



Red Door
FAMILY SHELTER

2021-2022

Together,
we're
changing
tomorrow,
today.

The Courage Report





Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which Red Door Family Shelter sits is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that the City of Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

Our Vision

Ending family homelessness one family at a time.

Our Mission

To create a safe and welcoming temporary space and critical services for women and children who have fled intimate partner violence, refugees seeking sanctuary from war and violence, and families in crisis with nowhere else to go as they heal and rebuild their lives.

Our Values

Our commitment to ending family homelessness is driven by these core values:

- **Quality:** providing high quality, client-centred programs and working towards continuous improvement on behalf of the children and families we serve.
- **Caring:** serving our families with respect, dignity, empathy and compassion, and celebrating the diversity and uniqueness of each individual.
- **Advocacy:** working towards ending the cycles of violence and poverty through advocacy and empowerment of our clients.
- **Collaboration:** building effective relationships among clients, volunteers, donors and staff, and seeking opportunities to form partnerships with the broader community.
- **Integrity:** delivering accessible, flexible, and transparent services while acting with integrity in a professional, ethical, non-judgmental, honest manner at all times.
- **Accountability:** measuring, achieving and reporting results and using funder and donor dollars wisely.



Red Door
FAMILY SHELTER

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(December 2021 –)



Starting Over Takes Courage

The pandemic brought challenges. We offered hope and healing. Your support made it possible.

COVID-19 continued to impact our community - openings, closings and restrictions challenged us in new ways to deliver services and support to families facing homelessness or eviction and families fleeing violence.

Job loss, illness and Toronto's lack of affordable housing contributed to an increase in homelessness and precarious housing situations. An especially difficult situation for families, most of whom are women-led. From June 2021 to June 2022, families accessing shelters increased 40%.

Violence against women and girls increased dramatically too. Between April 1 and Sept. 30 of 2021, the Canada's Assaulted Women's Helpline received 51,299 calls, compared to 24,010 in the same time in 2019.

The Ontario government estimated that between 2021 and 2022,

approximately 14,000 women and dependents accessed family and intimate partner violence supports and services in Toronto alone. And they expect that number to increase because final reports for 2021/2022 are not in.

Experiencing homelessness and intimate partner violence dramatically changes the lives of children. Children who witness violence in the home have twice the rate of psychiatric disorders as children from non-violent homes.

Food insecurity also increased dramatically this past year. Too many families were faced with a question they shouldn't have to ask: pay the rent or feed my children?

Red Door Family Shelter

- > 106 beds and cribs for families
- > 20,000 sq. ft. over four floors
- > Private bedrooms and bathrooms
- > Communal dining and social areas
- > State-of-the-art kitchen
- > Indoor and outdoor children's play areas
- > Dedicated food bank

According to Daily Bread Food Bank and North York Harvest, there were 1.45 million visits to Toronto food banks last year, a 47% increase compared to the previous year and the highest number of visits ever recorded in the city.

Making sure hungry tummies are full is another step on the road to health and healing. Our residents enjoyed three meals a day, and we provided between 70 and 80 children with a healthy lunch to take to school. That's over 1,500 lunches every month.

Red Door has been there for families facing homelessness or fleeing violence for 40 years. And you have been by our side from the start.

We've seen the strength and courage it takes to leave an abusive relationship. We've seen the strength and courage it takes to battle homelessness and precarious housing to hold a family together. And so has our community and the volunteers and donors who help us provide the comfort, caring and services our residents need to heal and transition to new lives.

As we approach our 40th anniversary in December, we are proud to celebrate courage in the face of fear. Your generosity and belief in our mission honours the circle of support that is changing tomorrow, today.



9752

The number of homeless entering Toronto's shelter system, June 2021 - June 2022

38%

of the unhoused in Toronto identify as women

Courage in Action

- > Counselling and case management
- > Medical care and referrals with partner agency, South Riverdale Community Health Centre
- > Advocacy, legal and immigration support
- > Connection to community resources
- > Children's supportive programming
- > Parenting and life skills workshops

135
families supported

419
people supported

143
new families accessed our weekly food bank



From Fear to Freedom

It takes courage to flee an abusive relationship. And the support of a circle of care to start over.

When Maggie met her ex-husband, she thought he was her very own Prince Charming.

"He treated me so well," she remembers. "We went out to dinner, we went dancing...I was in love."

He was seven years older, divorced with three children. It was a quick and intense relationship. They met in October, Maggie was pregnant the following

May, and they moved in together.

And then...he disappeared for days at a time and was still living off and on with his former partner. He controlled Maggie's every move and became abusive, verbally, physically and emotionally, to Maggie and her 10-year-old son from a previous relationship, who was living with them.

