

# Helping and protecting children and youth

Today's young people face challenges that did not exist for earlier generations. Bell partners with a wide range of youth-oriented organizations such as [Kids Help Phone](#), [Jack.org](#) the [Canadian Centre for Child Protection](#) and [MediaSmarts](#), in addition to programs such as Backpacks for Kids, [RE\\*Generation](#) and [Computers for Schools \(CFS\)](#). Northwestel also creates lasting partnerships with youth initiatives in the North. These organizations and programs have helped Canadian children and families cope with the impacts of COVID-19, overcome difficulties, build self-esteem, play, learn and grow in new ways.

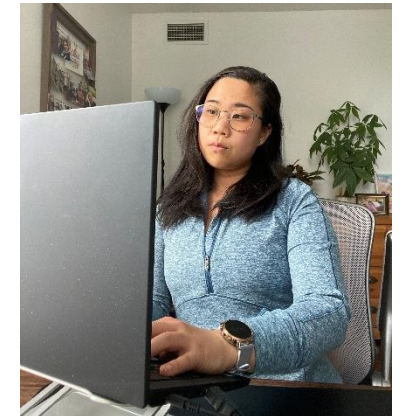
## Mental health support for kids

Bell is a founding partner of Kids Help Phone, supporting the mental health and well-being of young people. Bell's partnership with Kids Help Phone helps to ensure young people have access to the mental health supports they need, especially when faced with the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19. Bell's donation of \$1.25 million in 2020, maximized access to virtual mental health and well-being supports throughout the course of the pandemic. After a record-breaking year of connections with youth in 2020, demand continued to grow in 2021 and included a 37% increase in professional counselling and 25% rise in volunteer crisis texting response.

Team members also continue to help organize and participate in the Kids Help Phone annual fundraising event and volunteer as Crisis Responders for the Crisis Text Line.


In 2021, team members from Bell Canada, Bell Media and The Source secured pledges and participated virtually in the Kids Help Phone Dance + More for Tomorrow, raising over \$54,000. Since 2002, Bell team members have raised more than \$11.3 million for Kids Help Phone.

Kids Help Phone 



GRI 408-1

SDG 16



Bell also partnered with Jack.org to help revolutionize mental health in every province and territory. In January 2021, Bell Let's Talk announced a \$500,000 investment to help expand the reach of Jack.org Chapters in hundreds of communities, and equip Chapter leaders with training, mentorship and digital education tools to support the mental health of young people. Despite the ongoing challenges of COVID-19, Jack.org staff have continued to provide support and mentorship to Jack Chapters across Canada. In 2020-2021, Jack.org staff trained and mentored 1,920 young leaders at 195 Jack Chapters. They also helped organize 2,468 in-person and online mental health initiatives, resulting in 79,212 interactions with their peers. The efforts of these young leaders are resulting in measurable change and are helping increase youth mental health awareness, decrease stigma and increase the capacity of youth to make meaningful change in their communities.

ok

## Montréal Children's Hospital Foundation Caring for Kids Radiothon and COVID-19 support

In 2021, Astral/Bell Media Montréal continued their support for the annual **Montréal Children's Hospital Foundation** Caring for Kids Radiothon, which raised more than \$1.3 million to help sick children and their parents during the COVID-19 crisis. Since 2004, Astral/Bell Media Montréal has played a vital role in helping to raise more than \$26 million dollars by providing free airtime on CJAD 800, Virgin 95.9 and CHOM 97.7.

# Bell Let's Talk continues to invest in Quebec's first Integrated Centre for Eating Disorders

In 2021, the CHU Sainte-Justine Foundation announced the launch of an unprecedented, intensive ambulatory care pilot program for patients being treated for an eating disorder, that also incorporates an innovative remote support component. Enabled by a \$300,000 donation from Bell Let's Talk, this new initiative will help young people and their families in their home environment, regardless of where they reside in Québec. This investment allows services to be delivered remotely to those who are unable to make daily visits due to COVID-19, and are subject to travel restrictions. This investment, combined with a \$500,000 donation in 2015 (to help set up the Day Hospital program within the first integrated Centre for Eating Disorders at CHU Sainte-Justine) has totaled \$800,000 that Bell has contributed to help treat eating disorders.



## Protection of minors

Bell and Bell MTS contribute approximately \$350,000 annually in funding and services to support the operations of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, including [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca). Cybertip is a national tipline for Canadians to report their concerns about the online sexual exploitation of children and to raise awareness on the issue so that we can better protect children when they use the Internet.

