



ANNUAL REPORT

2022

Mission Statement

ACSA is a non-profit, multi-service agency addressing needs and empowering children, youth, newcomers, homeless and underserved communities to build a better tomorrow



Values

ACSA team members are guided and inspired by the following core values:

Compassion and Respect

Every person has the right to be met with compassion and treated with respect.

Diversity and Inclusion

We embrace different perspectives, believing that diversity enriches us all, and are guided by the voices of our communities, including local residents and community partners.

Accessibility

All people should have access to the resources and the support they need.

Responsive

Services must be responsive to changing needs and priorities.

Collaboration

We are stronger when we are able to work collaboratively with one another.

Supportive

We are committed to supporting individual residents and emerging community groups to grow and develop.

Accountability

We strive to achieve results that have a positive impact on our community.



Message from the Board Chair

Manny Sousa

It's been a rough three years of isolation, vaccinations, increase in mental health issues and the list goes on. I said this last year and I'll say it again, "The needs of our communities do not go away. In fact, the need is even greater, today, in a post pandemic world."

ACSA in the community!

For nearly 50 years, ACSA has always been rooted in community assisting those in need. Remembering that even during the pandemic, the great team at ACSA never closed its doors to community. They continue to persevere giving a hand up to community striving to offer the best possible service despite challenging times.

This year we held our Strategic Planning session where we confirmed that ACSA is on the right track to fulfill our Strategic Objectives for the next five years. A strong focus on governance at the board level to ensure that we meet our fiduciary responsibilities. In fact, we have renamed our Policy committee to Policy and Governance committee. This committee has been working hard to ensure that we are compliant with the new Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) by reviewing and updating our by-laws and policies.

The other Standing committees include Finance, Nominations and Board Development and Fundraising and Marketing committees have also been meeting regularly throughout the year.

The Finance committee has three Certified Professional Accounts to ensure that our finances meet the vigorous standards as set out from the General Accounting practices.

The Nominations committee have been busy interviewing and bringing on board (pardon the pun) four new candidates that are up for election at our AGM.

Finally, I'm very excited about the direction that our Fundraising & Marketing committee are heading in. I would like to personally thank Maria Rio, our Fundraising Consultant for developing a comprehensive strategy that hopefully brings in funding from donors outside the traditional grants and commitment from United Way and the City of Toronto.

ACSA's strength would not be possible without their incredible team led by the incomparable Executive Director, Lee Soda. The team is always looking to improve and expand services to the community. Of course, their mantra, "stronger together", is only possible through the incredible volunteers who give so much of their time to assist ACSA. The commitment to helping our communities is very much appreciated! Of course, this also includes our incredible Board of Directors. They not only volunteer their time but ensure that ACSA has all the support they need from a governance perspective.

I'd like to thank two directors who will be completing their terms on our Board. Stanley Szeto who was our Treasurer for a number of years and is completing his second term on the board. I also want to thank Maria Molano who led our Nominations and Board Development committee. I really enjoyed their insights and dedication to our board. Thank you, Stanley and Maria. You will be missed.

Thank you to every single one of our volunteers. We value and appreciate your dedication and commitment to ACSA and the communities we serve. I encourage you to read through the 2022 Annual Report to get a snapshot of ACSA accomplishments and challenges. Although I have focused on work being done behind the scenes, the annual report will showcase many Agency accomplishments.

Finally, I can't thank Lee Soda and her incredible team enough. The work they do at ACSA is amazing. Words alone cannot describe it. Thank You, Thank You, Thank You.



Message from the Executive Director

Lee Soda

Another remarkable year of Agincourt Community Services Association (ACSA) welcoming and assisting residents from all over Scarborough and beyond.

At the onset of the pandemic, like many others, we were faced with unprecedented challenges that resulted in, process changes, new ideas, and an incredible bounty of generosity from staff/volunteers to funders and everyone in between. Drawing from the many lessons of the year prior, ACSA has continued to re-imagine possibilities in all areas of our work. The constant adaptations allowed us to deliberately focus on the bigger picture and think about new initiatives internally and externally. We learned that from trials and tribulations, comes change, growth and re-imagining what's possible. In 2022 there was a lot of experimenting, learning, and renewed optimism and gratitude for the strength and resilience of our Scarborough!

The pandemic consistently showed us the many social issues that disproportionately impact low income, marginalized and racialized people including mental health concerns, gender-based violence, job insecurity, lack of affordable housing, and many more. These realities kept us focused, informed, and allowed us to be intentional in how we redesign our thinking to solve issues and create sustainable, impactful community initiatives. In 2022, ACSA provided nearly 7600 services to over 5400 newcomers from all walks of life. ACSA expanded our Food bank and moved to a new 7,300 sq/ft space and continues to serve 5000 individuals every month. We continued to serve thousands of hot, nutritious meals to individuals experiencing homelessness, and housing dozens of individuals in safe, affordable homes... no easy feat during a housing crisis and within systems that are not equal for all people. The work of ACSA, always rooted in community, and with the voice of community at the table to inform, educate, knowledge transfer and often, lead the changes that transform communities.