He wasn't working, but he always had money to spend on fancy clothes ▶

Programs and Services

In addition to emergency shelter, Red Door provides critical support to women and families when they arrive, during their stay, and as they make the transition to a new home. We offer counselling support, access to schools and health care. Dedicated children's programming and safe spaces for children to heal are priorities – arts and crafts, homework help, life-skills workshops for teens, and social, recreational opportunities for all ages. Housing workers liaise with landlords to secure safe and affordable accommodations and fair leases for families. Later, we provide outreach support to help families remain housed.

87%
or **122,250** low-income tenant households are paying over 30% of their income on rent. Almost half are paying over 50%

Caseworkers

A compassionate team of Caseworkers help residents to visualize their life ahead, and then develop plans that will get them to that place. Each resident is unique, and so are the steps they will take to realize their dreams. And they don't stop there. Caseworkers also link families to the community services that will support their success.



Caseworker
Michelle Byrne

and cars and such for himself. Maggie discovered he was cheating on her with older women who would give him money and buy him things.

Maggie didn't share much about what was going on at home.

"I was ashamed, you know?" she explains. "And I was scared. I had no money. Where would I go? Who could help me?"

Six years and three children later, Maggie knew she had to take herself and her children to safety. Her eldest son went to live with his dad, and Maggie, with the help of her sister and mum, found Red Door Family Shelter.

"They had a place for me and my

family," says Maggie. "I grabbed a duffle bag and the kids and I ran."

When she arrived at Red Door, she was welcomed by a compassionate woman who became her Caseworker, helping the family get settled and then helping her set goals for a new life free from hurt and fear.

Maggie's Housing Worker got the family on the priority housing list and helped with the application, including getting the required proof of co-habitation – her ex-husband did not include her name on their lease – and copies of other important documents she lost in her flight.

Maggie discovered she was pregnant ▶

Emergency Shelters

Red Door's two emergency shelters, one for homeless families and one for women fleeing violence, have 156 beds between them, which allows us to serve hundreds of families each year. The women who arrive at Red Door come from all walks of life. Each has a backstory, but they all have one need in common: a safe sanctuary to heal on their journey home.

64%
of those sheltered
were children

40 Years of Caring

With the support of our community,
we offer women and
families a new way forward.



In 1931 Reverend Ray McCleary (above) painted the church doors of WoodGreen United Church red, and they became a symbol of hope and help, then and today.

1982

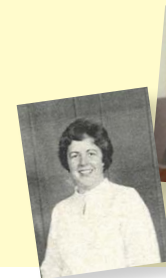
In response to increasing poverty and homelessness in the area, leadership at WoodGreen United Church including Sybil Longley and Rev. John C. Hilborn, founded a 28 bed (24-person) shelter in the church basement on December 22.

1983

By March, a total of 83 families had sought safety at the shelter. WoodGreen United Church applied to incorporate the shelter as WoodGreen Red Door Family Shelter and in June applied for a charitable number.

1984

A new floor of church space was allocated for 7 more beds. A provincial grant allowed capacity to go from 28 to 45.



Rev. John C. Hilborn (above) and Sybil Longley

1986

Toronto City Council asked that a new floor be opened offering shelter for 35 abused women and children. It mostly supported mature and elderly women.

Opening of Refugee Reception Center



1989

Red Door welcomed the first government-sponsored refugees from Poland and Ethiopia. Outreach staff and services, referral services, full-time childcare, ESL and crisis intervention were introduced.

1995

Demand for services went up when child and welfare budgets faced major cuts. Red Door leased a new space at Victoria Park and Lawrence Avenue East offering 75 beds and housing 83 people a night.

1998

Red Door Violence Against Women Shelter opened in an undisclosed location.



Red Door logo from 1993

Housing Workers

Housing workers help our residents navigate the often-complicated assisted housing system and move into permanent, affordable homes – no mean feat! They visit prospective housing with the family and assist with lease-signing and particulars such as the rent rate and move-in date. And they work with the family’s Outreach Worker to make sure the family has what they need to move into their new home.

soon after she arrived at Red Door and the Baby Basket she received with toiletries, diapers, baby blankets and sleepers felt like a celebration of her son’s birth.

Maggie had placed herself in harm’s way many times to protect her children, and they arrived at Red Door suffering from anxiety and nightmares. The family was referred to a Child and Family Therapist at Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre, and to the Here to Help Program, a group intervention program for mothers with children who have experienced family violence. And Maggie has been matched with a life coach at Up With Women to help her

with personal and career goals over the next year.

The team also helped register Maggie’s eldest daughter for school.

