

Using AI in Youth Sport Programs

Simple tools. Real impact.

By Jessica Marasovic

About Beat the Streets

Impacting youth through wrestling & life skills.

- Youth sport & development programs in Toronto
- Focus on underserved communities
- In-school + after-school programming

Small Team. Big Workload.

We didn't need more hours. We needed a better way to work.

- Programs
- Grants
- Communications
- Reporting
- Everything else in between!

How I Use AI for Grant Writing

From overwhelming → structured.

- **Research**
 - Gather relevant data & stats (then verify)
- **Structure**
 - Map activities, outcomes, budget
- **Align**
 - Match funder priorities
- **Refine**
 - Improve clarity, remove repetition
- **Stress-Test**
 - Find gaps, weaknesses, unclear sections

Bottom line:

21 → 27 → 30 grants
(From 2023 to 2025)

More shots on goal → more
funding potential

From Data Collection → Real Insight

How we strengthen comms using data.

- Analyse surveys & feedback
- Identify themes
- Pull quotes
- Combine perspectives
- Use across grants, comms, reports

Bottom line:

From collected data → clear
impact story

From Updates → Impact Stories

Same programs, finally told the way they deserve to be.

- **Before (Pre-AI):**

- Quick thank-you
- Minimal detail
- Limited storytelling

- **After (With AI):**

- Clear project explanation
- Strong narrative
- Data + impact integrated
- Funder recognition

Bottom line:

More content & data +
significantly higher quality

Community building fund supports growth of BTS

News and Updates | Donor Appreciation Jun 1 | Written By Jessica marasovic

BTS was awarded a [Community Building Fund](#) from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Government of Ontario. Through this fund, BTS was able to support staff salaries to:

- Complete year 1 activities from the strategic plan and start year 2 activities.
- Launch fundraising plan.
- Develop communication plan tools.
- Develop a board fundraising handbook and toolkit.
- Launch a donor program and develop a donor recognition & stewardship program.
- Launch our volunteer program.

We are grateful for this funding. This funding has helped us to focus on organizational and operational activities to ensure we recover and rebuild from the pandemic and get back to doing what we do best, impacting youth. Like through our volunteer program, BTS was able to serve 4 students through a coop program, providing them with more than 195 hours of real-world experience in the charity sector and giving BTS extra help in delivering programs and managing social media accounts. You can learn all about our four superstars and their thoughts on the program on the next two pages.



Expanding Opportunities for Girls in Sport: Beat the Streets Awarded Ontario Trillium Foundation Grow Grant

Donor Appreciation | News and Updates Mar 17 | Written By Jessica marasovic



An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Beat the Streets is proud to announce that we have been awarded a **two-year Grow Grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)** to expand our Girls CAN Wrestle & Lead program to Thunder Bay.

We are incredibly grateful to OTF for their investment in our work and their commitment to building stronger, healthier communities across Ontario. This support marks a major milestone for our organization and for the future of girls in sport.

Building Pathways for Girls in Sport in Thunder Bay

With support from OTF, Beat the Streets will deliver **20 high-impact weekend wrestling and empowerment camps for 400 girls aged 10–17** in Thunder

Bay over the next two years.

These camps are designed to do more than introduce sport; they are built to develop confidence, resilience, and leadership through a powerful combination of:

- Self-defence and boundary-setting
- Movement skills and introductory wrestling
- Social-emotional learning through our You Grow Girl model

At the same time, we will train **four local women to become certified wrestling coaches**, creating a sustainable pathway for girls to continue in sport long after the camps end.

This is about more than participation – it's about building a system where girls can enter, stay, and grow in sport.

Why Girls in Sport Matters More Than Ever

Across Canada, girls are leaving sport at higher rates than boys, and we've seen this firsthand. At Beat the Streets, girls once made up 50% of our after-school wrestling participants. Today, that number has dropped significantly. In some programs, girls have told us plainly: *"This isn't for me."*

We listened.

Because the reality is clear: **Girls don't stay in sport just because a spot exists—the environment has to be designed for them.**

In Thunder Bay, where wrestling has deep community roots, but girls represent only a portion of participants, the need for intentional, girl-centred programming is especially strong. For many girls – particularly those facing economic, geographic, or cultural barriers – access alone is not enough.

They need spaces where they feel safe, supported, and seen.

Local Leadership: Building Something That Lasts

This expansion is led in partnership with **Olympian and gender equity advocate Leah Ferguson**, who is based in Thunder Bay and has already begun piloting this work locally.

