



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary



Centraide Québec



Operation Eyesight

# Time to give: Canadians and Their Causes

**W**ith more than 161,000 charities and nonprofit organizations in the country Canadians have a wealth of causes in which to invest their time and money. For most this means making annual donations. In fact, more than 84% of Canadians give every year. As the holiday season approaches and the calendar year comes to an end, take the time to think about what causes matter to you. Make holiday giving part of your – and your family’s – tradition.

## Charity Connections Run Deep

Referencing the old Chinese proverb Brad Diggins explains what drew him to Operation Eyesight as his charity of choice. “If you give a fish to a bunch of people, they’ll eat it. But if you teach them how to fish you can feed a lot more people.”

Operation Eyesight, the global charity headquartered in Calgary, focuses on the prevention of blindness and low vision in developing countries. In addition to supporting training for eye care workers and medical facilities, they build wells since clean water is a major factor in prevention.

In his role as Chairman of the Mechanical Contractors Association of

Canada, Diggins was on the lookout for a signature charity they could get behind and Operation Eyesight fit the bill. His association represents companies delivering services in plumbing and other infrastructure around the world so Operation Eyesight’s well-building initiatives were the perfect fit. Diggins makes regular presentations about the charity at industry conferences and also gives personally. His family donated a well last year at Christmas and when his aunt died they contributed part of her estate to build one in her memory. After just one year he’s been instrumental in the building of six wells with two more on the way towards

a goal of twenty.

Diggins is passionate about the cause. In addition to causing Trachoma – the world’s leading cause of preventable blindness – poor hygiene has a ripple effect in the community, he explains, spilling out into areas like education since a teacher is unlikely to go into a community where there isn’t clean running water.

“Water is life,” he says. “It’s health. Without your health you don’t have much.”

## About Imagine Canada

Imagine Canada is a national charitable organization whose cause is Canada’s charities and nonprofits. We strengthen the sector’s collective voice, serve as a forum and meeting place, and provide a supportive environment for organizations to build stronger communities.

Learn more about Canada’s charities and nonprofits at [www.imaginecanada.ca](http://www.imaginecanada.ca)

Give to your favourite charity online at [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org)

Imagine  Canada



# Imagine Canada

Let's make it easier for Canadians to support the causes that matter to them the most!

Imagine Canada proposes the **Stretch Tax Credit for Charitable Giving**, a new and simple tax incentive for **all** Canadians.

**82% of Canadians** in a recent Ipsos Reid poll **support this new incentive**. More than half think it should be implemented within the next year.

## CARING CANADIANS build stronger communities

### STRETCH TAX CREDIT *for* CHARITABLE GIVING

**The purpose of the Stretch Tax Credit for Charitable Giving is to challenge more Canadians to give and to support those who do give to give more.**

**HOW IT WORKS:**

The Stretch Tax Credit for Charitable Giving would increase the federal charitable tax credit for individuals by 10% on all NEW giving that exceeds previous donations. This incentive will allow Canadians to "stretch" their giving even more.

**WHY WE NEED IT:**

Charities and nonprofits in every community work on behalf of Canadians to provide services and supports that contribute to quality-of-life and economic prosperity. We need to act now to renew and grow Canada's charitable sector and donor base to ensure organizations working across the country and around the world can meet the changing needs and growing demands of the individuals, families and communities they serve.

For more information on the Stretch Tax Credit for Charitable Giving visit:

[www.stretchtax.imaginecanada.ca](http://www.stretchtax.imaginecanada.ca)

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Data presented from the 2007 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating by Statistics Canada, Imagine Canada and Volunteer Canada available at [www.givingandvolunteering.ca](http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca)

[www.imaginecanada.ca](http://www.imaginecanada.ca)

Photos courtesy of Rouge Valley Health System Foundation, Stellula Music in Schools and Workman Arts.

## Employee Giving Comes Home

“It was right in front of me,” says Peggy Yuill about her decision to get involved with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM). She had heard on the radio about the organization’s program to help newcomer families acclimatize to life in Winnipeg. So when her employer, Investors Group, invited her and her fellow co-workers to volunteer by partnering with a family she jumped at the chance.

“We don’t always have the opportunity to learn about people who come from entirely different circumstances,” Peggy offers when talking about her motivation to be matched with a family. She also saw it as a great way for her two girls, aged seven and ten, to develop more of a global view. “They had no idea how incredibly lucky we are in this country and how

different things could be just by the luck of the draw.”

Peggy’s family was matched with a family from Africa with four daughters. They arrived here in the dead of winter from a refugee camp in Uganda. The parents had both grown up without fathers and had to sacrifice to keep some food on the table. They wanted something better for their children and Canada held out that promise.

At first Peggy’s girls were apprehensive about meeting the new family. But after the two families went on outings together to places like the Manitoba Children’s Museum and shared meals at their home, Peggy’s oldest daughter said: “This isn’t what I expected. They’re just like us.” For Peggy this was gold.

“We live in a small bungalow and don’t have a lot of luxuries but seeing things



Two families come together at the Manitoba Children’s Museum to learn from each other and to have fun thanks to a work place program by Investors Group which supports the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba.

through their eyes made us appreciate what we do have,” she says. One of the greatest rewards for Peggy is how she feels when she visits her friends at their apartment complex. “They are so welcoming,” she says. “I don’t feel that way anywhere else I go.”

## The Next Generation Leads the Way

Like many university students Jonah Brotman was thinking about taking a trip abroad to round out his education. His parents suggested Europe since this was practically a rite of passage in their day. But Jonah was more drawn to the off-limits locales that had been opened up, at least virtually, to him and his peer group growing up in a context of increased globalization. He ended up in Ghana on a “voluntourism” trip that – while worthwhile – fell short of his expectations.

