

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON  
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT  
RAPPORT

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Our File/N/Réf.            03-07-00-0127  
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE                        1 June 2000

TO/DEST.                 Chair and Members, Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP.                A/Committee Co-ordinator

SUBJECT/OBJET         **SAGE YOUTH**

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### **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Community Services Committee receive the presentation for information.**

### **BACKGROUND**

Attached please find information on Sage Youth, a registered charity and non-profit corporation that provides literacy, academic and life-skills instruction to high-risk youth. Ms. Usha Tamba Dhar, Executive Director, will make a presentation to Committee.

*Approved by*  
*Stephani Roy*

**SAGE YOUTH  
JEUNESSE SAGE**

11 Rosemount Ave., #301  
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4R8  
(613) 722-2776

May 23, 2000

Councillor Alex Munter  
111 Lisgar  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2P 2L7

Dear Mr. Munter,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your time and for inviting me to address the Community Services Committee on June 15<sup>th</sup>. As you know, Sage Youth is a registered charity and non-profit corporation that provides literacy, academic and life-skills instruction to high-risk youth. We offer our programming free of charge to children between the ages of five and eighteen. Since 1992, we have worked with over 1400 young people and their families. We believe that we have developed an efficient model to address the issues of illiteracy and financial disadvantage amongst our students. Our motto is that excellence is the greatest deterrent to poverty and racism, and that is what we help our students achieve! Currently we have an administrative budget of less than 3%.

We are in the process of expanding our programs to meet the growing need in our community. I have enclosed a brief synopsis of our background, goals and activities, which I thought may be of interest to you and the other committee members.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours very truly,  
Usha Tamba Dhar  
Executive Director

## **WHAT IS SAGE YOUTH – JEUNESSE SAGE?**

Sage Youth - Jeunesse Sage is a non-profit corporation and registered charity that was established in 1992. We provide free literacy, academic and life-skills classes to high-need children between the ages of five and eighteen. Most of our students are new Canadians and almost all are from financially disadvantaged families. Our programs are located in a homeless shelter and two low-income housing developments in the downtown Ottawa area.

While our primary focus is on literacy, English as a second language and French as a second language, we incorporate several other academic areas into our curriculum. These include: mathematics, Canadian studies, geography, history and science. Our advanced classes offer the participants what is often their first and only exposure to classical education through the study of poetry, ancient civilizations, philosophy, ethics, ecology, great composers and art. Our life-skills workshops are an opportunity for the children and their parents to meet with other community members such as the police, teachers and health care educators to discuss a wide range of issues from safety and drug-abuse to adult literacy and nutrition. As part of our programming, we strongly encourage our students to volunteer in their neighbourhoods and to become respectful contributors to the well being of their communities.

With the alarming incidence of illiteracy in our society and all of the consequences that accompany it, Sage Youth offers a meaningful and effective solution. Within eight weeks, our new Canadian students who arrive in our classrooms not speaking a word of English, are able to read and write at a first grade level. Virtually all of our graduates have gone on to college or university. To our knowledge, none of our students have used drugs or have committed a crime. We have, in the past seven years, taught over 1400 children to read.

## **OUR BUDGET:**

Our proposed operating budget for the coming year is approximately \$120 000.00. These funds will go primarily to the salary of our staff, textbooks and exercise books, classroom materials and supplies, and insurance.

Over fifty volunteer tutors contribute thousands of hours of their time and care to our students. We receive thousands of dollars worth of books and classroom supplies as well as professional services and donated classroom and office space. Thanks to these generous in-kind donations, the administrative expenses at Sage Youth are kept at approximately 3% of our overall cash budget; meaning that, for every dollar donated, 97 cents goes directly to our classrooms.

**OUR GOALS:**

Our goals at Sage Youth for the coming years are to expand and improve upon our existing programs; to offer new programs; to dramatically increase the number of students participating in our classes; to improve upon the academic success of our students; to assist as many other communities as possible in replicating this simple and effective educational model.

To assist us in achieving our goals we are requesting that the Community Services Committee kindly consider recommending a grant in the amount of \$40 000.00 for the 2001-2002 year.