Maggie’s ex-husband sued for custody of the children and the Red Door team swung into action, helping her complete a legal aid certificate so she could get a family lawyer to mount her custody battle. She won. But he owes \$40,000 in court-ordered child support.

Slowly, the family began to heal. The children played games, visited the park, made crafts and made friends, living each day without fear for the first time.

And Maggie made friends too, ▶



Children and Youth Programs

We know that helping children overcome painful and frightening experiences supports their growth into strong, capable and resilient adults. Our after school and evening programs offer help with homework as well as fun activities such as games, visits to the library or a local park, and arts and crafts for children of all ages.

2006

Red Door Violence Against Women Shelter relocated to a safer and more secure location in a quiet residential area and the Lawrence Family Shelter closed.

2007

A Ministry of Community and Social Services grant allowed for significant improvements to Red Door Violence Against Women Shelter including a seven-foot fence, special shatter-proof film on the windows, security camera, commercial kitchen, new communal kitchen, new laundry facilities, new backyard space and new dining hall.

2008

Renovations complete, Red Door Violence Against Women Shelter officially reopened.



WoodGreen United Church is put up for sale

2010

In late 2010, WoodGreen United Church decided to sell Red Door Family Shelter on Queen St. East and Red Door began negotiations to purchase the property.

2012

Red Door and developers Rose and Thistle Group LTD partnered to incorporate the shelter into a new condominium the developers were building.

Toronto City Council supports the Save Red Door campaign



2014

The Queen St. family shelter was at risk of closing when the corporation that owned the property went into receivership. The Save Red Door campaign received overwhelming support from the community and Toronto City Council voted unanimously to help secure Red Door’s long-term future.

2015

Toronto City Council approved funding to build a new shelter at 875 Queen Street West. We launched a \$3M capital campaign to fund the much-needed equipment, furnishings and resident services and by March, over \$500,000 had been collected.

2020

- Red Door had received over \$2.8M in gifts and pledges for equipment, furnishings and resident services at the new shelter.
- COVID-19 hit and inspired many new monthly donors, increased monthly commitments and additional financial gifts.

2021

In June, the innovative, purpose-built Red Door Family Shelter on Booth Avenue opened, occupying four floors of a new Harhay Developments condo development in Leslieville.

Thanks to our circle of support, we opened the doors of our new, purpose-built family shelter.



Food Programs

A state-of-the-art commercial kitchen at our Family Shelter prepares and serves three nutritious meals a day as well as snacks for all. Our Violence Against Women shelter has an equally well-equipped kitchen to offer residents tasty, nutritious meals. Between 70 and 80 healthy lunches for the children to take to school are packed every day.

We also provide two Food Banks for families who have moved out of the shelter. They can choose the fresh and staple foods they need, including culturally specific items, special diet items, household essentials and diapers and baby formula, and donated supermarket gift cards.

Business Coordinators

Business Coordinators are the glue that holds our kitchens together, monitoring supplies, ordering food, designing menus and making sure that our residents – adults and children alike – enjoy delicious, nutritious meals, sometimes for the first time in a long while.



Cook Yvonne David

with women who shared her lived experience: they understood where she'd been and where she was going now. No judgement.

Nine months after Maggie and her children arrived at Red Door seeking a safe harbour, they moved into their new home. Red Door helped with moving and provided furniture and the other household necessities.

Maggie's Outreach Worker told her about the New Beginnings Support Program and she's enrolled in the Office Administration Program at Humber College.

"We're happy," Maggie says. "I am not in a cage anymore.

"I am so grateful to Red Door and the people who supported me – and continue to support me."

And what would she tell a woman experiencing intimate partner violence today?

"You deserve better. Your kids deserve better. I know you're afraid. But there are supports for you.

"You can take that first step." ♥

Outreach Workers

Outreach workers partner with residents to help them access the support and social services they need to realize their goal: to rediscover their sense of worth and self-confidence and take their rightful place in the world. And they offer follow up support, too, connecting residents to opportunities to further their education, find employment, and access financial aid, health care, legal and social supports.

Courage to Start Over

50

families moved to permanent housing

13

of those families moved into private housing and pay 57% of their income in rent





Coldest Night of the Year

Bundling up to offer the Red Door community warmth, comfort and love.