Among these are women, seniors, and newcomers in precarious life situations needing support quickly and confidentially. In 2022 ACSA played a lead role in building healthy communities by providing critical services that contributed to increased vaccine engagement for Scarborough residents disproportionately affected by COVID-19. ACSA led a collaborative of 18 stakeholders and supported equity seeking groups throughout our communities. Leaving no stone unturned, we used various forms of engagement, workshops, community-based vaccine clinics, home visits and initiatives aimed at educating and informing residents about vaccines, mental health wellness, resilience, and ongoing educational opportunities. ACSA was in community, leading, following and joining forces with residents during times of uncertainty and fear. ACSA is a backbone Agency, a leader, a collaborator and community connector in Scarborough. We genuinely understand the value of partnerships and never take for granted that **#TogetherWeAreStronger**

Additionally, ACSA has been privileged to partner with many local organizations to meet the changing needs of newcomers. We supported newcomers to find jobs through the ACSA Pathways to Employment project, get vaccinated via numerous community pop-up vaccine clinics, obtain access to internet and devices at a low to no cost, access settlement resources online with ease, advocate for affordable housing and much more. Through our many collaborations and community connections, we have helped people in ways that our services could not have done alone. We are also proud and grateful of the interconnected partnerships and collaborations at the heart of reimagining new possibilities for Scarborough residents. Knowledge sharing, learning exchanges, staff and Agency growth is an inherent part of ACSA, and we have aspired to be a leading and learning organization. This continues to be part of ACSA's strategic plan.

Through collaboration, partnership, and being part of networking tables, conferences and more, ACSA shared knowledge from the perspective of experienced leaders in order to convey best practices, communicate practical knowledge, and the sharing of hard-earned experiences, success stories and social responsibility. Common topics of discussion included anti-oppressive practices and digital service delivery/digital literacy. We worked very closely with our funders at all government levels representing the communities we serve in addressing newly emerged challenges and opportunities.

Every year comes with unique challenges in parts of the world where people are disproportionately impacted; 2022 was no exception. When faced with the tumultuous political situation in Afghanistan and Ukraine, ACSA jumped into action to support Afghan and Ukrainian newcomers and refugees during these difficult times. ACSA ensured that staff were adequately trained to assist Afghan and Ukrainian newcomers and hired staff that spoke Dari/Pashto/Ukrainian/Russian to support our newest neighbours coming to ACSA seeking supports and settling in Scarborough.

ACSA has taken steps to increase organizational efficiency and provide professional development opportunities for employees. We aim to better support our employees and systems to in turn benefit those we serve. We have invested in training and other initiatives in advancing the goal of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) internally and for our communities. ACSA is on the path of providing professional development of all staff, using both in-house expertise and external facilitators for the training. We will continue to learn more, do more and do better to demonstrate anti oppressive practices from within to ensure our staff and clients are treated with respect and dignity.

The tenacity and steadfast commitment of ACSA to the communities in which we are privileged to serve would not be possible without the support, dedication, and partnerships from all levels of government, community residents, ACSA staff, our Board of Directors, dedicated volunteers, and donors. We thank each contributor for an incredible year of hard work, impact and success in serving community. It is a privilege to work alongside with you in building healthy communities and vibrant workplaces. ACSA's success depends on our ability to learn from one another and support diverse, and vibrant communities for all.

With gratitude, always,

Lee Soda

Community Food Centre

March 2022, a 7,300 Sq ft Scarborough Community Food Centre became a reality. Addressing food insecurity is a key area of work at ACSA. We focus on addressing inequities within our systems while meeting people's basic needs and connecting people to community and resources. The ACSA Food Centre is one of the largest food banks in the City seeing skyrocketing increases in people struggling to make ends meet. The Food Center is open Monday to Friday between 11am-4pm by appointment, and we aim to turn no one away in times of need.



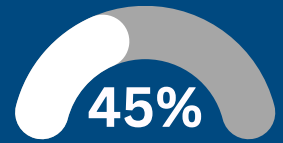
In 2022...



3,700 Households served
from March 21 - Dec 31



125,165 Individuals served
from March 21 - Dec 31



**Increase of clients served in
November 2022**

Our goal is to improve access to community supports and provide a dignified approach to accessing food. Implementing a "shopping model" where people are allocated points, and can shop similar to a grocery store, putting in their cart what they need for their families. Beyond the provision of food, the Food Centre provides skill building workshops that include, cooking/canning and other food related topics. The Food Centre plays a pivotal role in connecting people to other ACSA programs, services and community supports. Many people are connected to services including, newcomer supports, child and family programs and essential housing supports.





2022 was also a monumental year as we were recognized as the Best in Class for *Outstanding Food Program* by the Daily Bread Toronto.

