



Operation  Smile
Canada

STUDENT PROGRAMS

A YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY 2020 TO JUNE 2021

OPERATION SMILE IS A...

...global medical charity helping to improve the health and lives of children in more than 60 countries. We've provided more than 300,000 children and young adults born with cleft lip, cleft palate and other facial differences with free life-changing surgical procedures and dental care. We train doctors and local medical professionals; ship donated medical equipment and supplies and provide year round medical treatments through a network of comprehensive care centres.

Our Vision:

We believe in the power of student and YOUTH leaders to create and lead a compassionate and caring world.

Our Mission:

Operation Smile Canada's Student Programs empowers YOUTH globally through advocacy, education, leadership, and service.



St. Benedict student's promoting their online fundraising campaign while physically distanced: PROJECT SMILE in the fall of 2020.

Why Students?

Because They Are The Future

Operation Smile works hand in hand with compassionate student and youth leaders to provide surgeries and complete care to children born with cleft conditions to make a lasting difference in the world, one smile at a time. Since the launch of Student Programs in 1985, Operation Smile has relied on students and youth around the world to fundraise, educate others on our essential work, and build awareness, all while acting as impactful leaders in the global community.



Mark Climie-Elliott, CFRE
Operation Smile Canada

A NOTE FROM OUR CHIEF SMILE OFFICER

"Operation Smile celebrates student engagement, and philanthropy in everything we do. Our vision for access to safe surgery and care for all is dependent on our next generation of leaders carrying our lifesaving work forward. Many of our students enrol in medical and/or international development programs. These amazing future leaders will change the world, one smile — and one community — at a time. For all you do, I give thanks!"

OUR FOUR PHILANTHROPIC PILLARS



EDUCATION

We instill the value of teaching and learning to promote social responsibility through exposure to authentic experiences, diverse communities, and global health care needs.

This year, students from the University of Ottawa, Western University, and Queen's University joined forces to host a virtual speaker's night focused on [local and global leadership](#). The event, entitled Connecting Future Leaders: Roles in Foreign Aid, featured inspiring sessions with medical volunteers and program coordinators, all of whom have worked with Operation Smile on a medical program. This was an opportunity for students to hear from foreign aid workers in their respective industries and become more informed about Operation Smile's work across the globe.



LEADERSHIP

We create an environment where youth become globally-minded activators. We cultivate leadership by facilitating innovative and inspiring programs that teach valuable skills, grow confident leaders and instill the spirit of philanthropy.

Recognizing that a large percentage of Operation Smile Canada's student volunteers are working towards careers in [medicine or dentistry](#), we have curated a network of current medical and dental students to act as mentors for those considering the same path. Medical and dental students from the universities of Toronto and British Columbia sat down for numerous 1:1 mentoring sessions with members of our student leadership cohort to discuss school life, dispense advice on applications, and more.



ADVOCACY

We inspire students to be an active voice for communities around the world that lack access to safe, effective, and timely surgery.

In Vancouver, British Columbia, students at Fleetwood High School spread awareness about cleft conditions and care through monthly, interactive quizzes with their peers on Kahoot, a game-based learning platform. The fun and friendly competitions also help to [destigmatize cleft lip and palate](#) and encourage fellow students to volunteer with Operation Smile Canada.



SERVICE

We empower youth to understand the importance of being an active participant in helping others locally and globally. We promote opportunities for youth to volunteer and take personal ownership of a cause.

Student leaders at Archbishop Carney Secondary School in Vancouver, British Columbia, demonstrated ample dedication to their local and global communities through an expansive series of [innovative fundraisers](#) including bottle drives, awareness weeks, and online fundraising. Collectively, the student group managed to raise over \$16,000 to fund life-changing surgery and complete care.

A GROWING MOVEMENT: STUDENT SMILE CLUBS

Our S.M.I.L.E. (**S**tudent **M**ovement **I**mpacting **L**ives **E**verywhere) program is a student club structure that supports philanthropic youth in their collective fundraising and awareness goals in order to assist children born with cleft conditions. Through this program, your club members will gain valuable leadership skills, incredible networking opportunities, volunteer hours, and experience for your future career aspirations!



“Running an Operation Smile Club has provided us with very many important leadership skills and wonderful experiences. Not only are we able to have a profound impact as a group, but we are also able to engage members of our community and create a generation of compassionate individuals.”

-John V.
Upper Canada College

Are you or someone you know interested in forming a student SMILE club?

