

# Helping and protecting children and youth

Today's young people face challenges that simply did not exist for earlier generations. Bell partners with a wide range of youth-oriented organizations such as **Kids Help Phone (KHP)**, the **Canadian Centre for Child Protection**, and **MediaSmarts**, as well as programs like 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 help Canadian children 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 enables innovative technology initiatives including online counselling through Live Chat, Resources Around Me, and Crisis Text Line. Team members also continue to help organize and participate in the annual fundraising event, Walk so Kids Can Talk.

In 2019, more than 280 team members from Bell Canada, Bell Media, and The Source canvassed for pledges and participated in 18 local walks, raising \$179,430. Since the event began in 2002, Bell team members have raised more than \$11.1 million.

Bell Media was also proud to partner with Kids Help Phone on their Walk so Kids Can Talk across the country. Bell Media provided in-kind support through television and radio public service announcements, as well as digital ad support. Our local stations were engaged in their respective markets by providing celebrity hosts, interview opportunities, and coverage of the events to assist in raising awareness and funds for the incredibly important work of Kids Help Phone.

Kids Help Phone 



In addition to the \$450,000 Bell donated in 2019 to Kids Help Phone, as well as \$25,000 for Walk sponsorships, The Source raised another \$175,000 for the organization at their annual fundraising gala.

With support from more than 65 vendor partners, the event featured a special screening at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) and testimonial videos that gave attendees a look at the evolution of Kids Help Phone's services, including the Crisis Text Line launched in 2018 with support from Bell Let's Talk.

## Protection of minors

Bell and Bell MTS contribute approximately \$267,000 annually in funding and services to support the operations of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, including Cybertip.ca, a national tip line for Canadians to report their concerns about online sexual exploitation of children, and to raise awareness of the issue so that we can protect children better when they use the Internet.

Since its creation in 2002, Cybertip.ca has processed more than 2.9 million reports related to child sexual exploitation, and in 2019 alone, processed more than 1.9 million reports due to the operation of Project Arachnid, an automated web crawler and platform that helps reduce the online availability of child sexual abuse material around the world. Bell's support has also helped fund important prevention material such as the Canadian Centre's Self/Peer Exploitation guides, which were developed in response to increased reports to the tip line regarding sexting incidents. Bell's renewed commitment to the development of these guides meant 21,000 copies were distributed in 2019 to families, schools, and law enforcement agencies across the country ensuring Canadians were armed with knowledge on how to prevent and adequately respond to this issue.

Additionally, Bell also supports needhelpnow.ca, an important website for youth to help them stop the spread of sexual pictures/videos and receive support along the way.



cybertip!ca®

NeedHelpNow.ca™

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 all Canadians have the critical thinking skills to engage with 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 such as 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 of the importance of digital consumers developing critical-thinking skills. Bell is a founding supporter of MediaSmarts. In 2019, 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 activities resulted in over 1.4 million online impressions in 2019.

Bell and MediaSmarts developed 2 workshops to promote a positive online experience for teens and pre-teens using social media: 1) Respecting Yourself and Others Online and 2) The Parent Network: Social Media and Your Kids. The workshops have received over 28,000 page views since launching. Using the content from the workshops, MediaSmarts also created a 4-part video series to further promote positive experiences online for young people. The videos, which are hosted on MediaSmarts' website, YouTube channel and Facebook page, have received widespread promotion through MediaSmarts partners and social media, resulting in over 350,000 views between the three platforms.



CANADA'S CENTRE  
FOR DIGITAL AND  
MEDIA LITERACY

## Backpacks for Kids

Bell team members across Canada support the Backpacks for Kids program, collecting school supplies for kids in need to help them get ready for back to school. In 2019, team members responded enthusiastically once again, donating over 3,500 backpacks that were distributed to schools and community groups across Canada. Since the program began, Bell team members have filled more than 100,000 backpacks with supplies for elementary school students.



## Virgin Mobile RE\*Generation

Virgin Mobile Members help at-risk and homeless youth change their lives for good through the RE\*Generation initiative.

Donations from Virgin Mobile Members and Canadians support job skills training programs for youth facing barriers to employment. For many youth, challenges like poverty, homelessness, foster care or mental health issues prevent them from gaining the education, work experience and professional networks to keep up with peers who have had more advantages.<sup>1</sup> More than 775,000 young Canadians are not in school or working according to Statistics Canada. The unemployment rate of youth living with mental health challenges can be as high as 30%, as compared to the national youth unemployment rate of 10%.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> To learn more about Youth in the labour market click [here](#)

<sup>2</sup> To learn more about Unemployment, Mental Health and Substance Use click [here](#).



In 2019, Virgin Mobile RE\*Generation supported more than 490 youth in gaining job skills, work experience, mentoring opportunities, and job search support through the charitable partners listed below:

- Broadway Youth Resource Centre (Vancouver)
- Guelph Youth Farm/Everdale Environmental Learning Centre (Guelph)
- NPower Canada (Toronto & Calgary)
- Threshold School of Building (Hamilton)
- Youth Employment Services (Montréal)

Virgin Mobile Canada staff also helped youth change their lives for good by participating in networking and mentoring events with youth, providing information and guidance on starting a career and building professional networks.

## Supporting youth in the North

Northwestel is committed to supporting young people in the North. One area of focus is the Northwestel Learning to Lead Hockey Camp, in partnership with Yukon First Nations Hockey Association (YFNHA). It is an annual hockey camp held in Whitehorse for northern kids, aged 5-17. The week-long camp features on and off-ice training for kids, helping them to be better hockey players and better leaders in their own communities.



## Montréal Children's Hospital Foundation Caring for Kids Radiothon

For the past 16 consecutive years, Astral/Bell Media Montréal has supported the annual Montréal Children's Hospital Foundation Caring for Kids Radiothon and played a vital role in helping to raise almost \$25 million dollars by providing free airtime on CJAD 800, Virgin 95.9 and CHOM 97.7. On that special day, Bell Media also rallies the community in support of children's mental health by sponsoring "Bell's mental health for the Children" capsules.

The gala also celebrated the winners of the Excellence Awards, which honour hospital staff for their contributions. Bell Let's Talk sponsored the Coup de Coeur award in the mental health category.