This was a pillar moment for us as the recognition of ACSA's work in addressing food insecurity in Scarborough was highlighted on a greater scale. The relentlessness of our staff, volunteers and partners continues to thrive.

***We serve one person every minute every day.
In one day, we serve about 300 clients and more.***



Additionally, the Community Food Centre is also a space which provides an opportunity for community volunteers to learn, grow and advocate for their community. Volunteers from all walks of life come together and play an integral role at the Community Food Centre. They show up every day supporting client needs and uphold the values and missions of ACSA. Without the support from our volunteers, the ACSA community Food Centre would not be where it is today.



"... I was a single mom and I was dealing with the loss of my mom. I had left an abusive relationship and had a lot of health issues cause of that and had to leave work. You [ACSA Food Centre] were always good and provided food for my daughter and family."

Community Food Centre Client

Child & Family Centre

Early Years (0- 6) & Parent Support

After facing extensive challenges throughout the pandemic, children and families were excited to return to in-person programs! Providing families with child centred programming and resources to support healthy child development and social interaction is vital! Virtual programming also continued as this served many families well. During 2022, the Parent Support Worker was busy providing knowledge exchange opportunities to families, and supporting parents and caregivers with specific one to one needs.



In 2022...



8,359

Families served
Virtual Program



11,075

Families served
In-Person Programs



585

Middle years participants
served

In 2022 there was a concerted effort on parents and caregivers learning the stages of child development and identified areas where their child needed extra attention and provided the tools to support their children.

A collaboration with the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation launched a Lost and Found project, where children shared their pandemic experiences through writing and art activities. The project aimed to improve literacy and build community, confidence, and empathy. Guest authors and chefs helped children explore other mediums of expression. A wonderful experience for the children!





Middle Years Program (6 - 12 years) & Restorative Justice Practices

Our afterschool programs for children ages 6-12 are a valuable asset for parents and children during the school year, March and summer breaks. Back to in-person programs was especially beneficial for children experiencing social isolation, mental health, and educational challenges, all heightened by the pandemic. In-person connection with leaders and friends boosted morale and allowed for sharing time together. Revisiting best practices, refreshing program outcomes and ongoing community support reinforces the benefit of accessible, quality community based out of school programs for children and families.

... The After School Program is a tremendous resource for our families and I also appreciate your willingness to always support our families who are in need.

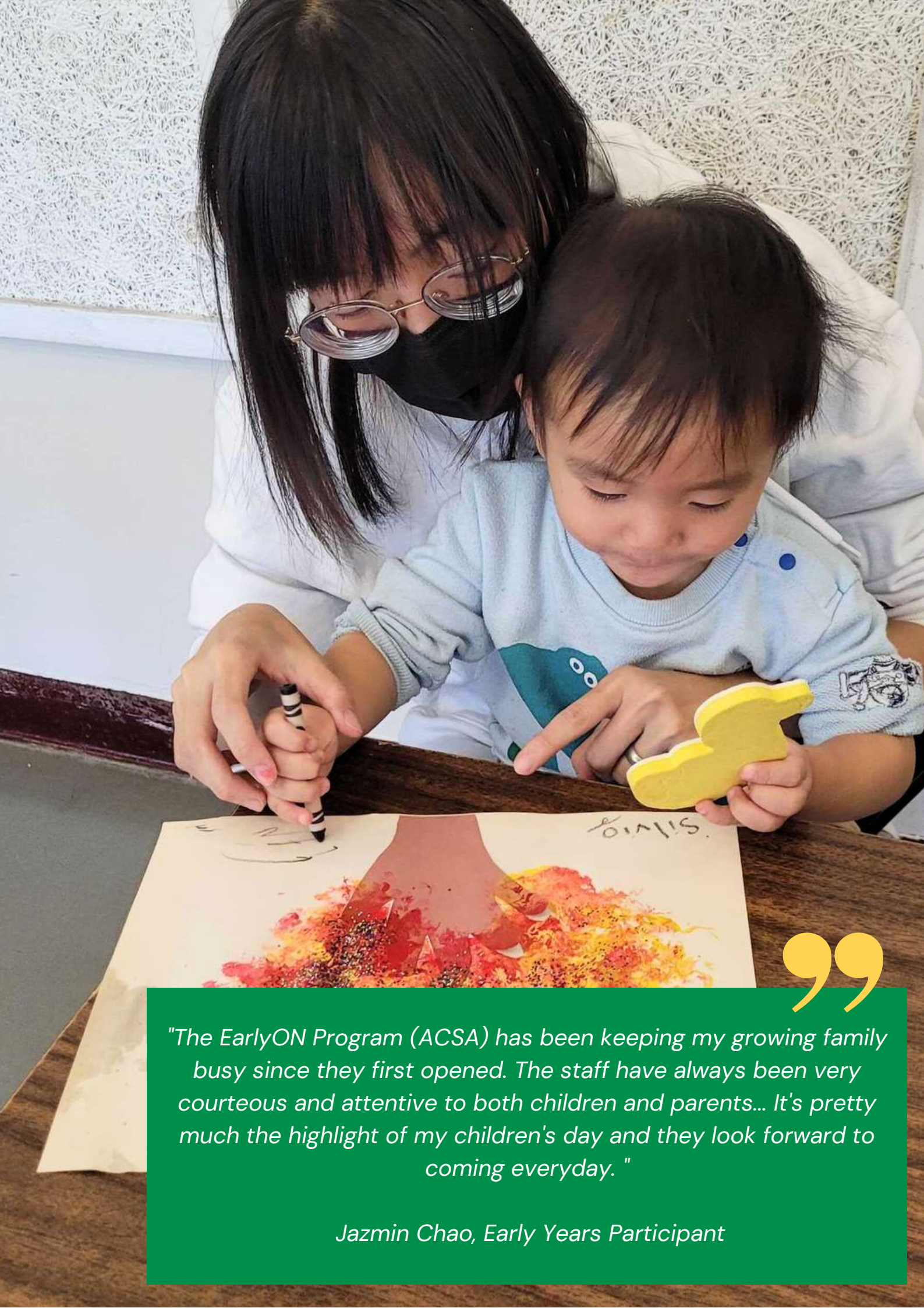
Darryl Gillis III.