On February 26, 2022, members of the Yorkshire Rose Quilters' Guild of Toronto bundled up to confront the cold and walk in support of Red Door in the Coldest Night of the Year, Canada's national fundraising walk for homelessness. We held a hybrid event – virtual and in-person - with a warming station set up outside



Pilot Coffee Roasters on Queen Street East. Forty-one teams – 188 walkers – braved the wintery weather because they believe in the safety and security offered by Red Door. They raised **\$99,320**. Our goal was **\$75,000!**

“Yorkshire Rose Quilters’ Guild is happy to donate quilts for the women at Red Door Shelter. Quilts represent so much more than just a bed covering. They bring comfort and warmth. Each stitch is made with love. Quilts bring healing through difficult and hard times, for both the makers and the receivers. They are treasured, and as time passes, they may be worn around the edges but they never lose their power to soothe the soul and remind us that someone cared.

“We had such fun as we walked, wrapped in quilts, along the boardwalk on The Coldest Night of the Year to raise awareness and donations for a great cause.

“Our members are proud to help Red Door Shelter and will continue to support the wonderful service they provide in our community.”

Anne McAllister
Member of the Executive,
Yorkshire Rose Quilters’ Guild of Toronto



A Safe Place to Call Home

Since 2008, the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation has been supporting the families who come to Red Door – changing tomorrow, today.

“As Realtors® we have the privilege of helping our clients find a home around which they can centre their lives. However, we are also aware that not everyone has a home that is safe. My Team at Royal LePage Estate Realty and I support the work of the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation and Red Door Family Shelter to help those who are in unsafe homes to escape violence and abuse and have a safe place to go while they rebuild their lives and



seek a safe place to call home. Many of our agents and staff provide direct contributions from their pay cheque and we are proud to host a number of fundraisers each year to support this essential work. We thank the staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication for all that they do.”

Chris Dunlop
Broker of Record | Owner
Proud Supporter of the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation

Changing Lives

A reading club for kids
heals hearts and minds.

“ReadUP is a community reading club for kids of all ages who are learning to read, many of whom are at risk of falling behind. I first became involved with ReadUP at Red Door in the fall of 2018 and my weekly visit soon became a highlight of my week!

“The 1:1 ReadUP reading support offers the children consistency – I’m there once a week at the same time. And it’s often crucial support, too; the upheaval they have experienced may well put them at risk of falling behind.

“The children are in an ‘in-between’ chapter in their lives and this affects them on multiple levels: academically, emotionally and mentally. The consistency of the weekly reading club is something they can count on, and the warm, smiling, familiar faces of the volunteers, reading one-on-one with each child, is something I feel helps them heal on all three levels, and gives them a positive attitude toward reading.”

Beka Ly

ReadUp Volunteer



Blues for the Red Door

Jake Hiebert made a difference
in our community and in the
lives of the families who seek
shelter at Red Door.

Jake Hiebert, known to legions of fans as Big Rude Jake, was a singer, songwriter, musician, band leader, philanthropist, and dear friend – to Lorraine Johnson, to the Red Door team, and



to all the women he supported through Blues for the Red Door, an annual cabaret in support of families seeking sanctuary.

Big Rude Jake passed on June 16, 2022 – but his legacy will live on.

Lorraine Johnson, Event Chair, has promised to continue Blues for the Red Door in honour of Jake.

“I received a call from Jake in 2014. He had an event idea that would benefit survivors of intimate partner violence and women experiencing homelessness. As an event manager working in the not-for-profit sector, I was elated to become a part of this.

“Blues for the Red Door was officially born, a star-studded blues cabaret of award-winning artists performing with our all-female house band. We’ve raised almost \$20,000 since then, as well as many in-kind donations of food and household items.

“It is an honour and a privilege to continue the legacy of Big Rude Jake through this remarkable evening. It gives back to me so much more than words can express.”

Lorraine Johnson

Event Chair

Changing Tomorrow Together

We are grateful to our partners
and community fundraisers
for their commitment to helping
us support some of Toronto’s most
vulnerable. It takes courage to
hold out a hand, but together
we can build a better tomorrow.

“In the fall of 2020, we created Kindred Spirits, a volunteer initiative committed to providing much needed donations to people who are homeless and in need of our help and support. During the Kindred Spirits Opportunity for Giving for the 2021 holiday season, our group of over 200 women and their families came together as kindred spirits to support Red Door Family Shelter. We chose Red Door as the recipient of our donations because of their unwavering commitment to supporting families who find themselves homeless during these very difficult and challenging



times. We wanted them know they are not alone; we are all in this together and we will get through this together, as a community. A huge thank you to the staff at Red Door Family Shelter for the enormous difference they are making in the lives of so many families.”

