

# **City Operating Grant Allows BGC Kawarthas to Expand Youth Services to Fenelon Falls**

BGC Kawarthas (formerly Boys & Girls Clubs of Kawartha Lakes) is opening a youth drop-in program in Fenelon Falls which will begin early in the new year. The program has been made possible by the approval of operating funds from the City of Kawartha Lakes.

The recently approved 2025 Operating Budget confirmed approval of a BGC Kawarthas request for funds to support expansion of its youth services. The one-year \$100,000 operating funding includes \$50,000 to offer a youth drop-in program in the under-resourced community of Fenelon Falls that will focus on the following:

- Meals and nutrition
- Youth Mental Health & Wellness programs
- Physical Fitness
- Queer Youth Kawartha Lakes
- Academic support

“BGC Kawarthas provides an integral support to our youth and children,” stated Mayor Elmslie. “We’re pleased to support the expansion into the Fenelon Falls area, where youth will now have more options for after school programming and activities.”

The program will begin in January at a location to be announced starting with young people aged 12 to 18 who reside in Fenelon Falls and the surrounding area (the northern portion of Kawartha Lakes). In particular, the program will invite students in grades 7 to 12 who are seeking support with academics, career guidance, and personal

development. Young adults looking for support with job readiness, housing, mental health support, and life skills are also welcome.

“I want to thank all the people in Fenelon Falls who have supported this effort, including the Kawartha Works Community-Cooperative (KWCC), as well as the young leaders who have brought important insights into the planning,” says Amy Terrill, Executive Director, BGC Kawarthas. “You know it’s the right thing to do when everyone is saying the same thing! Together we’ll make a difference for youth in Fenelon and the surrounding area.”

“We are thrilled to contribute community support to this much needed youth service,” says Jim Armstrong, KWCC Board Chair.

BGC Kawarthas successfully operates similar programming in Lindsay at its Warehouse Youth Centre. Last year alone, 420 unique youth came through the door at the Warehouse. The approved operating funds also include \$50,000 for continued expansion of the Lindsay program to include programming on Friday evenings for events, Saturdays throughout the school year, and summer programming, plus drop-in education hours for students on alternative learning plans, including students that have been suspended or expelled from school.

There will be many ways for interested community members to support the growth of youth services in the village. BGC Kawarthas is hiring staff to support this programming and is interested in guest speakers and programming from community groups, and volunteers. Fundraising will also take place to support some of the additional operating costs including transportation (shuttle) for youth, food, as well as to allow for growth of the program. For more information, visit this [link](#).