediaSmarts**, in addition to programs such as Backpacks for Kids, and **Computers for Schools Plus (CFS+)**. Bell Let's Talk has also partnered with the Graham Boeckh Foundation to support the delivery of mental health services for young people through **Integrated Youth Services (IYS)** hubs. Bell subsidiary Northwestel also creates lasting partnerships with youth initiatives in the North. These organizations and programs have helped Canadian children and families cope with the impacts of COVID-19, overcome difficulties, build self-esteem, play, learn and grow in new ways.

Mental health support for kids



Bell is a Founding Partner of Kids Help Phone (KHP), supporting the mental health and well-being of young people. Bell's partnership with Kids Help Phone helps to ensure young people have access to e-mental health resources, especially as the need for support has continued to grow. Bell's recent donations support Kids Help Phone in delivering its expanded frontline responses for youth in crisis. That includes training over 7,500 volunteer Crisis Responders and doubling the number of professional counsellors and clinicians available to deliver and manage a clinical operation, helping to ensure young people have access to quality services. With an approximate 60% increase in counselling and texting interactions alone, KHP has delivered more than 12 million connections across all services and supports since January 2020. This sustained demand is expected to continue amidst a youth mental health crisis, while the complexities of growing up only increase in the years to come. Bell has been, and will continue to be, a lead partner in ensuring KHP is there to unlock hope so young people can thrive – one connection at a time.

Bell team members also continue to help organize and participate in the Kids Help Phone annual fundraising event and volunteer as Crisis Responders for the Crisis Text Line. In 2022, team members from Bell Canada, Bell Media and The Source secured pledges and participated in Walk so Kids Can Talk, raising over \$40,000. Since 2002, Bell team members have raised more than \$11.3 million for Kids Help Phone.



Bell also partners with Strongest Families Institute (SFI) to provide programs for children, youth and families dealing with mild to moderate mental illness and other health issues through a unique distance-coaching approach, supporting families over the phone and Internet in the privacy of their own homes. It is the only program of its kind in the country with a no-waitlist policy for families. Bell Let's Talk has invested in the expansion of SFI in the Atlantic Region, Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and Yukon. Bell Let's Talk supported Strongest Families Institute in developing a new secure mobile app to further enhance SFI's ability to reach people in remote communities with its proven programs that leverage highly skilled coaches and innovative technology to improve mental health and well-being.



For more than 22 years, the Fondation Jeunes en Tête has been preventing psychological distress in young people aged 11 to 18. In 2022, Bell Let's Talk partnered with the Fondation and two other prominent mental health organizations to organize the largest fundraiser event ever in Québec for mental health, with \$2 million net raised at the fourth edition of the Bal des Lumières.



Since 2020, Bell Let's Talk has partnered with The Graham Boeckh Foundation (GBF) to advance integrated systems of care for youth mental health across Canada. Through the partnership, Bell and GBF are committing \$10 million to accelerate and develop integrated youth services (IYS) for youth ages 12-25 and their families. IYS provides access to youth-friendly and culturally appropriate mental health, substance use and related services in one location. IYS initiatives and youth hubs around the country are co-designed by youth, for youth and provide a service model where young people can access multiple supports under one roof, when they need them. To date, the partnership has supported provincial IYS networks including [Aire ouverte](#) in Québec, [Foundry](#) in British Columbia, [Huddle](#) in Manitoba, [Youth Wellness Hubs](#) in Ontario and the pan-Canadian research project, [ACCESS Open Minds](#). In November 2022, the Bell-GBF partnership, together with the Government of Canada and RBC Future Launch announced funding for a pan-Canadian network of IYS networks to improve mental health services and outcomes for all Canadian youth. To learn more about how IYS is transforming youth mental health click [here](#).

Protection of minors



Bell and Bell MTS contribute approximately \$150,000 annually in funding and services to support the operations of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, including [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca). Cybertip is a national tip line for Canadians to report their concerns about the online sexual exploitation of children and to raise awareness of the issue so that we can better protect children when they use the Internet.

Since its creation in 2002, Cybertip.ca has processed 384,060 reports from the public. Cybertip.ca has sent more than 18.7 million removal notices worldwide through Project Arachnid, an automated web crawler and platform that helps reduce the online availability of child sexual abuse materials. Bell's support has also helped fund important prevention materials such as the Centre's Self/Peer Exploitation guides, which were developed in response to increased reporting on the tip line regarding sexting incidents. Bell's renewed commitment to the development of these guides resulted in approximately 6,737 copies being distributed to families, schools and law enforcement agencies across the country in 2022, ensuring Canadians were equipped with the knowledge on how to prevent and adequately respond to this issue. A Self/Peer Exploitation flow chart created for professionals working with youth which outlines steps for addressing self/peer exploitation, has been downloaded 7,534 times in 2022.

