



Red Door
FAMILY SHELTER

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COURAGE
REPORT



40
YEARS | OF SHELTER
AND SUPPORT

VISION

Ending family homelessness, one family at a time.

MISSION

We provide safe, temporary refuge and vital services that enable families to rebuild their lives and establish themselves in their communities.

VALUES

Compassion: We believe all people are deserving of respect. Therefore we celebrate our diversity and uniqueness, and treat each other with kindness, empathy and dignity.

Equity: We recognize that systemic barriers privilege some people and hold others back. Therefore we strive to deliver inclusive services, work to address discrimination and end cycles of violence and poverty.

Collaboration: We know that we are stronger together. Therefore, we build effective relationships, work as teams and partner for excellence and impact.

Integrity: We are responsible for resources entrusted to us. Therefore we measure, achieve and report our results, strive to learn and improve continuously, and behave at all times in a manner that is ethical, transparent and professional.



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.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



When I arrived at Red Door in December 2022, it was the beginning of a new chapter. It was my first day as Executive Director but also marked the beginning of Red Door's 40th year supporting families seeking refuge, stable housing, and hope.

As much as I chose Red Door, I'd like to think that it was Red Door that chose me—it's a natural extension of the 20-plus years I've worked in community-centred organizations. I've always believed that it is through communities and residents that we empower the actions of the next generation. Red Door does this every day, supporting families at every stage of life and empowering them to build brighter futures.

By addressing the fundamental rights that all humans deserve—safety, housing, food, education, and mental health resources—we are working to end family homelessness, one family at a time. While 45% of our residents are women fleeing violence, we also support families facing other traumatic circumstances, such as refugees who've escaped war and violence, and families in crisis facing eviction or the loss of their home.

Our approach at Red Door is focused on uplifting families. We meet our residents where they are and connect them with the resources that suit their specific situation and needs. This year, we introduced our Scholarship Fund to help children and adults access educational programs over and above the ones we already offer. This provides up to \$500 for kids and up to \$1,000 for adults, opening a variety of opportunities.

In order to support the families who turn to us, we recognize that having a strong, stable team is vital. During the pandemic, Red Door

experienced high staff turnover, partly due to burnout and personal health concerns. While some factors are beyond our control, we are committed to doing everything we can to improve the well-being of our organization, staff, and community. Our new three-year strategic plan will guide the work required to achieve this goal, which entails reviewing policies and procedures, creating a foundation of supportive leadership, improving our workplace culture, and focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Red Door could not exist without the support of many people and collaborative organizations. Thank you to our volunteers and board members for your time, commitment, and prudent guidance. Also, thank you to our funders and donors for your contributions, which are essential to keeping our doors open and our programs running. And, of course, I am very grateful for the incredible team who work alongside me every day—thank you for your compassion, expertise, and dedication.

I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge our ongoing partnerships with other community-centred agencies, including Second Harvest, Abiona Centre, and South Riverdale Community Centre. In bringing together each of our areas of expertise, we can provide wrap-around services that fully support the unique needs of every family that turns to our shelter.

While we hope to see the day Red Door and other shelters no longer need to exist, until then, however long it takes, we will continue on our mission of ending family homelessness, one family at a time.

Maritza Sanchez

Maritza Sanchez
Executive Director

'HEALING IS WHAT BROUGHT ME TO RED DOOR.'

When Rochelle and her two kids moved from Toronto to Calgary in early 2022, she had hopes of providing a better life for her family. It started out well: She had a good job as a personal support worker, and that spring, she met a man online. Their relationship progressed quickly, and he moved into the family's home. It wasn't long before the abuse started.

The violence began after Rochelle discovered that he was habitually abusing drugs and stealing from her. Whenever she tried to speak to him about what was going on, he attacked her verbally, physically, and sexually. The abuse always happened in private—to her kids, he seemed like the perfect father figure.

Then one day, things came to a head. **"I told him that he took my rent money...that I couldn't have my kids live on the street,"** Rochelle recalls, adding that he reacted violently, throwing her against the wall and threatening to kill her. She knew she had to leave, for herself and, more importantly, for her children. She didn't want them to experience violence. **"This was my time to get out."**

With only the things they could quickly cram in a duffel bag and a backpack, they ran. By the end of October 2022, Rochelle and her children were back in Toronto. But with nowhere to go and few people to turn to for help, they slept in the airport the night they arrived.

"I ran with whatever I could fit in a duffel bag and a backpack. I had to leave almost everything I owned behind."