“I was put with a family that was paid very little in return,” he says. At the same time, the volunteer work he was offered was not the fit he had in mind and

there was little, if any, support from the trip organizers.

With a fresh vision for how young people might have a more genuine experience of volunteering abroad, Jonah and his friend David Berkal established Operation Groundswell in 2006. Five years later the “backpacking with a purpose” program is taking groups of young people, aged 18-30 to Africa as well as the Middle East, Southeast Asia and South America. In 2012 they are leading 20 trips designed to give young people the chance to see the world and make it better at the same time.

Jonah recently returned from a trip to Iquitos, Peru – known as the largest city in the world not accessible by road. In a nearby village they reached by boat the group worked with local youth to build a water filtering system that would address a



series of chronic health problems borne of drinking and washing in contaminated river water. Jonah and his group of North American youth learned to chop wood with machetes to build the three-tiered water tower.

Jonah believes that this kind of social purpose approach to travel is the mode of choice for young people today. “Our goal is to create more globally minded people who can do good in whatever field they choose.”



# Family Matters

**B**ack in the 1980s when the HIV/AIDS epidemic hit Toronto, family doctor Donna Keystone was there fighting to get her patients the care they needed. “Everyone was afraid,” she says. “The specialists didn’t want to see them. The whole idea that this was a gay disease kept everyone at a distance.” Donna and her colleagues protested, marched, advocated and did whatever they could to get people to change their attitudes. The work brought her into contact with families devastated that their children had been too afraid to come out to them and yet struggling to stick by them in their illness and even death.

Addressing the needs of families in the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirit, queer) community continues to be near and dear to her heart. Donna’s daughter Jen is gay and a mother herself

who introduced Donna to the Ten Oaks Project, a unique program for gay families of which Jen is a volunteer and former board member. The Ten Oaks Project is a summer camp for children and youth questioning their sexuality but also for those growing up with gay parents. The camp provides a safe place for children and youth to share their concerns, enjoy the outdoors and have a great time. A regular donor and a fundraiser too, Donna’s connections with the Ten Oaks Project run deep. She recounts her daughter Jen’s experiences with other parents in the neighbourhood park, wondering not only if she was being judged as a gay parent but whether or not that judgment would be



passed along to her child.

“The challenges faced by gay families is an emerging picture,” says Donna. “At camp, the kids can gain confidence that their families are as wonderful as everyone else’s,” she adds. The program’s offer of subsidies ensures that any child, regardless of economic status can attend. Equally motivating for Donna is her goal to ensure that Ten Oaks Project will be around when her grandchildren are old enough to go to camp.

Imagine  Canada

## Coming Soon!



CharityFocus is a brand new one-stop source of information about Canada’s 85,000 registered charities.



Anyone looking to support a charity will find sophisticated yet easy-to-use search capabilities and information which provides a balanced and complete picture of a charity – their work, their funding, and their people. **CharityFocus** will allow a charity to tell their story through posted annual reports, financial statements, social media feeds, and more!

CharityFocus will be launched in early 2012. Sign-up to be notified when the site goes live at [www.imaginecanada.ca/charityfocus](http://www.imaginecanada.ca/charityfocus).

Funding provided by



RBC Foundation

Production of CharityFocus has been made possible by a financial contribution from the Canada Revenue Agency.



Canada



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Mary Johnston  
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cancer-free  
movement

albertacancer.ca

## Helping you Give

**W**ondering where to start? Visit charity websites to learn more about their programs, impact, finances and who's involved. We've also compiled a list of resources to help you gain the information and confidence you need to make the right decision.

**CharityFocus.** Coming Soon. A brand new one-stop source of information about Canada's 85,000 registered charities. [www.imaginecanada.ca/charityfocus](http://www.imaginecanada.ca/charityfocus)

**Ethical Code.** Over 400 charities participate in this program to show their commitment to financial transparency and ethical fundraising. [www.imaginecanada.ca/ethicalcode](http://www.imaginecanada.ca/ethicalcode)

**Guide to Giving.** A free downloadable guide to answer some of the most common questions put forward by Canadian donors. [www.imaginecanada.ca/guide-to-giving](http://www.imaginecanada.ca/guide-to-giving)

**Standards Program.** Coming soon. A nation-wide set of standards and accreditation program for Canada's charities. [www.imaginecanada.ca/standards\\_initiative](http://www.imaginecanada.ca/standards_initiative)

**Additional Resources:**

**Association of Fundraising Professionals.** Fundraising Code of Ethics. [www.afpnet.org](http://www.afpnet.org)

**Canada Revenue Agency.** The federal government regulator. [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/charities](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/charities)

**CanadaHelps.** The online giving portal. [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org)

**Community Foundations of Canada.** The Canadian movement for vitality. [www.cfc.fcc.ca](http://www.cfc.fcc.ca)

**Leave a Legacy.** Advice on giving through your will. [www.leavealegacy.ca](http://www.leavealegacy.ca)

**Philanthropic Foundations Canada.** A network of Canadian grantmakers. [www.pfc.ca](http://www.pfc.ca)

**United Way Centraide Canada.** Strengthening communities. [www.unitedway.ca](http://www.unitedway.ca)

**Volunteer Canada.** The national leader on volunteerism. [www.volunteer.ca](http://www.volunteer.ca)

### Giving is Easy

More than 85,000 charities are listed on CanadaHelps, the most comprehensive Canadian online giving portal. Through [CanadaHelps.org](http://CanadaHelps.org) anyone can donate to any registered charity. Give today: [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org).



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## “What do you do when you don’t know where to turn?”

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