NeedHelpNow.ca™

Additionally, Bell supports [needhelpnow.ca](https://www.needhelpnow.ca), an important website for youth to help them stop the spread of sexual pictures/videos and receive support along the way. In 2022, the site received over 119,000 page views.

Bell is also proud of its role as a founder of the [Canadian Coalition Against Internet Child Exploitation](https://www.cccan.ca) and its [Cleanfeed Canada](https://www.cleanfeed.ca) initiative (operated by Cybertip.ca). This was developed to reduce Canadians' exposure to child abuse images and create a disincentive for those who access and distribute child pornography.

Digital Media Literacy



MediaSmarts is a Canadian, bilingual not-for-profit centre for digital media literacy. Its vision is to ensure all Canadians have the critical thinking skills to engage with media as active and informed digital citizens. Working closely with academics, broadcasters, telecommunications service providers and internet-based organizations, MediaSmarts develops educational materials and programs such as online resources to assist parents with strategies for the digital generation, workshops and lesson plans for teachers and an annual Media Literacy Week to build public awareness of the importance of digital consumers developing critical-thinking skills.

Bell is a founding partner of MediaSmarts, supporting their ongoing operations that include digital literacy workshops, public awareness campaigns and online resources. In 2022, Bell donated \$50,000 to help improve digital media literacy for young people and their families and supported Media Literacy Week as a gold sponsor. Media Literacy Week is an annual national campaign hosted by MediaSmarts and supported by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, which facilitates digital parenting workshops, Break the Fake workshops and seminars on topics ranging from AI to cybersecurity organized by over 140 collaborating organizations including libraries, classrooms, museums and community groups from coast to coast to coast. Media Literacy Week activities in 2022 resulted in more than 84 million impressions on Twitter using #medialitwk. MediaSmarts' inaugural Digital Citizen Day launched during Media Literacy Week on October 26th, encouraging all Canadians to share what it means to be a digital citizen using #DigitalCitizenDay.

Bell funding is enabling a number of new and updated digital literacy resources and workshops including: My Voice is Louder Than Hate: Pushing Back against Hate in Online Communities; #ForYou: A Game about Artificial Intelligence and Privacy; DigitalSmarts skills workshops designed for marginalized populations in partnership with YWCA Canada; From Access to Engagement: Building a Digital Media Literacy Strategy for Canada; and Young Canadians in a Wireless World Phase IV research study into the digital lives of youth. MediaSmarts hosts the world's largest bilingual website for digital media literacy, with 3,000 pages of free resources, 3.1 million views annually and 200,000 downloads a year.

Backpacks for Kids

Bell's annual Backpacks for Kids (BFK) program supports students in communities across Canada, helping them start the school year strong. Since the program began, Bell team members have filled more than 111,000 backpacks with supplies for elementary school students. In 2022, Bell continued to support the program through the BFK virtual program. With help from our Bell backpack champions, more than 3,900 backpacks were delivered to 93 community groups in various locations across the country. Our employees also donated more than \$5,000 through the Bell Giving Program.



Virgin Plus with Purpose

Virgin Plus goes beyond keeping Canadians connected by investing in education, career and mental health programs that support underprivileged youth and youth in transition. Through its partnerships, Virgin Plus is ensuring that today's youth are on the path toward a bright future.

Programs include:

Virgin Re*Generation

Starting a career is hard enough – it's harder still for Canada's at-risk and homeless youth. Re*Generation works with Npower Canada to break down barriers of employment for underserved and underemployed young adults, including BIPOC, new Canadians, LGBTQ2S+ individuals and youth with disabilities. The partnership with NPower Canada means providing these youth with mentoring opportunities, free in-demand digital and professional skills training and additional resources that make building a meaningful and sustainable career easier.



Friends of Ruby

Virgin Plus is a proud contributor of Friends of Ruby supporting the LGBTQ2S+ community. Friends of Ruby supports LGBTQ2S+ youth by providing free counselling, housing and social services – no matter what stage of their personal journey.

Recycle Me Program

Virgin Plus's Recycle Me program helps to take care of the planet. Virgin Plus and its partners have diverted up to 8,000 electronic devices from landfill, to be responsibly recycled. The net proceeds from the recycling program are donated to WWF Canada's Regenerate Canada program.

