

2024 Year in Review

Opportunity
changes
everything!



OUR MISSION

To provide a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships, and develop confidence and skills for life.

OUR VISION

All children and youth discover and achieve their dreams and grow up to be their best selves.





Our core values

BELONGING

We welcome everyone in a safe, accepting environment based on belonging and positive relationships.

RESPECT

We ensure that everyone – children, youth, families, volunteers, staff – is heard, valued and treated fairly.

ENCOURAGEMENT

We encourage and support every child and youth to play, learn and grow to achieve their dreams.

WORKING TOGETHER

We work together with young families, volunteers, our communities and government.

SPEAKING OUT

We speak out for our children, youth and families, so that we can make our world better.



About BGC Ottawa

Free community-based services.
Positive relationships.
Life-changing programs.

For over 100 years, BGC Ottawa has been a vital part of the community, providing children and youth with a safe space between the realities of home and the pressures of school – a place of belonging where they can play, create, and grow into their best selves.

As one of Ottawa’s largest child and youth-serving charitable organizations, BGC Ottawa provides free life-changing programs and services to thousands of young people each year. The Club serves 31 neighbourhoods through its Neighbourhood Ambassador Program, operates four Clubhouses located throughout the city, a satellite location in Kanata and Camp Smitty, our overnight camp in Eganville.

We provide safe, supportive places where all kids and teens – of all backgrounds – can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, and develop confidence and skills for life. From anti-racism to Reconciliation to 2SLGBTQ+, food security to scholarships to job readiness, our Clubs battle systemic issues with systemic solutions: equity, acceptance, support and opportunity.

31 Communities Served

BGC Ottawa’s reach extends across 31 diverse communities, ensuring that every child has access to opportunity – no matter where they live.

Clubhouses

4 flagship, full-service centres

Satellite Location

after-school programming in Kanata

Camp Smitty

overnight camp in Eganville

Communities Served

31 neighbourhoods across the city through our Neighbourhood Ambassador Program

986

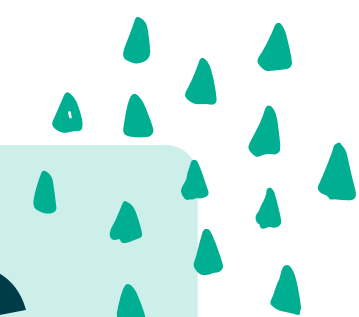
Days Open (Clubhouses)

234

Total Staff Members

98

Club Alumni on Staff

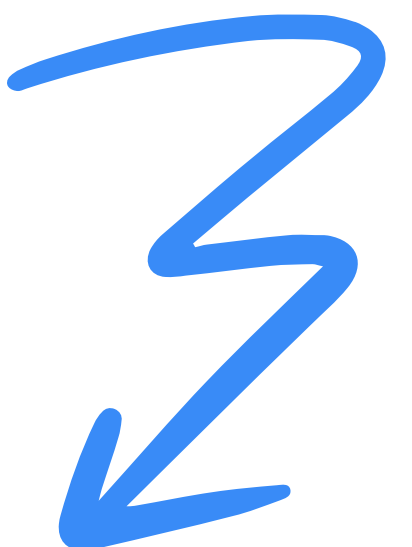


BY THE NUMBERS



Because of BGC

At BGC Ottawa, young people are empowered to grow, explore and thrive. Their voices reflect the real and lasting difference the Club makes in their lives every day.



What our Members are saying:

Growing through new experiences

81% of Members say they've developed new skills through BGC Ottawa programs gaining tools they can carry with them for life.

Finding joy and connection

91% actively participate in activities they enjoy, building positive memories and meaningful connections at the Club.

Feeling valued and supported

83% feel genuinely appreciated and recognized for who they are, contributing to a deep sense of belonging.

A safe and respectful space

90% report feeling respected and comfortable within BGC Ottawa environments – spaces where they are free to be themselves.

Health and well-being in action

83% are more physically active because of their involvement with the Club, showing how we help foster lifelong healthy habits.

Confidence in identity

86% feel confident being their authentic selves – supported by peers and mentors who embrace individuality.

Cultural respect and inclusion

88% believe their culture is recognized and valued at BGC Ottawa, reflecting our deep commitment to inclusion and equity.

This impact data is drawn from our Learning and Impact Report and General Member Survey. It highlights what we know to be true: when young people are supported, respected and celebrated, they thrive.

BGC Ottawa by the Numbers

At BGC Ottawa, impact is measured not just in programs, but in people – Members engaged, meals served and hours given – all working to build stronger communities.

Here's a snapshot of our reach and engagement in 2024.

Membership and engagement

Unique Members: 3,624

Young people from across Ottawa who accessed BGC's programs and services this year.

Total individual visits: 92,244

Clubhouse: 81,494

Camp Smitty: 3,490

BGC Ottawa Day Camps: 2,780

BGC Ottawa Thunderbolts: 4,480

Nutrition and wellness

Access to healthy food remains a cornerstone of our commitment to overall youth well-being:

Healthy meals served: 11,400

Healthy snacks served: 98,600

Every meal and snack help ensure no child is held back by hunger.

