

Lions Quest Canada is ...

We recently asked a wide variety of Lions from across the country what Lions Club Members needed to know about Lions Quest Canada and here is what they wanted us to share.

Lions Quest Canada – The Centre for Positive Youth Development is a registered charitable organization and operates as a social enterprise. A social enterprise is a business that creates community impacts and promotes social values using their proceeds to fund their mission. Lions Quest Canada is funded by the donations of Lions Clubs and by providing fee-for-service training and consulting services.

The mission of Lions Quest Canada is – To provide leadership, knowledge and resources to develop capable young Canadians of positive character. When describing our organization to others, we remind people that it takes a village to raise our children, and Lions Quest Canada is equipping the “villagers” – with tools and resources to have an impact.

The staff of Lions Quest Canada have all been with the organization for over thirty years and are personally committed to our mission.

- Joanne McQuiggan, our Executive Director, started her journey with Lions Quest as a youth participant in an international youth camp hosted by Past International President Sten Akestam (1987). She has since committed her career to the positive development of Canadian children and youth.
- Kay Nelles, our Events Coordinator is committed to providing a positive experience and support for our national network of community champions.

The Board of Directors for Lions Quest Canada is made up of Lions from across Canada who are committed to the work of Lions Quest Canada. The board members include PID Jack Isaman (Chair), PID Marvin Chambers, PID Tom Gordon, PDG Frank Hartman, PDG Cheryl McKittrick, PCC Len Mooney, PCC Susan Sangster, PZC Mike Stanford, and PCC Bob Tanner.

Lions Quest Canada promotes positive youth development in Canada which is an approach that focuses on the strengths of the child supported by caring adults, neighbourhoods and schools. This approach promotes healthy development, leadership skills, personal and social responsibility and also helps prevent negative risk taking behaviours like drug use and violent behaviour including bullying.

Lions Quest Canada accomplishes our mission by facilitating training for communities including schools, municipalities, police services, public health, children’s aid and youth-serving agencies. We also distribute resources like printed material, books, videos and other tools to support the work of local groups. We primarily offer 3 different workshops – one for schools, one for communities, and a capacity building train the trainer session for communities.

What difference does Lions Quest Canada make? We are encouraged by the trends we see across the country and our ability to contribute as a thought-leader in child and youth development. For example –

- The techniques like experiential (hands on) and social-emotional learning that have been central to our Lions Quest school-based programs since the 1980's have become part of how our student teachers are instructed in teacher certification programs.
- Lions Quest programs have been taught in schools in every province and territory, and over the years more than 50,000 people have participated in our workshops reaching about 3 million young Canadians.
- We have helped support the shift from 'fixing problems' to building on the strengths of children in foster care in Ontario.
- Lions Quest is a recognized provider of training and other resources for the RCMP, not only for their youth programs, but also their anti-terrorism division, as our work helps to prevent the radicalization of youth.
- Lions Quest Canada has provided consulting services resulting in a complete review and revision of the camp programs delivered by the Tim Horton Children's Foundation reaching over 17,000 children annually across North America.
- Lions Quest Canada has also been recognized by the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police - "The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police is proud to support Lions Quest Canada as it works to develop understanding among all policing communities regarding the value added which results from developing assets in youth and forging intentional positive relations."

Lions Clubs can help us make a difference by –

- financially supporting Lions Quest Canada on a regular basis by budgeting for a donation on an annual basis,
- sponsoring Lions Quest Canada Fellowships for deserving Lions and community members, and
- organizing and promoting events (training workshops and gatherings) in your community.

The most important difference that Lions Quest Canada can make is as a champion for encouraging individuals to take action and do their part, whatever that part may be as a friend, mentor, coach, teacher, neighbour, care giver, community member to influence the positive development of our children and youth.

Remember you can make a difference for kids and it's just as simple as smiling and saying 'hi' when you see a young person in your community.

For more information about Lions Quest Canada please contact Joanne McQuiggan at 1-800-265-2680 ext. 107 or by email at joanne@lionsquest.ca.