

Quarter Notes



New String and Percussion students, receiving their instruments in September.

Notes from Year Four

78 students, from 4 schools, with us for 3 hours a day. 9 types of instruments. 10 teaching artists, 2 support staff, and 23 volunteers. Welcome to year four of YONA!

In June, we completed our three-year pilot program, as well as a full-scale evaluation of the program's strengths and areas for development.

Some of the key strengths of the program were identified to be the program's design, the quality and commitment of the program staff, and the skill development that occurs as a result of the program.

Some identified challenges were the time commitment for students each week, a lack of focus during academic time each day, and an unclear program identity.

We've taken this feedback and have used it to inform our program design for this year. We've added an optional early-dismissal on Fridays,

along with electives for our returning students. We've established a new role for one of our Teaching Artists as the Academic Liaison, and he's taken on the task of formalizing our academic program. Lastly, we've revised our overall vision and mission so they better represent our current values.

In this edition of Quarter Notes, you'll read about all of these changes, and will get to see some pictures from this year's string and percussion instrument graduation. Woodwind and brass students will graduate later in the year, so stay tuned for that!

Another issue of Quarter Notes will be sent out in January, but in the meantime you can check in online at www.yona-sistema.com.

Thanks for reading!

- The YONA Team

Vision

To kindle long-term positive change in Edmonton's underserved populations by engaging youth in music education.

Values

- Inclusivity
- Community
- Ensemble
- Peer mentorship
- Intensive instruction
- Holistic instruction
- Strength-based practice

"We are so thankful for YONA because we know that our son is learning something which will impact his life later on."

- YONA Parent



Aniela, with her violin.

Our Vision & Mission

Prior to the launch of YONA in 2013, a group of educators, musicians, and stakeholders gathered to establish a vision statement and mission for the program, based on what we'd seen in other *El Sistema*-based programs and on what we perceived to be the needs within Edmonton.

This summer, our staff team revisited these vision and mission statements and revised them to better reflect the values and priorities that we have established and developed since 2013. This vision and mission will serve us as we grow in the coming years, and will help keep us on-track in the long run.

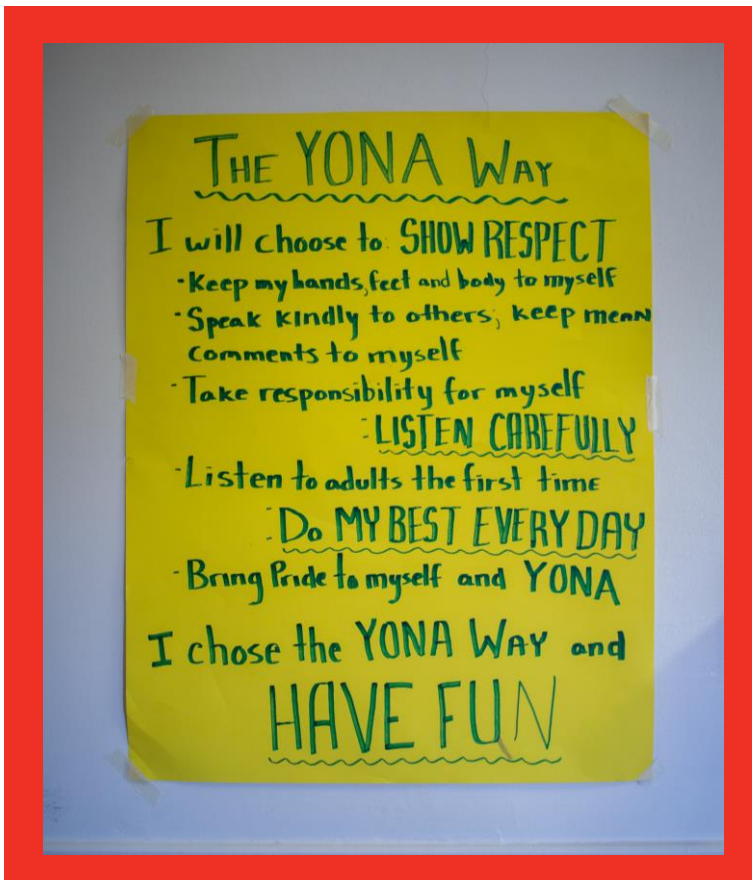


Vision

To kindle long-term positive change in Edmonton's underserved populations by engaging youth in music education.