Volunteer power

Our programs thrive thanks to the generosity and commitment of volunteers:

Individual volunteers: 145

Total volunteer hours: 6,300

In addition to individual contributions, our corporate and community partners made a meaningful impact:

Corporate volunteer groups: 14

Group volunteer hours: 800

Together, these volunteers bring energy, expertise and heart to our Clubhouses – helping us build stronger, more connected communities.

Student placements

BGC Ottawa continues to be a platform for skill-building and employment:

Placement opportunities provided: 60

Through co-ops and internships, young people gained meaningful experience.

Cultural and seasonal giving

Holiday Hampers delivered: 215

Supporting families with care packages filled with essentials and holiday cheer.

Ramadan and Eid hampers delivered: 643

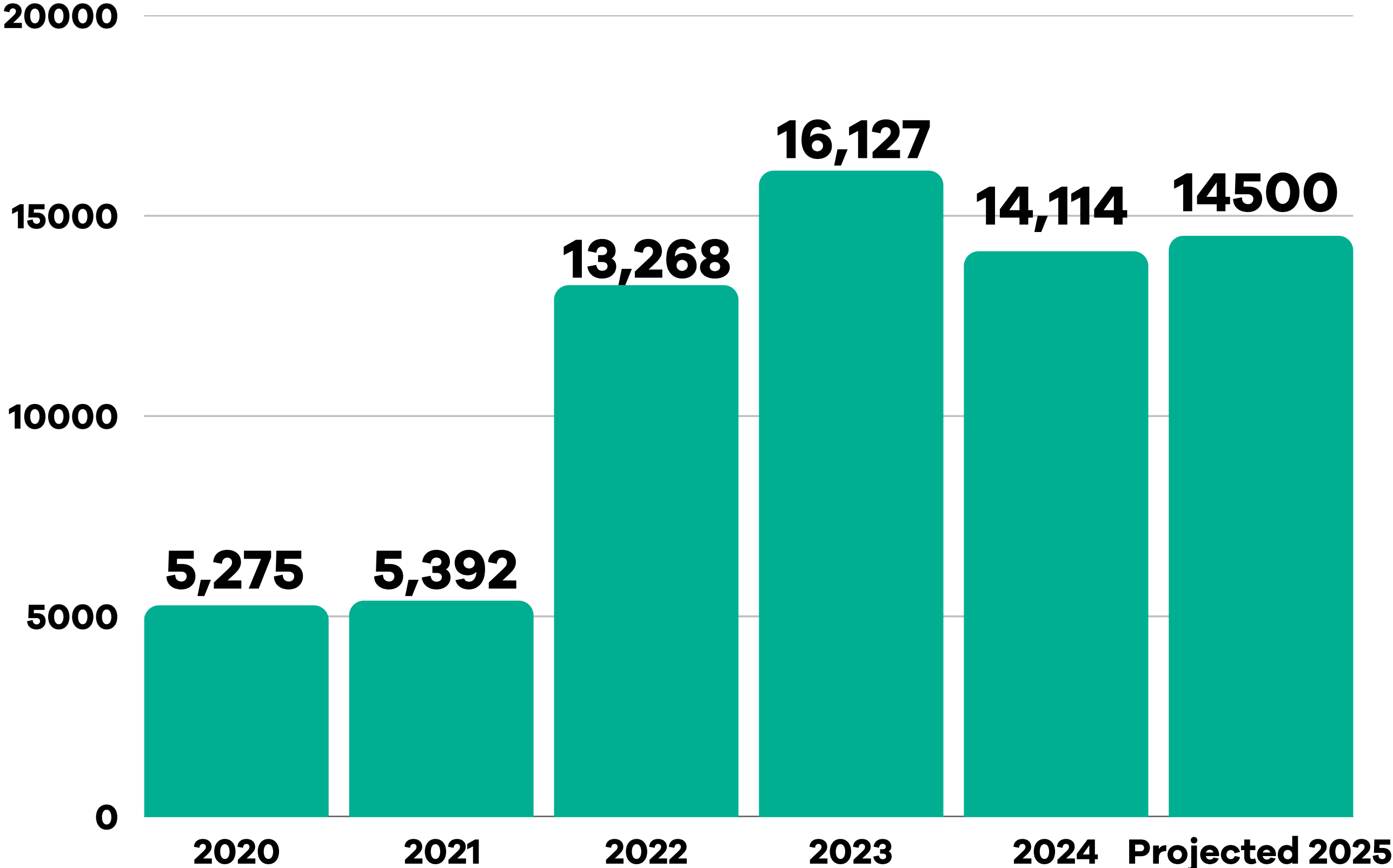
Sharing joy and tradition with culturally appropriate food and essentials during the holy month and festive celebrations.



Tomlinson by the Numbers

The Clubhouse currently has 794 members. The frequency of visits differs for each Member. Some access our programs daily, others come on particular nights when an activity of interest is offered, and others visit the Club when life gets difficult, and they need extra support.

