

YWCA FOCUS: OUR HISTORY

Established in 1894, YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish is the oldest nonprofit in the region focused on the needs of women and girls, and is the second largest YWCA association in the United States.

Since our founding, YWCA has been the one reliable resource women and families can count on, providing services and advocacy to support stable homes and economic advancement, reduce violence and improve health, and promote racial equity and social justice.

- Initially, YWCA opened with a lounge and cafeteria offering 10-cent lunches for working women.
- In the early days, YWCA organized multi-interest, multicultural clubs for young women and girls in the area.
 - One of these clubs, The Culture Club, was for local African-America women. The branch created in the Central District for this club became one of the first interracial YWCA branches in the country.
- Built in 1914, YWCA's 5th Avenue and Seneca building in downtown Seattle remains our headquarters today.
- Today, YWCA operates more than 25 locations across two counties, with over 900 units of housing and nearly 50 programs serving more than 15,000 women, men, and children each year.

Through direct services, advocacy, and education, YWCA works to eliminate racial and gender disparities and create equity in housing, health, and economic advancement. Our vision is an inclusive society where people thrive and all communities are valued, respected, and self-directed.