Reach out to
ca-students@operationsmile.org
or call 647-696-0600 to join our student SMILE movement today!



A list of SMILE clubs across Canada:

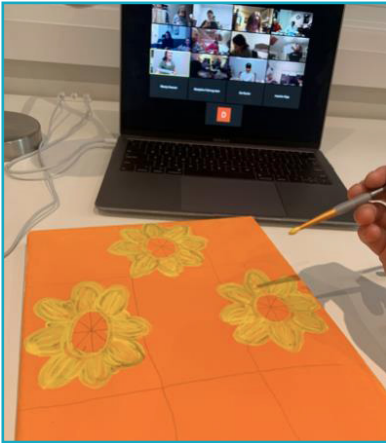
Archbishop Carney Regional S.S. • Bell High School • Fleetwood Park High School • L'Amoreaux Collegiate Institute • Lisgar Collegiate Institute • Marianopolis College • McGill University • McMaster University • Northern Secondary School • Prince of Wales Secondary School • Queen's University • Sentinel Secondary School • St. Andrew's College • St. Benedict Catholic School • University of Alberta • University of British Columbia • University of Calgary • University of Guelph • University of Lethbridge • University of Ottawa • University of Saskatchewan • University of Toronto • University of Waterloo • University of Windsor • Upper Canada College • Western University • Wilfrid Laurier University



DID YOU KNOW?

Every three minutes, a child somewhere in the world is born with a cleft lip, cleft palate, or both.

STUDENT RESPONSE TO COVID-19



Point of view of a participant of the Bob Ross Virtual Paint night

Our bright and innovative student leaders did not let a global pandemic interrupt their volunteerism but instead confidently navigated a physically distanced reality. Collectively, student and youth leaders across Canada raised more money for life-changing surgeries and complete care than they ever have before!

Creative Queens

Leaders from Queen's University excelled at conceptualizing creative virtual events and fundraisers this past year. Forced to think beyond in-person events like bake sales, the Queen's students managed to organize no less than 11 events and raised over \$2,000. A couple of their memorable events include:

A Bob Ross Virtual Paint Night

Students and members of the Kingston community were invited to participate in a virtual paint class for all skill levels! Hosted by a club member majoring in fine arts, participants were encouraged to brush up on their creative abilities by following step by step instructions. The event raised nearly \$700 for children born with cleft conditions and brought smiles to the faces of all those involved.

Wellness Week: Virtual Edition

Focused on delivering smiles to their local community, Queen's students organized a week-long fundraiser encouraging self-care through daily wellness events. Highlights from the week included guided self-reflection, virtual baking events, and sidewalk smiles—an initiative where students wrote friendly greetings on the sidewalk to brighten people's day. All in all, the event not only raised awareness and funds for children with cleft conditions, but left Queens students well looked after!

Longest Day of Smiles Initiative

From sun-up to sun-down, on the longest day of the year, Canadian students from coast-to-coast-to-coast dedicated June 20th, 2021, and the time leading up to it, to making someone SMILE.

Using their passion and creativity, students raised awareness and funds for surgical smiles and complete care for children born with cleft conditions in low- and middle-income countries.



Over 250 students signed up for a Longest Day of SMILES page and collectively raised over \$43,000

CONFERENCE WITH A CAUSE

International Student Leadership Conference

Each year, the International Student Leadership Conference (ISLC) is held at a different university around the world. This annual conference, held virtually for the first time this year, helps students develop and strengthen their leadership skills while also providing training on how to best support those in low- and middle- income countries. This conference is the first step of the credentialling process for high school students to volunteer on a medical program.

This year, Canadian students were wonderful representatives at this conference. To wrap up the first day, the Canadian team leads, Sowmiya, Solaya, and Joyce designed and led a Canadian-themed virtual escape room for the conference participants. This escape room event was attended by over 80 participants from around the world! Team lead, Sowmiya, was also the recipient of the conference's international talent show award for her dancing skills. Canadian students Teah and Quinn were also recognized for their work during the social media challenge and brought home that award as well. Two more gold medals for Canada!

STEP UP Symposium

This annual global conference gathers undergraduate student volunteers from all over the world to share how Operation Smile contributes to global health – and how students can get involved. The 4-day annual conference, held virtually for the first time this year, empowers youth in 2 important ways: LEARNING and LEADING. This conference is the first step of the credentialling process for undergraduate university or college students to volunteer on a medical program.