Member Visits



Program Highlights

Black History Month Celebration

Our Black History Month celebration was a huge success with 100+ Members attending. The event featured cultural and recreational activities honouring the African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) communities. Attendees enjoyed traditional ACB dishes and an energetic Afrobeat dance session, celebrating the rich history and contributions of Black culture.



Community Giveaway Days

We hosted two community giveaway days and they were a tremendous success, attracting approximately 300 Members and their families. The events featured a complimentary BBQ and offered participants the chance to browse and select from a wide range of giveaway items. During our Fall giveaway event, we were honoured to welcome race car driver Megan Tomlinson, who brought her race car for attendees to view.



Homework Club Rejuvenation


Staff introduced an enhanced system within the Homework Club to better support our Members' academic development. Each Member now receives a personalized, labeled workbook containing curriculum-based, grade-appropriate worksheets in subjects such as math, language and science, which they are encouraged to complete daily.

To foster collaboration and motivation, if the group collectively reaches the monthly target, they are rewarded with a pizza party. Additionally, the Member who completes the most worksheets each month is recognized as the "Homework Hero." This new structure has led to increased participation and motivation among Members, contributing to a more productive and engaging learning environment.

Annual Eid Celebration


We proudly hosted our annual Eid celebration, which was a tremendous success. With approximately 140 Members in attendance, the event featured a festive feast that included shawarma chicken, battata harra, fattoush salad, tabouli, naan, cupcakes, date balls and a variety of other traditional dishes. To cap off the day, each Member received a treat bag to take home, making it a memorable occasion for all involved.





“At BGC Ottawa, I don’t have to pretend to be someone I’m not. I’ve learned to be proud of who I am and what I can do.”

– Zahra, age 14, BGC Ottawa Member



“BGC Ottawa has been a second home for my son. The programs have helped him grow more confident, active and connected to his community.”

– Yusuf, BGC Ottawa Parent

Launching New Opportunities

BGC Ottawa's First-Ever March Break and Summer Day Camps

March Break Day Camp Summer Day Camps

In 2024, BGC Ottawa proudly launched its inaugural March Break Day Camp at the Tomlinson Family Foundation Clubhouse. Over five days, 19 campers aged 6 to 12 participated in a variety of engaging activities designed to build creativity, teamwork and confidence. This new program expands our year-round offerings, providing safe and enriching experiences beyond the summer months.

"I loved making new friends and trying new games every day. Camp was so much fun!"

— Layla, age 9, March Break Camper

in partnership with the Ottawa Senators

Also in 2024, BGC Ottawa began a one-year partnership with the Ottawa Senators to deliver summer day camps across three clubhouse locations, each hosting eight sessions throughout the summer months. This collaboration allowed us to reach new audiences and introduce camp experiences to children who may not have otherwise had access to our programs.

- 279 unique campers attended
- 537 total camp visits

These community-based day camps provide accessible, local opportunities for children to benefit from social connection, personal growth and outdoor fun – all without the need for overnight stays.

"Our daughter gained so much confidence and independence this summer. We're grateful for the safe, welcoming space BGC Ottawa provides."

— Noor, Parent of Camper



Equity, Diversion and Inclusion

In 2024, BGC Ottawa's Equity Working Group set clear goals centered around two key themes: enhanced data collection and improved program delivery for both staff and Members. These initiatives mark an important step in understanding and supporting the diverse experiences within our community.

Data collection and insights

Volunteer demographics

We began systematically collecting demographic data on our volunteers to better understand who is volunteering with us and to identify any differences in volunteer retention.

Employee experience

For the first time, demographic data was integrated into our Engagement Survey to gain insight into our employee population, assess how closely it aligns with our Member community, and evaluate employee experience and retention through an EDI lens.

This foundational work will enable BGC Ottawa to recognize and address the unique experiences of our employees and volunteers.

Enhancing service delivery

Inclusive programming

Clubhouses across the city integrated EDI themes into their activities. This included celebrations and learning opportunities such as Black History Month, Truth and Reconciliation, Pride Month and Pink Shirt Day.

Girls' programming

In alignment with our strategic priorities, all Clubhouses with a high number of female-identifying Members introduced tailored programming, which received strong engagement.

Language accessibility

Membership forms were translated into multiple languages to ensure accessibility for all families.

- English
- French
- Arabic
- Somali

Program development

We identified gaps in our offerings and piloted new programs, including March Break and Summer Day Camps, as well as expanded programming at Camp Smitty, with a focus on engaging girls and other underrepresented groups.

Staff training and development

EDI training weeks

Both part-time and full-time program staff participated in training focused on inclusivity for individuals with physical disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ community members, autism awareness and mental health support.

Specialized workshops

Additional in-house training covered:

- Girls-only programming needs and strategies.
Protective factors for youth.
- Indigenous-focused training
- Staff learned about the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls report and its Calls for Justice, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, with a focus on the significance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

BGC Ottawa is committed to fostering a truly equitable, diverse and inclusive environment – one where every Member and staff person feels seen, supported and empowered to thrive.





www.bgcottawa.org

Opportunity changes everything!

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