Janet Purcell & Susan Sainsbury

Founders, Kindred Spirits

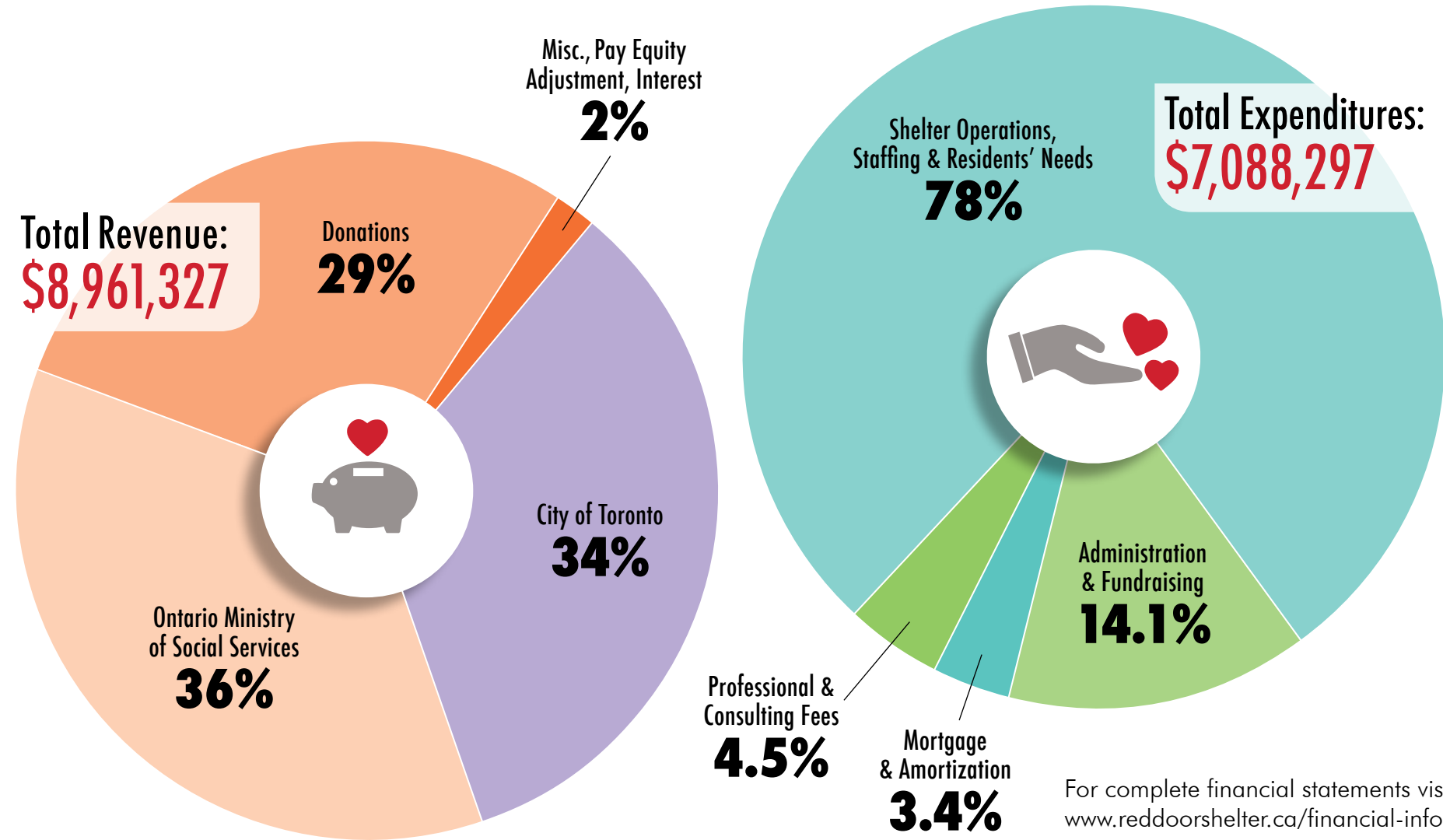
Financial Overview

You Give Families a Better Tomorrow

The commitment of donors and volunteers helps change tomorrow, today. Your generous donations fund key programs and services and your volunteer time

offers families care and compassion. We couldn't support families fleeing violence and facing homelessness without your unwavering support.

Find our complete list of donors at www.reddoorshelter.ca/our-donors



For complete financial statements visit www.reddoorshelter.ca/financial-info





Heather Giles, Violence Against Women Program Manager; Michelle Byrne, Caseworker; Rose Constance, Shelter Support Worker; Yvonne David, Cook.

“It was then that we decided that owing to the continued very depressed drab outlook of those ragged days of 1931 onwards, we should paint the door of the church a brilliant red and the door of the house the same colour.”

Reverend Ray McCleary,
WoodGreen United Church



Red Door Family Shelter

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www.reddoorshelter.ca

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