For the first time, Canada hosted a national break-out session during this conference, led by superstar student volunteer Alex from Western University. It was a wonderful opportunity for undergraduate students across Canada to meet, discuss leadership strategies, and plan national projects!



"Overall, my favourite part of ISLC 2021 was getting to meet students from around the world who shared my passion. The energy that all these people brought to the conference was truly infectious and has made me extremely excited for my future adventures with Operation Smile."

-Solaya, Team Lead
**Archbishop Carney
Secondary School**



"I learned so much at the STEP UP conference and, if it's even possible, I think it made me even more devoted to Operation Smile's mission. I feel lucky to have made lasting connections with students and mentors from this conference and would strongly encourage any of my peers to register for the next STEP UP Symposium next year."

-Alex, Session Leader
Western University



CANADIAN U-LEAD STUDENT SYMPOSIUM HOSTED THROUGH WESTERN UNIVERSITY

In early March of 2020, Western University hosted Operation Smile Canada's inaugural U-LEAD symposium. The day-long conference highlights medical innovation and leadership exhibited around the globe and hosted interactive workshops for students to participate in. Examples of these workshops included banana suturing, as well as a dentistry challenge. While last year the conference was held in person, the 2021 symposium looked a bit different. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was hosted online through zoom, enabling students from across Canada to partake in discussions about the future of healthcare.

The main goal of U-LEAD is to inspire and cultivate leadership, collaboration, and innovation in students interested in the medical and health fields across Canada. High schoolers and undergraduates across the country were thrilled to participate in the event. Eden Reid, a student at Western University and an attendee of the U-LEAD conference, notes that it has been a highlight of her university experience.

The conference this year featured a keynote speech from Morgan Livingstone, a child-life specialist. Livingstone provided a glance into her role on Operation Smile medical programs and demonstrated how crucial child psychologists are to our medical programs.



"As a student who is always looking for ways to get involved and make positive change, attending U-LEAD was beyond my expectations. The conference was so interactive and gave attendees the opportunity to collaborate and network with so many likeminded students and professionals. From the inspirational speakers to the applicable workshops, I took so much away from the overall experience and feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to attend U-LEAD. I love that Operation Smile Canada gives students such hands-on experience and opportunities to better ourselves and learn from and alongside other energetic, passionate, and like-minded youth."

-Eden R,
Western University



DID YOU KNOW?

Infants born with cleft conditions have nine times the risk of dying within the first year of life. With surgery, a child can have a brand-new, beautiful smile in as little as 45 minutes.

JUNIOR SMILE AMBASSADORS

Our Junior Smile Ambassadors truly demonstrate that impact can be made at any age. We empower youth of all ages to use their voice to advocate for others and make a positive change in the world, one smile at a time. Some of the amazing works done by Operation Smile youth volunteers as young as 3 years old are highlighted below:



Mia working on one of her abstract paintings.

Art For Smiles

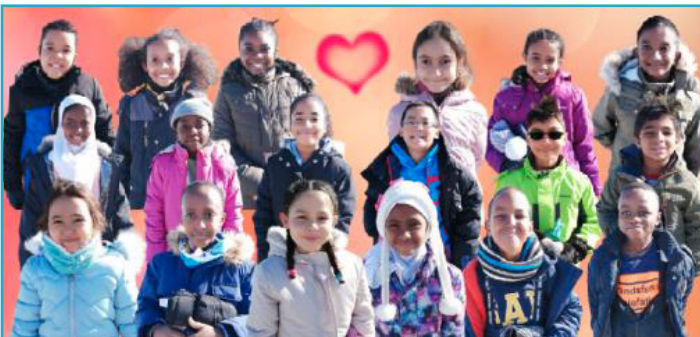
Three-year-old Mia and her family know first-hand the power that cleft surgery can have on a child's life. Mia, born 8 weeks prematurely with a cleft palate, received her first procedure at 15 months. Mia, alongside her mother, Amrit, began the Art for Smiles initiative to raise funds and awareness for the same kind of life-changing treatment that Mia received. Donors making a donation of \$50 or more to their Longest Day of SMILES fundraising page would receive one of Mia's abstract paintings. The project brought in almost \$2,000 and will help children in low-and middle-income countries.