Past Principle of Sliver Springs Jr P.S.



Our Afterschool Program also incorporates Restorative practices as a way of working through conflict putting the focus on repairing the harm that has been done. It is an approach to conflict resolution that includes all of the parties involved. ACSA has been creating curriculum and helping children learn about this practice.

Furthermore, the program is focused on developing children's emotional and social skills, emphasizing conflict/aggression prevention and managing and building healthy relationships. In 2022, we returned to in-person program during March and summer breaks, providing children with the tools and language to enhance their social skills, emotional and health support and practice conflict resolution and empathy.



"The EarlyON Program (ACSA) has been keeping my growing family busy since they first opened. The staff have always been very courteous and attentive to both children and parents... It's pretty much the highlight of my children's day and they look forward to coming everyday. "

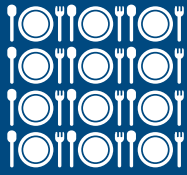
Jazmin Chao, Early Years Participant

Food Security

The Food Security department runs programs that teach/increase knowledge about nutrition, healthy cooking, and gardening to the residents of communities in Scarborough. The Cooking Healthy Together program expanded in 2019 and now invites all ages to participate in online classes and in-person workshops. The Backyard Gardening program and community gardens provide access to workshops covering gardening topics such as organic composting, sustainable growing, growing mushrooms, and introduction to herbs. The ACSA Community Gardens are green, lush and a peaceful place where residents go to learn about growing food, connect with friends and learn more about community assets they can access.



In 2022...



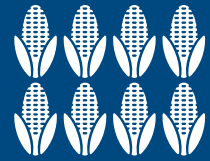
550

participants served in
Food Security Program



80

Volunteers



53

Gardeners

The role of food impacts our lives dramatically, from satisfying a basic human right to the deep connection throughout communities. It's important to recognize this connection throughout our food security work as the connection between food security and food goes beyond nutrition. It also strengthens our connections to our families, different cultures and our environment. Ensuring our work provides a holistic approach we were able to collaborate with other ACSA departments such as Community food centre, youth summer programming, Chester Le community work and Newcomer's summer programming.





Furthermore, ACSA's Food Security Department received the Pollinate TO grant. The grant allowed us to build two pollinator gardens in the Chester Le Community Corner Olive Garden. The gardens encourage growth of community plots, supporting local food supply and increasing fresh produce. The produce is donated to the local food bank, providing access to healthy and fresh foods for Chester Le families.

The pollinator gardens provide a space for community members to support environmental sustainability and improve their own mental and physical health by engaging with nature.

"...This is my fourth time participating and I always appreciate all that we learn. I enjoy the in-person sessions and appreciate the online sessions also"

Food Security Program Participant



The opportunities provided by the Food Security Team allowed for residents and volunteers to participate in plant research, garden design, and learned about planting and plant care throughout the changing seasons.

Members expressed gratitude for the opportunity to diversify the local ecosystem, combat climate change with native flowering plants, and collaborate with neighbours.



"I really enjoy attending these sessions. I look forward to all of them. Thank you for bringing us together."

Food Security Program Participant

Housing Services & Housing Access

Our Street Outreach program serves clients that live in encampments, under bridges, in rail yards or on the street.

Over 2022, the team has increased caseload capacity, demonstrated faster response times to concerned citizen calls, and put in place more efficient support services that have resulted in better outcomes for clients. The program has reduced homelessness and improved the lives of those in need, resulting in a positive impact on the community.



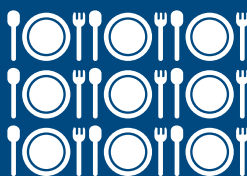
In 2022...