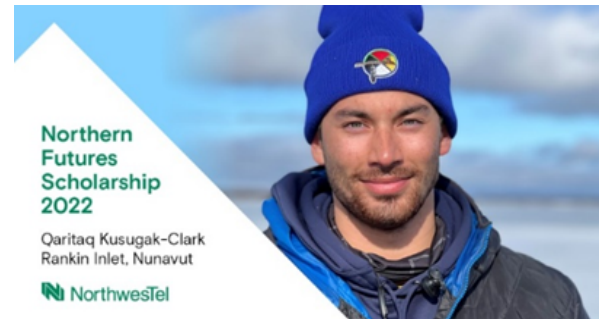
Supporting youth in the North

Northwestel is committed to supporting youth sport in the North. In Nunavut, The Northwestel Learn to Speed Skate program is offered by the Nunavut Speed Skating Club in Iqaluit. Youth are taught fundamentals of short track speed skating, with a focus on safety and good technique for new skaters. More than 50 youth take part in the program annually. In the Kivalliq region, the Northwestel Rankin Rock Hockey Camp works with about 200 kids aged 8 to 13 every year. Through intensive hockey skills training, off-ice education, goal setting and personal development, the camp creates “better people - not just better players.”

In the Yukon, Northwestel sponsors the Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club Jack Rabbits and Bunny Program. The “FUNdamentals” program is designed to teach youngsters cross-country skiing basics.



Northwestel believes in investing in the future of the North. The Northern Futures Scholarship program offers six \$4,000 scholarships to students from communities across the North. This year’s recipients are studying everything from Civil Engineering to Business Administration. Northwestel also offers meaningful summer employment opportunities that often lead to full-time roles within the company.



Mental health in the North

Northwestel is committed to supporting a North with easy access to mental health support. In Nunavut, the Kamatsiaqtut help line provides mental health support. Kamatsiaqtut, which translates to “A person who cares,” provides crisis support service in both English and Inuktitut. Northwestel is a long-time partner and donor to the locally run help line.

Also in Nunavut, Embrace Life Council is a community driven non-profit that tackles the challenge of suicide prevention. Recently Northwestel signed on as a supporter of the organization’s Peer Leadership Program, where the primary focus is to foster confidence in young people to be supportive peers when receiving disclosures of abuse and thoughts of suicide.

Northwestel is grateful to have the opportunity to assist in cultivating an environment that connects youth leaders throughout Nunavut to learn, collaborate and gain tools for positive mental health and healthy living.

Northwestel supports the Canadian Mental Health Association Yukon Division in the operation of their Counselling program and Reach Out Support Line, a volunteer-based, confidential, non-judgmental and free support line.

Northwestel supports BYTE – Empowering Youth Society, a by-youth, for-youth organization that focuses on empowering and promoting youth mental health and well-being throughout Yukon and Canada’s North. Bytes travels to Yukon communities to deliver relevant, innovative and experiential workshops to youth on topics such as Leadership, Healthy Relationships and Healthy Minds.



In the last 25 years, OPEQ has:

- sorted millions of units of equipment (computers, servers, cell phones, printers, mice, keyboards, projectors, etc.)
- recovered more than 50,000 computers per year
- upgraded and distributed more than 320,000 refurbished computers and laptops
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- helped more than 2,000 young people gain work experience through the Ordinateurs pour les écoles du Québec (OPEQ) internship program
- helped several thousand trainees acquire skills in the information technology field
- worked with dozens of young people with physical or cognitive limitations in OPEQ's sorting centres and workshops



OPEQ–Computers for Schools in Québec

Bell and OPEQ: partners for 25 years!

In 1993, Industry Canada and the Telephone Pioneers created the Computers for Schools (CFS) program to donate to schools computers no longer needed by the federal government.

In 1997, Bell took over the leadership of the program in Québec and became a founding member of Computers for Schools in Québec (OPEQ – Ordinateurs pour les écoles du Québec). It is under this entity that the CFS (now CFS+) program is managed in the province.

Bell has been contributing to the success of this program for 25 years. In addition to providing equipment donations, Bell is actively involved within OPEQ, ensuring representation on the board of directors, appointing an employee as Executive Director and providing space for a workshop and the administrative offices for the OPEQ management team.

This close collaboration has fostered the growth of OPEQ and it has become the most important player in the reuse of electronic equipment in Québec, with 2 sorting centres (Montréal and Québec) and 6 workshops (Bellechasse, Gatineau, Montréal, Québec, Saguenay and Sherbrooke).

Bell helps reduce the digital divide through its strong collaboration with OPEQ, by maximizing the reuse of electronic equipment surplus and ensuring its secure, efficient and environmentally sound management. The value of Bell's donations to OPEQ is over \$600,000 per year.

