



# Investing in Children

*Helping children to learn,  
grow and thrive since 1999*



®

**Our Mission** - *Investing in Children is committed to improving the well-being and learning of ALL children.*

**Our Vision** - *We collaborate with our local communities to provide inclusive opportunities for children and youth to thrive emotionally, physically, artistically and academically. Our impact will support all children to reach their full potential and accomplish their goals.*

## Family Literacy and Math Program – (Since 2005)

Almost 3,000 children and their families participate in Investing in Children's Family Literacy and Math Program, held at various London and area schools throughout the year. Investing in Children's expert Literacy staff plan and deliver a variety of engaging activities which nurture young minds, focusing on curriculum, literacy skills and math strands, as well as Indigenous Education and up-to-date learning strategies initiated by the Ministry of Education. It also provides parents with ideas and tips to extend and support learning at home.

### What are people saying about our Family Literacy and Math Program?

*"Awesome connections to the literacy and math curriculum. Very engaging and got the kid's talking about their favorite healthy foods."*

*"It was fantastic! Families came out and participated in the fun and engaging activities. The snacks, stories and centres were relevant and directly supported our school literacy and numeracy goals. We are so glad you came!"*

*"Always great. I come to all of them when I get a chance. My kids really love it."*

*"Thank you for bringing this lovely program to our school community!"*



## HARK After School Program – (Since 2009)

Investing in Children has had the privilege of leading their HARK (Healthy, Active Resilient Kids) After School Program in some of London's most challenged socio-economic areas. This program has been cherished by many families who appreciate the experiences and activities their children are offered, such as attending London Knights hockey games, watching performances at Grand Theatre or having exciting and famous Londoners visit the program such as London Firefighters, Therapy Dogs and even NHL star Jason Williams and Gold Medal Olympian Alex Kopacz!

### What do kids say about our HARK After School Program?

*"I like the food and trying new things!"*

*"I love going on field trips. The volunteers are awesome!"*

*"My favourite part of the program is being able to see my friends for longer!"*

*"Sports! Soccer, hockey, is fun, fun, fun!"*



## Kids Power Conference – (Since 2005)

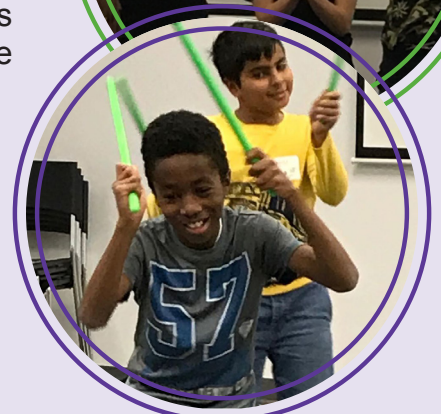
Investing in Children's Kids Power Conference gathers 100 Grade 6 and 7 students from London and area schools to participate in a full day of workshops designed to discover, nurture and develop leadership skills and strategies. The conference encourages the students to take the skills and use them to help improve their schools and communities!

### What are kids saying about the Kids Power Conference?

*"I loved the variety of workshops we did today and what we learned. They all gave me a new perspective on life and what I want to do to help improve things in my community and in the world."*

*"The best thing about the Kids Power Conference was how everyone was really interactive in their presentations and wanted to get the messages through but still be entertaining."*

*"I want to start a club at school to learn more about bullying and how to stop it."*





## Ontario Student Nutrition Partnership – (Since 2007)

For more than a decade Investing in Children has worked as a community partner to assist in the provision of the Ontario Student Nutrition Program (OSNP). By chairing the Children's Nutrition Network, our role is to support the OSNP in serving nutritious foods to over 20,000 kids per day in over 90 schools in the London – Middlesex region,

The need continues to be critical; even beyond the funding we receive. Corporate and private donations are always required - and much appreciated - to help us help children!



## Snack Stop – (Since 2018)

Investing in Children has been very active in discovering new and innovative ways to provide nutritional food – especially for the start of a youth's day. We also realize that once the school year and the OSNP program finishes the need for a nutritious start to a child's day remains vital. Hunger does not take a vacation. With this in mind, Investing in Children has initiated a program called the Snack Stop, whereby once a week, our staff delivers fresh fruits and vegetables to numerous locations throughout the city during the summer including Libraries, Community Centres, Family Centres, and Resource Centres. This has been met with tremendous accolades. In 2019, more than 5,000 nutritious snacks were served!

### **What do those managing the sites say about Snack Stop?**

*"Our community is very diverse and the newcomers really enjoyed having fresh fruit. Having the program during the summer is excellent because we do get a lot of children for our Summer Reading Program."* (Beacock Library)

*"We do see many children and families making use of the snacks, and also some of the more vulnerable adult population that we serve at the library".* (East London Library)



## Summer Snack – (Since 2013)

During the months of July and August, Investing in Children has been providing breakfast-type foods to several city camp locations in the east (Argyle) and in London north. Staff serve the campers with a nutritious snack to give them an energetic start to enjoy their day at camp! This program has been highly welcomed, and highly utilized.



## How can you help?

**Donations** help sustain programs like these! If you wish to donate please visit [investinginchildren.on.ca/donate](http://investinginchildren.on.ca/donate)

**Volunteers** are always needed to help run and prepare for our events, conferences and camp.

**Contact us** at [info@investinginchildren.on.ca](mailto:info@investinginchildren.on.ca) or visit [investinginchildren.on.ca](http://investinginchildren.on.ca) for more information or to volunteer.

**Get Social** follow us on twitter @InvestChildren, facebook @investinginchildren and Instagram @investchildren

## Kids 1st Day – (Since 2004)

More than 5,000 children and their families participate in Investing in Children's Kids 1st Day. Investing in Children has taken the lead to solicit more than 50 area businesses and organizations who have graciously agreed to invite London's children and their families to join them for free or low-cost activities and places to visit, ranging from arts, culture, history, sports, music and other recreational type activities! It is scheduled yearly in June on a shared Professional Activity Day with all of London's School Boards.