110

people sheltered

experiencing homelessness in Scarborough and North York



44,778

Meals served

from North & South Drop-in



27

clients served from Housing Hub

The Drop-in program continued to provide essential services and supports to those who need it the most. 2022 the ACSA Drop-in programs welcomed back a full spectrum of services including medical services such as a primary doctor, nurse practitioner, and foot-care clinic appointments could be accessed by clients in-person. Clients were able to enjoy meals in the drop-in dining area, use laundry and shower facilities, and participate in in-person programming.

In addition, the food hamper days at the South Drop-in location were reintroduced after a break during the Covid-19 pandemic.





Drop-in programs provide low barrier community based access to vulnerable, isolated persons in need of critical services in a welcoming, caring environment for individuals struggling with the different challenges faced by people at different times in life. The Drop-In program partnered with South Riverdale Community Health Centre to bring the Safer Opiate Supply (SOS) programs to the ACSA South Drop-In location. The SOS program aims to address the overdose crisis by supporting individuals transitioning from street opioids to safer pharmaceutical grade opioids. Having this program operate out of the ACSA South Drop-in has been incredibly helpful in ensuring clients have safer supply options located outside of the downtown Toronto core.

Increasing food costs and lack of affordable housing led to an increase in the number of community members accessing ACSA for support



In October 2022, ACSA's previous Housing Help program expanded into the new Housing Hub program. This program housed a total of **27** clients. Each client housed through the ACSA Housing Help/Hub program remained on the caseload for up to 1 year, and was provided housed-focused follow-up supports.

In addition, the ACSA Housing Hub became a community partner of the Toronto Rent Bank program, and hired one full-time Rent Bank worker. These changes have allowed for community members to access housing supports all in one central location and responding to client needs in a fast, efficient manner.

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“If you need help this place will set you on your path”.

L.J., Drop-In Client

Housing Prevention

The Homelessness Prevention team work closely with individuals by offering one to one support and vital supports for the prevention of evictions. They ensure client needs are met to advance independence and housing stability.

In 2022, ACSA's Homelessness Prevention Services Department continued to support individuals and households exiting homelessness or at risk of homelessness to stabilize their housing, while providing holistic, client focused, wrap-around case management supports. The goal is to foster greater independence and sustained long term housing stability.



In 2022...



115

clients provided with
basic needs



110

clients received social and
community integration supports



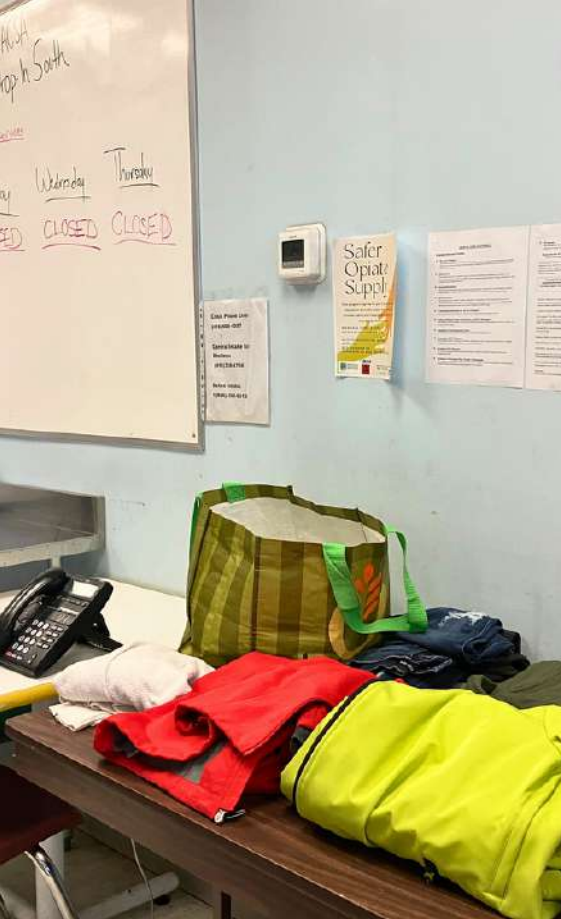
153

Clients served
through EPIC program

ACSA's homelessness prevention programs- Eviction Prevention in Community (EPIC), Follow-Up Supports, and Voluntary Trusteeship- utilize a Housing First and Harm Reduction approach to stabilize housing and improve outcomes for vulnerable households. Due to the opioid crisis, lack of affordable housing, and economic impacts from the pandemic, there is a growing demand for housing support services. ACSA's in-house supports, such as harm reduction and addictions counselling, have proven to be effective in promoting greater independence for clients in addition to the case management clients receive. The programs are always client-centered and co-designed with clients to meet their unique needs.