Glimpse Into The Life Of A Child

For the past three years, third-grade teacher Rob Aguiar has been teaching his students about kindness, empathy, and leadership through philanthropic and volunteer initiatives that benefit Operation Smile Canada. Each year, Aguiar selects a theme to guide his class discussions and projects. Action was this past year's theme, to teach the young student leaders that "it just takes one action to start a ripple of change, and each of us can be the one who can make the world a better place". This year, through book sales and online fundraising, the team collected over \$12,000.

Nathan And Nolan

Dynamic duo Nathan and Nolan, with the help of their parents and dog, Whiskey, have spent the last year raising money for new smiles by collecting bottles from their neighbours. To date, the team has fundraised almost \$2,000 through their weekly collections. Of the project, Nathan claims, "it's inspiring to think I can help save a life."



The GLIMPSE team.



Brothers Nathan and Nolan posing during their recycling collection.

HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Operation Smile wants to partner with the next generation of global leaders, and these high school students have stepped up to the plate. We want to highlight just a few of the many exciting projects that Operation Smile high school students have put into action this year:

Microsoft Workshop

Students at the Prince of Wales Secondary School in Vancouver, British Columbia wanted to help their peers prepare for future careers in medicine and other industries. The group partnered up with Microsoft to provide their peers to develop their professional skills through with a virtual resume building workshop while also raising funds and awareness for Operation Smile. This event featured tips and tricks for creating a captivating LinkedIn profile, and some insight on how to use the Microsoft resume assistant to create a unique and dynamic resume that stands out. Students were thrilled to have the opportunity to learn such useful skills while supporting Operation Smile simultaneously.

Walk For Smiles

Students of Lisgar Collegiate in Ottawa, Ontario, tied up their laces and walked miles for smiles in the fall of 2020. This walk was an opportunity for the students to come together and raise funds in a manner that was still physically distanced. They collected money online and promoted the walk throughout their school and community. In total, the event made up \$500 of the group's almost \$1,200 of fundraising from the school year. We are so proud of these students coming together to create change, one step at a time.



Depop And Donation

Teah and Quinn, two Operation Smile volunteers in Mississauga, Ontario, came up with a rather stylish way of fundraising! The two hatched a plan to collect gently used clothing from friends and family and sell it online through the popular reselling application, Depop. The team also created an online fundraising page and shared it with friends and family, asking them to donate what they could to raise SMILES. To date, Teah and Quinn were able to fundraise over \$6,800 to help children born with cleft conditions, all from the comfort of their homes during the lockdown.



"Working with Operation Smile has been one of the best experiences for both of us. We have learned so much about the organization of course. However, we've also learned so much about sales and how to run your business, figuring out and learning things a classroom could never teach."

-Quinn and Teah,
Lorne Park Secondary School

UNIVERSITY SPOTLIGHT

Student Involvement with Operation Smile doesn't end after high school! Student Programs continue to work with students throughout college, university, graduate or medical school, and beyond! Our university SMILE clubs go above and beyond in their pursuits to support children born with cleft conditions. Just a few of their incredible events are highlighted below:



Stretch And Smile

The Operation Smile Student club at the University of Waterloo hosted a virtual yoga class for students to partake in. Students were invited to participate in a guided yoga class and meditation taught by a local certified yoga instructor from the comfort of their own home. Not only an opportunity to destress and relax, but this event inspired positivity and a chance to stretch their smile!



Steps For Smiles

A group of Windsor medical students counted their steps and smiled, hosting a walk/run fundraiser. This step challenge took place over two weeks last November, in which medical students competed to raise the most money and walk/run the farthest. A Garmin watch, Operation Smile merch, and bragging rights were awarded to teams who raised the most money and walked the furthest. Alongside the step fundraiser, an online auction of community donations was held. All in all, it's safe to say this event was a huge success, raising \$1,100 for surgeries and completing almost 1,000,000 steps!










Bracelet Making

Students at Marianopolis College in Quebec got creative and crafty making bracelets for a fundraising initiative. Selling \$240 worth of bracelets in total, students made and sold bracelets to their peers and friends. This event inspired artistry and smiles while raising funds for life-changing surgeries. This original event would not have been as successful as it was without the dedication of the Marianopolis Operation Smile students.

STUDENT AWARDS

We are so impressed with everything that our powerful student leaders have accomplished this past year. While we recognize and honour all the hard work, time, and energy of student leaders across the country that make our programs a success, we celebrate these student leaders who have outdone themselves. The following awards, designed to reflect some key elements of our programs, are peer-nominated and highlight some of our many amazing student leaders!