Since its creation in 2002, [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca), has processed 367,029 reports from the public. [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca), has sent more than 10.8 million removal notices worldwide through Project Arachnid, an automated web crawler and platform that helps reduce the online availability of child sexual abuse materials. Bell's support has also helped fund important prevention materials such as the Canadian Centre's Self/Peer Exploitation guides, which were developed in response to increased reporting on the tipline regarding sexting incidents. Bell's renewed commitment to the development of these guides resulted in approximately 2,000 copies being distributed in 2021 to families, schools and law enforcement agencies across the country, ensuring



Canadians were equipped with the knowledge on how to prevent and adequately respond to this issue.

Additionally, Bell supports [needhelpnow.ca](https://needhelpnow.ca), an important website for youth to help them stop the spread of sexual pictures/videos and receive support along the way. In 2021, the site received over 121,000 page views, an increase of x% over the previous year.

Bell is also proud of its role as a founder of the [Canadian Coalition Against Internet Child Exploitation](#) and its [Cleanfeed Canada](#) initiative (operated by [Cybertip.ca](#)). This was developed to reduce Canadians' exposure to child abuse images and create a disincentive for those who access and distribute child pornography.

## Digital and media literacy

MediaSmarts is a Canadian, bilingual, not-for-profit centre for digital and media literacy. Its vision is to ensure that all Canadians have the critical thinking skills necessary to engage with the media, as active and informed digital citizens. Working closely with academics, broadcasters, telecommunications service providers and internet-based organizations, MediaSmarts develops educational materials and programs. These include online resources to assist parents with strategies for the digital generation, workshops and lesson plans for teachers and an annual Media Literacy Week to build public awareness on the importance of digital consumers developing critical-thinking skills. Bell is a founding partner of MediaSmarts, supporting their ongoing operations that include digital literacy workshops, public awareness campaigns and online resources. In 2021, Bell donated \$50,000 to help improve media and digital literacy for young people and their families, and supported Media Literacy Week as a gold sponsor. Media Literacy Week is an annual national campaign hosted by MediaSmarts and supported by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, which facilitates digital parenting workshops, Break the Fake workshops and seminars on topics ranging from AI to cybersecurity. It is organized by over 100 collaborating organizations including libraries, schools, museums and community groups from coast to coast to coast. In 2021, Media Literacy Week

**NeedHelpNow.ca™**



activities resulted in more than 74 million impressions on Twitter using #medialitwk. The Break the Fake House Hippo PSA promotion during Media Literacy Week delivered over 4.5 million impressions on YouTube and TikTok.

Bell funding is enabling the development of several new and updated digital literacy resources and workshops, including: 1) My Voice is Louder Than Hate: Pushing Back against Hate in Online Communities, 2) CanCode: I Can Do That! Media Production for Assessment and Evaluation in K-12 Classrooms, 3) #ForYou: A Game about Artificial Intelligence and Privacy, 4) Navigate Online Relationship Safety, How do I Connect with Video Chats?, and Explore Digital Parenting workshops in partnership with YWCA Canada and 5) Bell Let's Talk: Finding Reliable Mental Health Information and Resources developed in partnership with Kids Help Phone. MediaSmarts hosts the world's largest bilingual website for digital and media literacy, with 3,000 pages of free resources, 3.1 million annual views and 200,000 downloads per year.

## Backpacks for Kids

Bell's annual Backpacks for Kids (BFK) program supports students in communities across Canada, helping them start the school year strong. Since the program began, Bell team members have filled more than 107,000 backpacks with supplies for elementary school students. In 2021, Bell continued to support the program through the BFK virtual program. With help from our Bell backpack champions, more than 3,800 backpacks were delivered to 81 community groups in various locations across the country. Our employees also donated more than \$3,000 through the Bell Giving Program.



## Virgin Mobile RE\*Generation

Virgin Plus' RE\*Generation program is supporting underserved young adults in building careers. Donations to RE\*Generation from Virgin Plus Members and Canadians support skills training programs for youth facing barriers to employment, to ensure that youth from any culture, ethnicity, gender or socio-economic background can thrive in a career. RE\*Generation partners with NPower Canada to break down barriers to employment for low-income, underserved youth, including, BIPOC youth, New Canadians, LGBTQ2+ and youth with disabilities, by providing program participants with free in-demand digital and professional skills training, to launch them into meaningful and sustainable digital careers.

In 2021, RE\*Generation helped support more than 1,500 youth in gaining job skills training through NPower Canada enrollment. In addition, in 2021, NPower Canada launched two new program delivery sites in Halifax and Vancouver, and piloted a new Junior Data Analyst training program, giving underserved youth another entry into the rapidly growing field of data analysis.



## Helping Youth with the Northern Future Scholarship Program

Northwestel believes in investing in the future of the North. Our Northern Futures Scholarship program offers six scholarships of \$4,000 to students from communities across the North. This year's 6 students are studying courses including Mechanical Engineering and Business Administration. Northwestel also offers meaningful summer employment opportunities that often lead to full-time roles within our company.