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In October, ACSA launched a Voluntary Trusteeship program to support individuals and households at risk of homelessness to stabilize their housing. In the past several years, the data shows an increase in the number of lower income neighbourhoods and systemic poverty taking root across Scarborough. In 2001, one in five families in Scarborough were living in poverty. The community need for the ACSA Voluntary Trusteeship Project (VTP) has been evident in Scarborough where income levels are some of the lowest in the City. In Scarborough, absence of legal rooming houses, affordable housing shortage, newcomer status, single parent households, unemployment, inability to pay rent and inadequate income contribute to greater risk of homelessness. The VT program proves to be a proactive measure that greatly contributes to housing stability and eviction prevention.

Between 1981 and 2001, the population of Scarborough grew by 33.8% but the number of 'poor' economic families increased by 136.6%



As a result of the City of Toronto's Rapid Rehousing Initiative, there is an increased number of individuals and families with limited income housed in Scarborough. These individuals require additional supports to sustain their housing and prevent return to homelessness. ACSA's Voluntary Trusteeship program was established to support the City of Toronto in its goal to reduce homelessness to zero by maximizing client resources in order to foster long term financial stability and independence.



"In February 2022 I was faced with an eviction notice. While pregnant with my first child, this felt like a nightmare. I quickly became very stressed and felt hopeless. After exploring little to no options, I was connected to EPIC at Agincourt Community Services. The epic worker on my case went above and beyond to help me... Her commitment and compassion to the matter, is truly what helped me and my newborn avoid homelessness. I'm so thankful that this program exists."

Anonymous, EPIC Client

Newcomers' & Settlement Services

The Newcomers' Centre provides settlement programs and services for new immigrants, refugees, and newcomer LGBTQ2S+. Offering programs and workshops for skills development, employment support and creating ongoing growth in Ontario.

In 2022, our Newcomers' Centre received 3 new funding opportunities from the Canadian Women's Foundation. The first grant awarded was the Recovery and Renewal grants under the Shocking Proofing Communities. This grant allowed us to create a Women's Tech Hub, a space that offers digital literacy that enhances the knowledge of available resources on gender-based violence and empowers women to gather vital resources.



In 2022...



5,373

Newcomers served



7,545

Service Sessions Offered



974

Newcomer Children & Youth served

The funding also provided case management support for women survivors of abuse. Which allowed us to leverage ACSA's English Women's Circle to integrate lessons and curriculum to help women increase their awareness of their human rights, identifying signs of gender-based violence and resources available to help them be better informed.

The third grant we received was a Capacity Building opportunity that offered ACSA opportunity to support increased organizational development and capacity in the areas of Anti-Oppression, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This grant has also provided, much needed, professional development opportunities for ACSA staff. Grants that offer opportunity to incorporate Agency wide training and professional development are great contributors to the health and stability of the Agency.

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ACSA Newcomers' Centre has once again demonstrated its agility in responding to the call to support the settlement needs of newly arrived Ukrainian immigrants. In light of the federal government's emergency travel program for Ukrainians seeking to migrate to Canada, In 2022, we served 672 Ukrainian Newcomers'.

The Newcomers' team offered comprehensive services such as assistance in finding suitable housing, registering for government benefits, enrolling in language programs such as ACSA's Language for Ukrainian Newcomers (LfUN) and other LINC programs, and providing employment support. Furthermore, to foster a sense of community and emotional support during this challenging time, ACSA Newcomers' Centre created a support group called the Cooking and Singing Ukrainian Group that meet every month to showcase Ukrainian dishes accompanied by music and support for each other to reduce social isolation.

In 2022, the Entrepreneur Speaker Series highlighted the remarkable achievements of newcomer entrepreneurs as they navigate through the intricacies of establishing their small business in Canada. We created this platform to motivate other newcomers to follow their dreams and learn from other newcomers on how they can successfully fulfill their goals of establishing their small business.



2022 was a busy year for the Newcomers' Centre, serving over 5,000 newcomers. More Afghan refugees were served as more family members arrived through other sponsorship pathways. We have seen an increase in arrivals of other refugees and have witnessed the impact of immigration backlog and delays in their integration process. We promptly answered the call to help refugees residing at the Delta Hotel and 22 Metropolitan Road by offering itinerant services and providing them with vital information on how to access resources. The interactions with our newest citizens are filled with care and compassion by our staff, who understand that the settlement journey is often long and overwhelming. The staff walk alongside our Newcomers to make the journey a little less daunting.

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"I want to say that I am grateful to ACSA for their help. I needed to talk. They helped me with all of my needs and accepted me with a warm welcome. I thank everyone who works at this agency"

Client from Newcomers' Centre



Youth Services

Resilience, Accountability, Community, Knowledge & Success (R.A.C.K.S)

The Youth Violence Prevention program (RACKS) increased youth and parent engagement significantly by utilizing an evidence-based model for supporting at-risk youth. The program incorporated violence interruption and intervention as a crucial component. Staff expertise's included knowledge of vulnerable areas, understanding of various intervention techniques and the ability to engage youth through unconventional means. Additionally, youth were engaged in prosocial programming to prevent violent behaviors from a younger age.