Mission

- To offer music education that is inclusive and accessible.
- To inspire a sense of community among youth while nurturing the development of the broader community around them.
- To encourage the development of social and interpersonal skills through ensemble practice and performance.
- To empower youth by building confidence and leadership skills through peer mentorship opportunities.
- To encourage excellence and accountability through daily intensive instruction.
- To build off the strengths of the communities we serve by establishing relationships rooted in mutual respect, trust, and responsiveness.
- To provide a safe and nurturing environment that supports the development of the whole child.



The YONA Way

At YONA, the students, staff, and volunteers follow "The YONA Way". "The YONA Way" tells us how to act and how to be while at YONA and elsewhere in the world.

We settled on this version of "The YONA Way" last year, after having developed and adapted a variety of classroom agreements with YONA students during each year of the program.

We regularly review "The YONA Way" with the students, and talk about what it looks like, sounds like, and feels like to follow each of the specified guidelines.





YONA students love Expressive Arts with Ms. Sasha

New This Year: Friday Options

We've added something new to our Friday schedule at YONA this year! We are giving families of returning students the option to leave at break time instead of staying the entire day, in response to feedback that students do not have enough time at home during the week.

Returning students who stay at YONA until the end of the day have the opportunity to participate in an "options class", which allows them to explore key concepts of YONA such as leadership, self-expression, and teamwork, and to interact with Teaching Artists and students they don't work with as regularly as their usual instrument groups. This semester, students get to choose from the following options classes:

- Creative Movement with Ms. Kathleen
- Samba Drumming with Mr. Kevin
- Improvisation, Composition and Song-Writing with Mr. Nathan
- Leadership with Ms. Jacquie
- Advanced Expressive Arts with Ms. Sasha
- Chamber Music with Ms. Lauren

Students will get to select three options to participate in throughout the year.

During this time, new students participate in "Fun and Games" sessions, where they learn songs and games that teach them teamwork and musical skills.

New This Year: Academic Liaison

Academic Time has always been an integral part of the YONA program, but over the years we've varied in the amount of focus demanded of the students during this time.

This year, to increase the effectiveness of the 25 minutes students spend each day on academics, Violin Teaching Artist Mr. Nathan has taken on the additional title of Academic Liaison, tasked with formalizing our support of our students' academic success.

This year, we have decided to focus on mathematics and language arts skills (after students have finished any homework they have for school). Our main function is to provide support and practice for the skills that students are learning in the classroom. As such, we are providing reading books which are levelled in a system familiar to our students, as well as individualized math workbooks at each students' level.

We are working towards ensuring that all of our students are working at their current grade level in both math and language arts, and we are recruiting volunteer tutors to provide individual support to students who need it.



YONA students like Academic Time, but not as much as Expressive Arts...

YONA Team

Alyssa Paterson
YONA Manager

Lucas Waldin
YONA Conductor

Jacque McNulty
YONA Site Manager

Hafsah Mohammad
YONA Site Assistant

Lauren Dykstra
Lead Teaching Artist

Natalie Boisvert
Sasha Campbell
Nathan Chan
Kathleen de Caen
Kevin Johnson
Rebecca Parsons
Elaine Stepa
Andreas Wegner
Erin Wong
YONA Teaching Artists

Photos by Carmyn Joy Effa

Special thanks to our
volunteers! If you'd like to join
our team, call Jeffory at
780-401-2517.

Upcoming Events

Winter Concert
December 21
4:45 pm
RSVP to Miss Jacque -
780-903-9744

From Paper to Wood, 2016

On September 28th, our newest batch of string and percussion students graduated from their hand-made cardboard instruments to the real thing! They performed paper instrument songs accompanied by returning string students, signed an instrument care agreement, and then played their instruments together for the first time in a magical musical moment!



Yabsira is excited for her cello, and Chase is happy about getting his drum.

Thank you to our supporters! You are truly instruments for change in our children's lives.

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please visit www.yona-sistema.com.