That weekend, with the help of the City of Toronto's intake system, Rochelle and her family arrived at Red Door's shelter for women and children escaping violence. It was here that they found normalcy and began the work to rebuild their lives.

Today, the family remains at the shelter where they found security and comfort. Rochelle's children are enrolled in school and going on Red Door field trips to water parks and other exciting places—the kind of fun activities that let her kids be kids again. And their case worker is supporting the family and their well-being by facilitating access to therapists, self-defence classes, and parenting programs.

Eventually, Rochelle hopes to go back to school to pursue a career outside health care. But her family is, and always will be, her main priority—and she's very grateful Red Door has been there for them.

"If it wasn't for Red Door, I don't know what would have happened to us. We had no other place to stay. We appreciate everything," she says. **"When you're running for your life, you don't think about packing boots. You just think about saving your family."**

*Image changed to protect privacy and security.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



HEALING & TRAINING

Arriving at Red Door is often the first step towards healing and rediscovering self-confidence. We provide assistance to help with this journey and establish a sense of safety as families navigate everyday life. Our counselling programs, life-skills training, and other services offer residents the emotional and psychological support to heal and build brighter futures. Residents also have access to a network of lawyers and other professionals to provide help when needed.



TRANSITIONAL OUTREACH SUPPORT

Having a place to call home is more than just having a roof over your head. It's somewhere you can relax and feel safe. Red Door's transitional supports assist the families to find and sustain a place to call home. The food bank is an essential component of the services we provide to families as they transition from the shelter to a home in the community.



CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMMING

In 2022-2023, we provided safe housing for 278 kids. Creating hope for a brighter future rests in supporting the youngest amongst us. Homelessness can rob a child from the excitement of growing up and exploring the world. That's why we invest in their emotional, social, and academic success, with programs that help them feel like kids once again. Our volunteers run various services and activities such as Homework Club, group activities and outings, and life-skills training.



FOOD BANK

When families are ready to move on from Red Door shelter, many find that over 50% of their income is spent on rent, leaving little for other necessities. To help curb the rise in food insecurity, we provide access to an on-site food bank for those transitioning from the shelter. The Red Door Food Bank offers culturally appropriate and special food items, as well as TTC fare compensation, because we believe the dignity of equitable food access is an essential right for all.

60% OF OUR RESIDENTS ARE CHILDREN ON ANY GIVEN NIGHT



BY THE NUMBERS 2022-2023

Red Door Family Shelter is a safe haven for families fleeing violence, refugees seeking sanctuary, and families in crisis with nowhere else to go. Here's how we helped over the past year.

WHO STAYED AT RED DOOR IN 2022-2023

135 FAMILIES, WHICH INCLUDED:

278 CHILDREN

171 ADULTS

61 OF THOSE FAMILIES WERE FLEEING VIOLENCE

42 OF THOSE FAMILIES WERE REFUGEES

32 OF THOSE FAMILIES STAYED FOR OTHER REASONS

NUMBER OF FAMILIES WE CONTINUED TO SUPPORT AFTER THEY MOVED ON FROM RED DOOR SHELTER

163 FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY USED OUR TRANSITIONAL OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICES

161 FAMILIES TURNED TO THE RED DOOR FOOD BANK

5,779 VISITS IN TOTAL AT THE RED DOOR FOOD BANK

'EVERYTHING IS EXCELLENT AT RED DOOR. I JUST NEED MY WIFE.'

A three-hour drive from Mexico City, Guanajuato is a lively state capital in central Mexico that's home to nearly 200,000 people. But behind the façade of vibrant architecture and bustling tourism, cartels endanger the livelihood of everyday Mexicans. When Andrés' * family was threatened, they made a difficult decision: He would head north to Canada with their two daughters, now 10 and 11, while his wife would stay behind with their aging parents and relatives.

Leaving their entire family and the only reality that they've ever known was difficult and full of uncertainty. **"We didn't know anything about Canada. We didn't know who could help,"** Andrés says. **"We also needed a place that I could use my wheelchair in, so we had to wait longer to find housing."**

When Andrés and his girls arrived in Toronto in September 2022, they were sent to a small hotel in Scarborough. Without a kitchen, they had to rely on takeout food—a far cry from the homemade tortillas, carne tostadas, and gorditas the family would enjoy together back home.

"My daughters love everything about Toronto. They love the snow! The only things they are missing are Mom and Mexican food!"