### **What are people saying about our Kids 1st Day?**

*"I have four kids. It is really expensive to take them to different places. This is a great way for us to get to go to new places and try new things!"*

*"Kids 1st Day was a great way to introduce families to our new facility. We planned on maybe 30 kids showing up. We had more than 300!"*

*"Thank you from me and my two boys for the best PA Day ever!"*



## Book Camp London – (Since 2005)

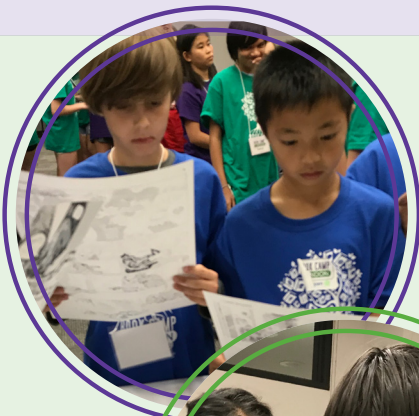
Forty aspiring authors, ages 10-15, register for Investing in Children's annual Book Camp London, in partnership with the London Public Library. The young campers are mentored by actual published authors and illustrators as well as other industry professionals! Upon completion of the camp, each participant receives a magazine brimming with stories and drawings created by all the campers!

### **What do kids say about our Book Camp London?**

*"My favorite part of Book Camp was all the friends that I made through our shared love of books and the positivity that came from it."*

*"My favorite part of Book Camp was the authors talking about what they see as the most important concepts in writing. Their different ideas help develop my writing."*

*"My favorite part is that everyone got to experience different ways of expressing themselves through either illustrating or writing."*



## Blue Boxes for Books – (Since 2004)

Blue Boxes for Books features blue bins filled with children's books placed in strategic locations throughout the city. Children are encouraged to choose a new or gently used book from the box. They are invited to read it while waiting, take the book home to bring back at their next visit, or simply keep it! Investing in Children replenishes the boxes regularly at the various locations such as London's Food Bank and the Family Law Info Center at the London Court House so that all children can have access to literature because we all know how important it is to foster early literacy skills!





## Free Youth Guitar Lessons – (Since 2018)

We piloted this fantastic program in 2018 at 7 different Family Centres – serving all corners of our city! More than 200 young people between the grades 7-10 have celebrated learning how to play the guitar, for a 3 month period – without experiencing any concerns regarding costs of the guitar or for lessons. Not only did our students learn the basics of playing guitar via an inclusive, collaborative approach, but they were also able to take the guitar home to practice, and were taught by London singer / songwriter Saveria (who in February 2019 was featured as the chosen performer on CTV's The Launch and appeared on American Idol in February 2020!)

**Here's what some of our parents and musicians have shared about our program!**

*"My daughter had a blast at the guitar program. She learned to play so many fun songs, so many new chords and she loved it so much!!!"*

*"Music is a natural for capturing kids' attention and imagination and, as it turns out, it has a huge impact on my child's body and mind and self-esteem. Playing guitar, listening to a beat can shift a kid's mood, help him cooperate and express emotions..."*



## Free Youth Song Writing Program – (Since 2019)

The pilot for this program was met with significant and unexpected success and accolades during its first run in early 2019! The launch of this program was inspired by London's hosting of the JUNO Awards in March of 2019. The youth involved (coached by Saveria) created the lyrics, melody and theme for a wonderful composition dedicated to help people with mental health to look at life through a renewed, positive lens. The work was recorded and played during a CBC Radio Afternoon Drive Show contest, where it was met with rave reviews. The second session of youth songwriters created an amazing piece showcasing all the fabulous things London has to offer entitled My London. The launch of the song was held at our 20th Anniversary Celebration. Mayor Ed Holder, pictured with Saveria and songwriting student, Becca Warner, praised the composition.



## Community Spirit

Investing in Children is proud to support various city programs such as Adopt-a-Park and numerous Child and Youth Network Initiatives. Investing in Children has also created several spaces in the aim of community betterment such as the reading garden which is along the London path system and the art installation by the forks of the Thames. We also partner with other organizations to pool our resources and expertise in order to offer more programs and help more families, children and youth in the city of London.



## Special Olympics – (Since 2003)

Investing in Children has partnered with the Thames Valley District School Board, the Harry E. Foster Foundation and several other corporations and individuals, to provide more than 1,000 student athletes with special needs (coached by approximately 1,000 of their peer mentors) with an opportunity to experience athletic competition and success! Funding is much needed here, mostly to cover the costs of providing special needs bus transportation over the three day event.

### What are people saying about Special Olympics?

*“Over the course of a year, I hear my son (with special needs) repeatedly talk about how affirming his experience was at this Special Olympics event! His excitement increases notably as the date for this wonderful event draws nearer!”*



## Placement Students and Volunteers

Investing in Children supports education through our Student Field Placement Programs. Our organization has an excellent relationship with many programs through UWO, Kings University College, Brescia University College and Fanshawe College. Approximately 2000 hours of mentorship opportunity have been provided to students in the Faculties of Education, Schools of Social Work, Nutrition, Family and Media Studies, Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Leadership, Public Relations and Corporate Communications programs and Recreation and Leisure studies. We value the level of collaboration that these students bring to our organization.

Investing in Children is very proud and appreciative of the more than 200 volunteers who are registered with us to help with the work we do in our community. We provide volunteer opportunities throughout London and the surrounding area through our weekly programs, special events and administrative tasks.

Volunteering with Investing in Children can help to develop job skills, make contacts in the community and gain valuable experience.



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