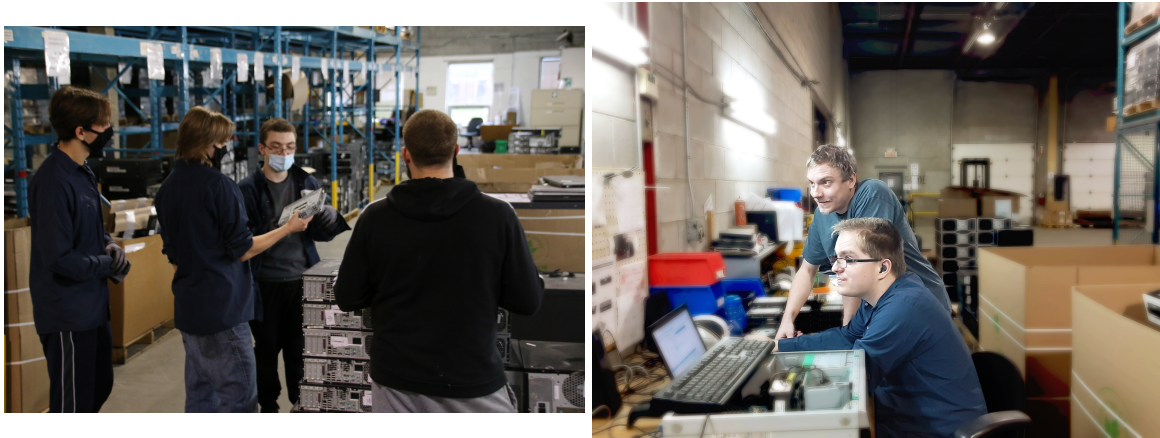
Giving back to the community

Since the program's inception, hundreds of thousands of computers, laptops, printers and cellular devices have been refurbished and redistributed to schools, libraries and non-profit organizations. OPEQ's mission extends, via targeted programs, to other clients such as low-income families and newcomers, with the goal of supporting digital inclusion and eliminating technological isolation.

Training young people from all over Québec

Diversity, equity and inclusion are at the heart of the organization's values.

The OPEQ internship program provides youth with hands-on responsibilities in information technology to help them gain the skills and experience needed to join the job market. It offers an opportunity for young people with physical or cognitive limitations to gain work experience, a workplace integration that is rewarding for all employees. Several instructors or managers now employed by OPEQ in sorting centres and workshops were successful graduates of this internship program. OPEQ also partners with professional training centres and offers their student participants a work environment that complements the classroom training and motivates against dropping out of school.



OPEQ for the environment

OPEQ has been mandated to recover computer equipment from provincial and federal ministries as well as para-governmental and municipal agencies. OPEQ also receives equipment from Québec's major companies in technology, communications, pharmaceuticals and finance, among others.

To minimize the negative environmental impacts of electronic devices, OPEQ prioritizes reusing before recycling. Thanks to the companies that have chosen OPEQ for the management of their equipment at the end of its useful life, we have refurbished more than 320,000 computers and laptops over the past 25 years and given new life to computers that would otherwise have been discarded or recycled. The satisfaction of donors, customers and employees is at the heart of OPEQ's mission. Work procedures are regularly revised to meet strict standards that ensure quality, security, health and safety.

When equipment cannot be reused, it is recycled by audited certified recyclers who meet the highest standards of recycling and proper handling of materials.

Through its support of OPEQ, Bell promotes:

1. Reuse of electronic equipment
2. Social inclusion for young adults through integration into the workplace
3. Developing digital skills with graduates in technology
4. Eco-responsible recycling of obsolete equipment

Bell donations of used equipment for reuse or recycling			
Number of units donated to CFS+	Computers	Monitors	Printers
2020	5,215	482	25
2021	8,472	637	91
2022	5,778	1,239	39
Cumulative total (since 1997)	133,300	24,700	5,000

Certifications

- OPEQ is among the organizations certified by the Recyclers Qualification Board as an Electronic Products Reuse and Rehabilitation Program (EPRRP). This certification enables us to work with the Electronic Products Recycling Association (EPRA-Québec).
- OPEQ is also certified ISO 14001:2015. This environmental standard certifies that the organization acts proactively in controlling its environmental risks.
- OPEQ is certified by “ICI on recycle +” (a program from RECYC-QUÉBEC) as Elite, which is the highest designation. All OPEQ sites have an Elite performance certificate.

Please visit us at www.opeq.qc.ca

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