After two months of living in a hotel, the family received good news: there was a space for them at Red Door's shelter for families. Here they are finding a true sense of connection and community, with shelter support workers helping them navigate every step as they get established in Toronto.

With help from Maria, a Red Door children's program staff member who speaks Spanish, the girls are now enrolled in school and English language programs..

Red Door has also helped Andrés connect with the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and access health services for the entire family. **"Everyone in the shelter has helped me and my daughters a lot,"** Andrés shares.

Next up for Andrés is perfecting his English skills, finding permanent housing with support from Red Door staff, and transitioning into a career. He worked in an office in Mexico and would like to establish himself in a similar role. But Andrés' ultimate dream is to have his whole family together again. **"Since we've arrived at Red Door, we feel good. To tell you the truth, everything is fine in the shelter. The only thing I need right now is my wife."**

*Name and image changed to protect privacy and security.



AN EVENTFUL YEAR!

In-person events returned in 2022-2023, and we are so grateful for everyone who came together to support families in need.

COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

Even a chilly February night couldn't stop the warm hearts from walking with us for **Coldest Night of the Year 2023**. Our first in-person event in two years, the community gathered to brave snowy sidewalks and raise funds to end family homelessness. Over **211 participants** raised more than **\$110,000**, towering over our original goal of **\$89,000**. Thank you to our sponsors for making the evening possible and even bringing their own teams to walk alongside us. **Pilot Coffee** supplied yummy cookies, coffee, and hot chocolate to keep everyone motivated and warm throughout the night. Join us for next year's Coldest Night of the Year on February 24, 2024!

2 RUNS TO REMEMBER

Running is an important part of life for many of us—and lacing up for charity runs can make a real difference. Our ongoing partnerships with **TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon** and **Constantine Yorkville Run** raised a total of **\$16,223** for Red Door in the fall of 2022, supporting our efforts to end family homelessness. We're looking forward to being a part of these events again in 2023—and we hope to see you there, pounding the pavement!

BLUES FOR THE RED DOOR

Access to food is a basic human right, not a privilege. That is what **Andrew Jacob "Big Rude Jake" Hiebert** believed, the musician behind **Blues for the Red Door**. Not your average fundraiser, the event featured live music and dancing fuelled by the all-female house band.

Since 2014, over **\$26,000** has been raised to feed the families at Red Door. Hundreds of food items, clothing, and toiletries have also been donated in-kind over the years. We extend our deepest gratitude to **Lorraine Johnson** and the entire planning team as they continue Jake's legacy. This event brings hope and help to our community's women, children, and families.

NORTHERN KARATE SCHOOLS' 2023 FRIENDSHIP TOURNAMENT

The NKS community's annual event was a great success! The tournament, showcasing the extraordinary talents of NKS students and ninjas of all ages, also highlighted the tremendous generosity of the NKS community. Students from the six participating Northern Karate Schools turned to their friends, families, and neighbours for support, collectively raising \$22,158.50 for families at Red Door! Way to go team NKS!





VOLUNTEERING BRINGS US TOGETHER

Thank you to all the individual volunteers, board members, and corporate and affiliated groups who made 2022-2023 possible at Red Door—without you, we would not be able to deliver our life-saving and life-changing programs.

This past year, our volunteers gave an astonishing 2,625 hours of their time to Red Door—that's over 100 days in total. Volunteers helped keep our Homework Club, Evening School- Age Program, Food Bank, and Donation Room running, and they represented Red Door at various fundraisers and community events, including Yorkdale's Breakfast Television Celebrity Clothing Sale and the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon.

We are so grateful for all the support, and we'd like to give our volunteers a big round of applause for another incredible year!

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

We are grateful for the generous support of our donors and funders. You play a critical role in helping families facing homelessness. By removing the obstacles in their path, you are opening doors to opportunity, so they can build positive, sustainable futures.

With your support, we are able to provide programs and services that are truly life-changing. Your gift makes a real impact.

Please visit reddoorshelter.ca/our-donors to see the full list of our 2022-2023 donors, including individuals, organizations, and foundations.

Red Door Family Shelter Board of Directors

Arielle Loeb – Chair

Bryan Good – Vice-Chair

Shikha Ghandi – Treasurer

Alan Mendoza – Director

Carina Chan – Director

Crystal Ram – Director

Marissa Anderson – Director

Nahida Mohamed – Director

Nida Mian – Director



Spring Clothing Sort at Riverside Church in June.



Volunteer sisters Patty and Toni mid-shift.



Volunteer friends Amy, Kim and Areeya sort together.



