

AYA NEWSLETTER

Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Program Newsletter

February 2018

GILDA'S CLUB 20s & 30s GROUP

Gilda's Club Greater Toronto is a not-for-profit supportive cancer care community located only a few minutes away from the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. It was established in Toronto in the memory and spirit of Gilda Radner, an original cast member of Saturday Night Live, a young woman that was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in her thirties. What Gilda recognized is that cancer can be an incredibly isolating experience, and Gilda's Club was built to create communities for people touched by cancer. Everyday at Gilda's Club, people come together to seek social healing. We see it in support groups, yoga classes, over healthy meals, education sessions, writing courses, art studios, and many moments of laughter.

At Gilda's Club, we understand that cancer affects adolescents and young adults (AYA) differently. There's no map for getting a cancer diagnosis at 23. For caring for a sick partner at 28. Or grieving for a lost parent at 34. In 2018, we're giving more attention to young adults in their 20s & 30s that come through Gilda's Club's doors. **We're launching new programming this February for the AYA community.**

Before we were offering bi-monthly drop-in support groups for individuals in their 20s & 30s experiencing cancer as well as a separate group for 20s & 30s caregivers. There was no place for our AYA community to go after they were finished with the support group model. Other people felt frustrated that too many weeks were spent telling the same story of their experience over each time to new faces. It was tough to get a dependable attendance, many people weren't coming back to us... something needed to change.

So this starting February, we're doing it different. **We will be offering six-session, weekly support groups for those with cancer as well as caregivers on Thursday evenings.** Mental health professionals will guide groups through a curriculum of topics, focused on progress and growth. What happens when you finish? You're always welcome to take the series again, but you can also continue engaging with this community in a new way.

We're adding a weekly social gathering for all members of the 20s & 30s community at Gilda's, for any range of cancer experience. This will include fun things like improv classes, board games, art experiences, movie nights, and potlucks. The focus will be on breaking down the isolation that time and time again the research reveals to be a problem for AYA affected by cancer. Healing takes many different forms, but we feel that building a space to come as you are and just feel good really sustains Gilda's legacy.

Sounding interesting? Good! We would love to have you. All our programming is free to participate in, you only have to become a member. Contact the staff at Gilda's Club Greater Toronto to schedule what we call a New Member Meeting. This meeting gives you the chance to further understand what the work we do is and how we do it, as well as familiarize yourself with the staff, space, and safety guidelines.

Once you're a member, you're free to not only check out our AYA programming, but our range of other offerings. We have fantastic programs for the whole family; for your mom that is having a tough time coping or your child that is struggling to understand. Mindfulness meditation is always a hit, and our new monthly comedy show is not to be missed. If you're an AYA person affected by cancer and looking for support, come on by to Gilda's Club. We're building something great and we really think you're going to love it!



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Adolescent and
Young Adult Program

aya@uhn.ca // ayaprincessmargaret.ca // 416 946 4501 x 5579

 [ayaprogram_uhn](https://www.instagram.com/ayaprogram_uhn)

 [AYA Program at Princess Margaret](https://www.facebook.com/AYAProgramatPrincessMargaret)

 [@ayaprogram](https://twitter.com/ayaprogram)

MONTHLY COMMUNITY UPDATES

GILDA'S CLUB

24 Cecil St. Toronto, ON



www.gildasclubtoronto.org
416 214 9898

20s and 30s Social

Join us for some fun social opportunities that include improv classes, board games, art experiences, movie nights and potlucks.

Feb 7, 14, 21, 6:30—8 PM

20s and 30s Support

A safe place for young adults with cancer to share their experiences

Feb 8, 15, 22, 6:30 - 8 PM

20s and 30s Caregivers Support

A support group for those in their 20s and 30s supporting a loved one with cancer.

Feb 8, 15, 22, 6:30—8 PM



WELLSPRING

4 Charles St E
Toronto, ON
www.wellspring.ca
416 961 1928

Visit online for upcoming program event dates this month: <http://bit.ly/2sGqCdy>

AYA PROGRAM UPDATES

FEB 22—ADOLESCENT & YOUNG ADULT CANCER MEET UP

Happy new year, everyone! Our AYA meet-ups have been changed to **every 4th Thursday of the month from 6 to 7:30 PM. This month's meet-up will be on Thursday, February 22, 2018.** It will take place on the 16th floor, Room 726, at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. We encourage participants to RSVP to aya@uhn.ca beforehand if they are planning to attend. Pizza will be provided.

MICHAEL KAMIN HART (MKH) AWARD NOMINATIONS

Have you nominated someone yet for our 2018 MKH Award? This is your opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of a volunteer or healthcare provider from Princess Margaret who has had an exceptional impact on the care of an adolescent and young adult (AYA) patient, defined as those between the ages of 15 to 39. **Nominations are due on March 31.**

For more information on how to submit a nomination, email us at aya@uhn.ca

COMMUNITY EVENTS & UPDATES

YOUNG ADULT CANCER CANADA: BIG CANCER HOOK UP

Young adults affected by cancer can feel isolated, but they are not alone. Join Young Adult Cancer Canada's **Big Cancer Hook-Up**, a webcast showcasing your cancer peers and their real-life cancer stories. You can broadcast this live from a computer, laptop, tablet or phone near you. If you are between the ages of 18 and 39 and diagnosed between the ages of 15 to 39, you can join us in person at **Wellspring Downtown Toronto (4 Charles St. E, 4th floor, Toronto) at 6 PM.** For more information, visit www.youngadultcancer.ca/bigcancerhookup



ON THE TIP OF THE TOES - Dog Sledding in Algonquin Park

Around you between the ages of 14 to 18? If you are, sign up to attend **On the Tip of the Toes' Grand Expedition Dog Sledding in Algonquin Park from March 3 to 11, 2018.** This expedition offers 14 teenagers in cancer remission to experience a dog sled expedition with other participants their age living a similar reality. To be eligible you must have been diagnosed with cancer and needed treatments and medical interventions but have ideally completed this and is currently in remission for less than 5 years. **Applications are due on February 4, 2018.** To register and learn more, visit: <http://bit.ly/2hLfRIY>

PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY!

CanDirect Study at McGill

[CanDirect Study](http://www.mcgill.ca/candirect/) is looking for cancer survivor volunteers to try self-care tools (relaxation CD and MP3, CBT workbooks) designed to help manage feelings of depression and anxiety for a [Canadian Cancer Society](http://www.canadiancancersociety.ca) funded study. For more info visit: <http://www.mcgill.ca/candirect/> and <https://www.facebook.com/CanDirectstudy> or call contact **Camilla Diniz** at (416) 643-7336 or email her at camilla.diniz@uhnresearch.ca



Give us your feedback!

We are interested in understanding the informational and supportive care needs of adolescents and young adult (AYA) cancer patients and their caregivers. If you are interested in this study, you will be asked to fill out a one-time online survey. Feedback gathered from the survey will be used to develop resources to help meet the needs of future patients and family members.

For more information, email the AYA Program at aya@uhn.ca or call **416-946-4501 ext 5579.** Please note that communication via email is not absolutely secure. Please do not communicate personal sensitive information via email.

The ball's in your court! Are you a testicular cancer survivor? Get involved today!

Who? Testicular cancer survivors who are interested in participating in individual interviews and discussing supportive care programming!

Why? To help in the development of sport-specific supportive care program for men like YOU!

Where? Interviews will be held at the University of Toronto (St. George Campus) or by telephone at your convenience. To participate, contact the study team (Anika) directly at



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