In 2022...



331

Youth served

with Youth Outreach Workers¹



400

Youth & Residents served

from RACKS Program



1,164

Youth & Residents served

at CCLC

Chester Le Community Corner

The Chester Le Community Corner aims to strengthen the relationship of residents in the Chester Le and the Steeles-L'Amoreaux neighbourhood. Offering services such as employment and skills training, workshops and programs for children, youth and seniors.

ACSA's youth team and CLCC invested additional resources in increasing access to mental health supports, particularly for BIPOC youth and residents. They addressed gaps in accessing support and created an intervention plan to meet this need. CLCC staff invested time in increasing their knowledge of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to reassess service delivery and increase awareness of cultural sensitivity.





A partnership was created between Preventure Program and CAMH to provide harm reduction workshops for youth due to an increase in substance use seen amongst individuals and youth. The partnership included trained staff who delivered an evidence-based program addressing substance use among youth.

Furthermore, new evidence-based workshops were created to increase resources for youth mental health and wellness, including workshops on body image and food, healthy relationships with oneself and one's partner, and abuse and healthy relationships. These workshops were offered to youth groups in Scarborough, with a focus on creating resources around healthy relationships due to an increase in domestic violence reports during the pandemic.

96% of youth say they are able to recognize when they need help with mental & well-being than when they started the program

R.A.C.K.S Evaluation Reporting Statistics



In response to the increased food insecurity faced in the community, CLCC Youth Breakfast Program was created. The program was developed in partnership with the Black Community Consultative and provides healthy meals to all youth and children in the Chester Le Community, addressing challenges faced by students attending school without proper nutrition.

According to Toronto Foundation for Student Success: One in every four children in Toronto lives in poverty and 40% of all children come to school hungry each day. It can be as high as 68% in our most at-risk communities. Research shows that when children have enough to eat, they feel energized, concentrate better in class and perform better in school.

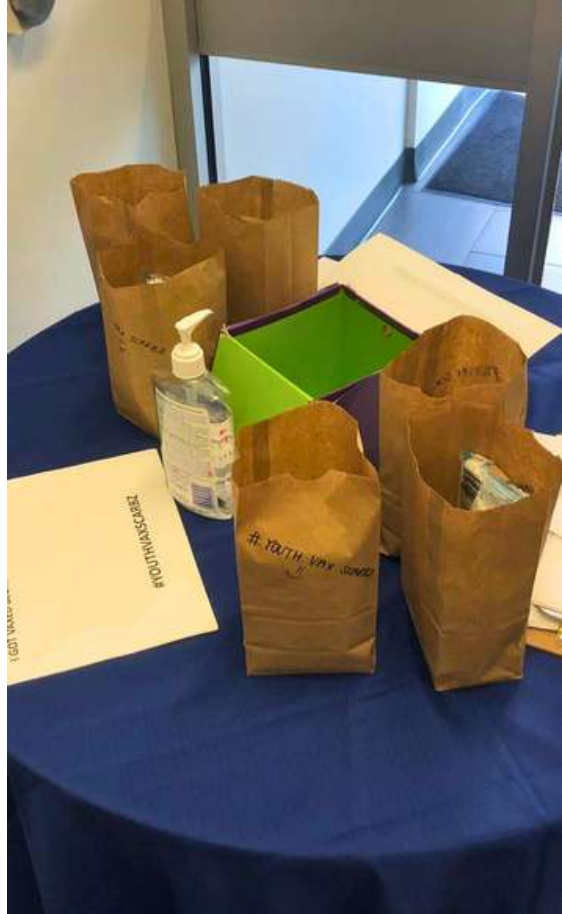


"This mentorship program has helped me stay on track with my school goal, make clear progress and create a plan for the rest of the school year. My mentor made me feel comfortable and we established a good bond throughout our meetings..."

*Participant of Youth Violence Prevention (YVP)
Program*

Community Healing Project

Over the past year the Community Healing Project has been supporting the community with workshops and engagement around mental health. This project supports youth and their families from the impact of violence that they have experienced. CHP has worked with over 500 youth and their families this past year. Outreach continues to be a major part of the Community Healing Project as it brings awareness to the magnitude and impact the project is having across the city. Outreach efforts were also done to bring awareness to the workshops happening in the 3 communities, Woburn, Chester Le, Markham and Eglinton.



“I think ACSA offers support to families and children in the community. It strengthens the community and brings people together. I get a lot of support with housing, child support, and financial support. It has been very helpful and has helped create change in my mental health and overall well being.

**I would tell [residents] to go access the support because you won't regret it.”
- Chester Le Resident**

Targeted outreach was done specifically to engage the youth in these before mentioned communities, and also to connect with the different agencies within Scarborough. The main focus for the outreach is to connect with people that are supporting the youth in these communities, and to promote services offered by The Community Healing Project.