HIGH SCHOOL	AWARD	COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
 Sowmiya Kones	 Outstanding Leadership Award	 Erin Zahavi
 Solaya Dofher	 Distinguished Community Engagement Award	 Alexandra D'Souza
Archbishop Carney Regional Secondary School in Vancouver, BC	 Fundraising Excellence Award	Western University in London, Ontario

Outstanding Leadership Award

The student nominated for this award demonstrates exceptional leadership capabilities, including guiding, supporting, and encouraging the development of other students around them.

Distinguished Community Engagement Award

The recipient of this award exceeds expectations of student leadership by expertly engaging their local, regional, and global communities through events, campaigns, fundraisers, or symposiums in benefit of Operation Smile Canada.

Fundraising Excellence Award

The club recipient of this award has demonstrated outstanding fundraising for children born with cleft conditions over the course of the school year.



"I plan to use the GLC to support Canadian students and their initiatives by connecting students with each other across the globe and putting in more effort to share knowledge and experiences to create new innovative fundraisers and awareness campaigns. With the help of the GLC we will be connected with many student clubs around the world, and I plan to use this network to execute coordinated nationwide initiatives to unite our clubs' individual efforts towards larger scale goals!"

-Arish Sivaruban,
GLC Rep, Eastern Canada
University of Waterloo



"What I'm looking forward to most is meeting individuals across many continents and time zones, all united by a passion for serving Operation Smile's mission. I've already met some of them through text, and I can tell that we're a lively group of people, who combine fun and passion into our work! I'm excited to hear what different clubs around the world have been doing to fundraise for the organization, and what lessons they've learned to improve their clubs."

-Davy Lau,
GLC Rep, Western Canada
University of British Columbia

THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (GLC)

Operation Smile's Global Leadership Council was created with the intention of unifying student programs internationally. The group will collaborate to create globally focused projects and initiatives, while also facilitating programmatic activities in their home country at a local, regional, and national level. These members will occupy their positions for a one-year term and represent Canada on the global stage.

BUT WHERE IS IT ALL GOING?

India, October 2021

This past school year, students of all ages from coast to coast to coast came together to raise over **\$91,000** for children born with cleft conditions. This amount is almost enough to fund a medical program being conducted in India in October 2021.

The last time Operation Smile Canada funded medical and comprehensive care programs in India was during the 2019/2020 program year. We are grateful that more children will be served, thanks to the support of our generous community fundraisers and donors.



Above: Bipul from India

OPERATION SMILE CANADA & CANADIAN STUDENT LEADERS



Above: Patrick being carried away by an Operation Smile medical volunteer

PATIENT HIGHLIGHT

Patrick was born in Ghana with a cleft lip and cleft palate in 2019. His mother, Rosina, worried about his health as Patrick struggled to breastfeed because of his cleft condition. She remained strong for Patrick in the face of ridicule and hostility from her community and continued her monthly visits to the local hospital with him. A nurse at the hospital introduced Rosina to Operation Smile in Ghana and the complete cleft care we provide. She was relieved to see other families and their children with cleft conditions when she visited Operation Smile. She wasn't the only one braving this situation. She found hope when she realized that Patrick would soon receive the life-changing surgery he needed. In the meantime, Patrick received the nutritional therapy and supplements that he required. When he was at a healthy weight, he received his cleft lip surgery. Rosina also received the emotional support she needed and was able to face her community confidently with Patrick. Thanks to generous partners like you, Patrick will continue to receive comprehensive cleft care to prepare him for his cleft palate surgery!



Mary Grant
Specialist, Student Programs
Operation Smile Canada

"Early in the organization's creation, Operation Smile recognized the importance of working with student leaders in its programs. Student Programs was launched only 3 years after the charity was established in 1982. I truly believe that partnerships with student leaders serve as a benchmark for how forward thinking our organization is. It is in our student leaders faces that we recognize the next generation of medical volunteers, community ambassadors, donors, and educators. For this reason, students serve a central role in our charity, and it is my privilege and delight to serve as a steward to the plethora of innovative projects that student leaders execute each year. This past year, in particular, I am especially proud of our student leaders who accepted the challenge of a virtual environment and delivered more smiles than ever before. This report, compiled by student volunteer Eden Reid from Western University, is a small sliver of all the work and effort that went into making it such a magnificent year. From the bottom of my heart, thank you to all our wonderful Canadian student leaders."



Operation Smile Canada

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