Volunteer Cindy tackling sorting t-shirts of all sizes.



Corporate Volunteer Team Ewing Morris organizing clothes for each shelter family on the final day of the sort.



Breakfast Television's Closet Sale at Yorkdale Mall on June 17: Red Door Ambassador Stephanie (centre) represents Red Door who was the charitable beneficiary of \$37,453 raised.

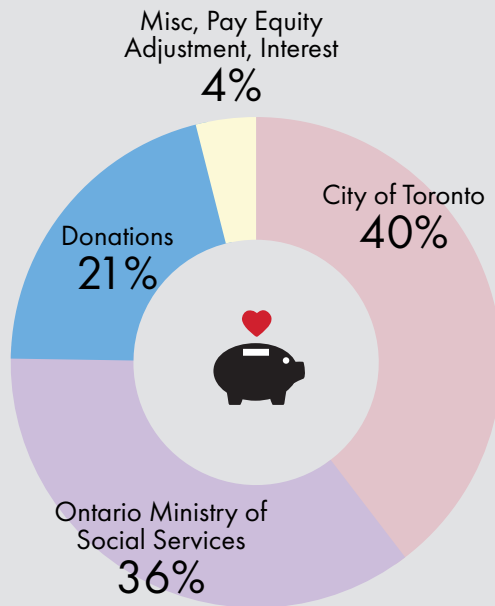
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

YEAR-END MARCH 31, 2023

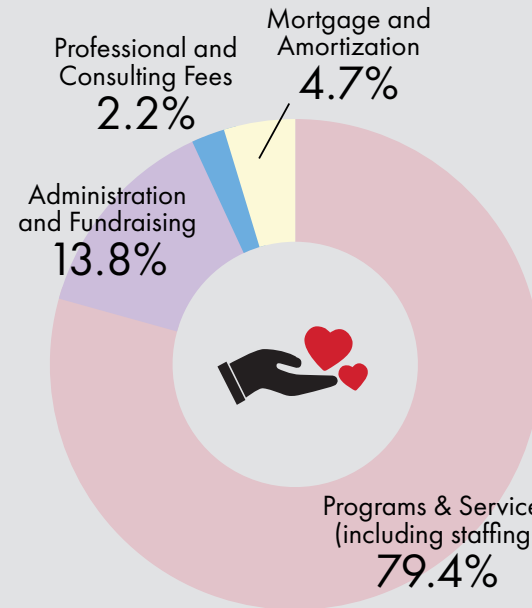
Our families depend on donors and volunteers to help change tomorrow, today. Your generous donations fund key programs and services and your volunteer time offers families care and compassion. We couldn't support families fleeing violence or homelessness without your support.



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



Total Annual Revenue
\$7,563,655



Total Annual Expenditures
\$6,949,977

*Total may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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

VISION FOR TOMORROW: OUR NEW 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Red Door has been a beacon of hope in Toronto for 40 years. We look forward to a day when family homelessness will be a memory of the past. To get there, we must address the systemic issues that impact families daily, and actively listen and consult with clients, program participants, community members, staff, partners, policy makers, and funders. It's conversations like these that provided the basis of our new three-year Strategic Plan—a dynamic roadmap towards change.

Our first step is to continue building a team that reflects the diversity of our residents. Familiarity can provide comfort in a crisis, and multicultural staff can reduce language barriers and establish a deeper sense of solidarity. As we move in this direction, we are committed to establishing strategies that promote employee recruitment, retention, development, engagement, and well-being.

Critical change is most effective through continual communication. By collaborating with staff and residents, impactful services will be pinpointed, creating opportunities for long-term solutions and sustainable growth.

Another way that we will be enhancing our services and programming is through new technology investments. Led by compassion and informed by data, we will allocate resources with increased efficacy, allowing us to be readily equipped when needed the most.

Red Door is so much more than a shelter. It's a safe refuge when every door feels closed. It's empowerment through education and self-care. It's helping kids be kids. It's building brighter futures. For every first step and next step, Red Door will be there for families, with open hearts. [Join us.](#)



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PROVIDE SERVICE EXCELLENCE

We will deliver excellent family-centred services and work to address the systemic issues that impact families experiencing homelessness.

MODERNIZE FOR IMPACT

We will strengthen our organizational collaboration, efficiency and delivery of services.

BECOME AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

We will promote an inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER WITH COMMUNITIES

We will ensure that we can continue to support families to combat homelessness.



Red Door
FAMILY SHELTER

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