

Good morning, I'm Victor Joong, Program Director at Cecil Community Centre.

I'm here today to ask that you reconsider funding the Centre's Youth Program in the amount of \$8,150.

Committee Members - I'd like to say without your financial support, it is unlikely that we will be able to continue to provide this worthwhile youth program. I'd like to say that while everyone agrees that youth programming is very important at the neighbourhood level, it is extremely difficult to obtain sufficient funding to create and sustain quality youth programming. We hope that you will reconsider your decision.

While we are not a designated priority neighbourhood, we all know that the Dundas-Spadina neighbourhood has serious social issues. Alexandra Park has the characteristics of a priority neighbourhood. Our program is located five minutes from Alexandra Park. A significant portion of participants come here from there. If you do not fund this program, you're having a negative impact to high needs youth in this area.

As a brief reminder, the Cecil Youth Program serves ~~at-risk~~ at-risk youth ages 13 to 19, and attracts a wide range of participants, many from newcomer immigrant backgrounds from the Mandarin & Cantonese-speaking community. However over the last year, the Cecil Youth Program also includes Korean, South African, Hispanic, Filipino, and African Canadian. It has also attracted many young women – who represent 40% of our youth program participants and Youth come from many surrounding neighbourhoods, including Chinatown, Kensington Market, and Alexandra Park, to participate. Attracting youth to our program keeps them off the streets - a major concern in our neighbourhood. As you know, there are many youth issues to consider such as gang violence, drugs, and vandalism.

The program runs four afternoons per week year round and five afternoons per week in the summer. The program offers a variety of supervised social, recreational and educational activities in a safe environment. Youth also have opportunities to participate in special activities and workshops, that include educational, health, arts, cooking and dance. In 2012, Cecil Youth Program served over 300 individuals, which represents an 18% increase over the previous year. It is a popular program operating with limited outside financial support.

The Centre runs a highly successful program for youth. We need and appreciate the funding that has been provided in previous years from Parks Forestry and Recreation Minor Recreation Partnership Grant and Community Recreation this past year as transitional funding. The grant has

**supported the program in the past, but we have not been able to secure new funding since. We hope that The Community Service Partnership Program will help fund this much needed program.**

**Thank you.**