Leah's leadership brings not only elite sports experience but also a deep commitment to creating inclusive, empowering environments for girls. Through this project, she will mentor



This investment will directly support:

- **400 girls participating in programming**
- **20 weekend camps delivered**
- **4 emerging female coaches trained and certified**
- **New girls-only after-school wrestling programs launched**

But beyond the numbers, this project is about something bigger.

It's about ensuring that girls, especially those who have been historically underrepresented in sport, have the opportunity to build confidence, develop leadership skills, and see themselves reflected in positions of strength.

It's about changing who feels like they belong.

About the Ontario Trillium Foundation

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario and one of Canada's leading granting foundations. Through its Grow Grants, OTF supports organizations in expanding proven programs that improve the health and well-being of communities across the province.

[In this latest round of funding, 153 non-profits were awarded over \\$47.5 million to help scale initiatives that are making a real difference.](#)

Beat the Streets is proud to be among the organizations recognised for advancing physical activity and youth development across Ontario.

Looking Ahead

We are deeply thankful to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for their trust and support.

This investment allows us to expand our reach, strengthen our programs, and continue building pathways where girls don't just participate in sport, they take up space! And this is just the beginning.



emerging female coaches, helping to build a new generation of leaders within the sport. Together, we are not just delivering programming; we are building local capacity.

By the end of the grant, Thunder Bay will have **female-led, girls-only wrestling programs** that continue beyond this funding cycle, ensuring long-term impact in the community.

A Proven Model, Built to Grow

The Girls CAN Wrestle & Lead pathway is built on years of learning and impact. It includes:

- **Girls CAN Defend** – self-defence, safety, and boundary-setting
- **You Grow Girl** – confidence, resilience, and belonging through movement
- **Girls-only wrestling sessions** – skill-building and sport identity
- **Train-the-Trainer** – developing female coaches and leaders

This model has already reached hundreds of girls and demonstrated measurable gains in confidence, resilience, and continued participation in sport.

Now, with OTF's support, we are ready to scale it.

Creating Lasting Impact for Youth Wrestling in Ontario



From Invisible → Visible

Better content didn't just sound better; it got found.

- **What changed:**
 - Increased content output
 - Stronger storytelling
 - More consistent messaging

Bottom line:

Better content → better visibility
→ more reach



youth toronto wrestling



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Central Toronto Wrestling Club
https://centraltorontowrestling.com

Central Toronto Wrestling Club: Home

Reopen the day to edit or restore sessions. **YOUTH WRESTLING (8-12 Y.O).** 6 - 7pm. 6:00pm - 7:00pm. **YOUTH WRESTLING (8-12 Y.O).** **YOUTH WRESTLING (8-12 Y.O).** Monday ... [Read more](#)



team impact wrestling
https://teamimpact.ca

Team Impact Wrestling. amature youth and adult wrestling.

Team Impact is a volunteer run, not-for-profit, wrestling club with locations in Toronto and Durham Region. Amature youth and adult wrestling.



New Wave Wrestling Toronto
https://www.newwavewrestlingtoronto.com

New Wave Wrestling Toronto | Pro Wrestling Training School

New Wave Wrestling Toronto offers pro wrestling training in the GTA with experienced, attentive coaches, world-class facilities, and UK partnerships.



beatthestreets.ca
https://www.beatthestreets.ca

Beat the Streets: Home

Learn how **Beat the Streets**, a positive youth development charity, encourages healthy bodies, healthy minds and job readiness in the Greater Toronto Area.



youth wrestling toronto

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Tournaments Best Near me Free

AI Overview

Youth wrestling in Toronto offers several training options focusing on confidence, coordination, and technique for children and teens, with notable programs at Toronto Top Team, Action & Reaction MMA, and Beat the Streets. Programs generally cater to ages 4–13, offering a mix of freestyle, Greco-Roman, and, in some cases, professional wrestling styles. www.beatthestreets.ca +4

Key Youth Wrestling Programs in Toronto

- **Toronto Top Team (North York):** Offers kids' wrestling classes for ages 4–7 and 8–13, focusing on discipline and skill development, with free trial classes available.
- **Action & Reaction MMA (Toronto/Pickering):** Provides wrestling classes for

Show more



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New Wave Wrestling Toronto

What This Means for a Small Team

More capacity. More output. Same team.

- Increased capacity
- Increased output
- Improved efficiency
- **Better use of limited funding**

Bottom line:

More resources directed to youth programs

Tools That Make It Possible

My AI support team.

- ChatGPT (strategy & structure)
- Claude (writing)
- Gemini (backup)
- Grammarly (editing)
- Canva (visuals)
- NotebookLM (presentations/video)
- Google Scholar (research)

Thank you!