Throughout the duration of the Community Healing Project in the east Quadrant, a number of alliances and partnerships have been forged. This allows for the continued success of the project, exchange of ideas, and the referral of youth from these agencies that are doing similar work in the specific communities of focus.

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Bay Mills Community Hub

2022 was a busy year for the Bay Mills hub, as the space was vibrant and animated with programs for children, youth, families and seniors living in the community.

In 2022, Canada Summer Jobs funding allowed for the hiring of 13 young people, providing much needed employment opportunities for youth in the community. This allowed ACSA, the opportunity to offer a robust array of summer programs and opportunities, where youth leaders were able to share their skills/talents and offer mentorship supports to the younger children in the community.



In 2022...



1,600

participant visits

with Children's Afterschool Program



6,075

resident visits

from Breakfast Program



1,800

Youth visits

from Summer Camp

The Bay Mills hub continues to offer a wide range of food security initiatives. This includes a much needed breakfast program where upwards of 30 children are provided a nutritious meal several days a week beginning their day with a healthy meal in a warm, caring and welcoming environment. The space continues to support a much loved, resident led food market accessible to the larger community.. Residents recently mobilized and created a Community Garden Committee and with the support of Toronto Community Housing, secured a plot of land. Residents disseminated seeds and pots and a good dose of encouragement to initiate balcony gardening, with the goal of launching a community garden in Spring 2023.





In collaboration with Toronto Community Housing (Active Living Department), the Bay Mills hub supported an exercise and socialization program for seniors in the community.

The Senior Social Club program was implemented as a response to the seniors' desire to connect with other community members. Pandemic isolation took a huge toll of Seniors and they recognized the need to boost their physical and mental health through exercise and social engagement. This community-driven collaboration increased connectivity between neighbouring community agencies and responded to current needs and concerns as identified by the community.

“the children say this summer was the best summer of their lives.”

Community Resident of Bay Mills



This year the female youth had the opportunity to participate in the MUD GIRL RUN for Breast Cancer Awareness fundraiser. 25 female youth take part along with staff and volunteers. The girls met every week for 3 months, and attended a series of workshops focusing on mental and physical health leading up to the events. This experience empowered the young women in the community to collaborate with their peers, share ideas and built life long friendships. With a successful turn out this year we hope to introduce this event in the new year.

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Dorset Park

Community Hub

Dorset Park Community Hub is a place where everyone has equal access to a wide range of services and supports vital to the well being of the community.

2022 began with a gentle reintroduction to integrating community back into the physical space. By year end, the Dorset Park Hub fully opened its doors to community and programs resumed in person. Once again, the hub is full of activity animated by the coming and going of residents, volunteers and staff looking to serve community to the fullest.



In 2022...

Over 50,000 persons accessed the Hub for programs and services such as English Circle, Housing supports, Seniors program and referrals for a number of different issues, partner services, summer programs, Newcomer programs, Early Years program, food centre and many more.

The return of a variety of events that brought people together again included the much loved Halloween Celebration with over 100 children attending. Children and families were once again able to enjoy a variety of activities and of course, plenty of tasty treats!

In partnership with SCAN (Scarborough Civic Action Network) and Women's English Circle hosted an All Candidates Meet and Greet. Residents learned about the different candidate platforms running in the provincial election.





Residents learned about the different candidate platforms running in the provincial election. Residents had the opportunity to address their concerns and questions with candidates. Attendance and participation as in person events took place was significant. This was imperative as people expressed their desire to return to lives where interaction with people was welcomed. The excitement of community members able to connect with one another was evident throughout the year!

In addition, to meeting community needs a collaboration with residents from Canlish and Glamorgan neighbourhoods, introduced a Cook and Connect Program

The purpose of the program was to bring residents from Canlish and Glamorgan neighbourhoods together for an opportunity to

The Hub has 8 agency partners that offer a wide variety of programs and services in the space such as mental health, jobs for youth, advocacy and reintegration for persons who have been in conflict with the law.



neighbourhoods together for an opportunity to build new connections amongst each other and with agency partners within the Dorset Park Community. Providing a space for individuals of different backgrounds to explore the many commonalities they share, to bring about community healing and to connect through meaningful conversations and to provide support for each other, all while cooking a meal together.

Dorset Park Community hub is a space that provides wrap around supports for residents from across communities. Whether it's services for seniors, youth, newcomers, mental health supports or access to printing/fax accessibilities. Residents can rely on us to get their needs met.



“ Through the English Circle, I have made wonderful friends, interesting social life, which is very important for people who are trying to establish a new life in a new country. Lots of thanks the English Circle, ACSA and the donor Sonor Foundation”

*Claudia
Participant from Women's English Circle*

SCAN

Scarborough Civic Action Network

Scarborough Civic Action Network (SCAN) is a non-partisan, community-driven network that aims to support civic engagement to address inequities and mobilize a civic voice for Scarborough residents.

In 2022, SCAN continued to play a pivotal role in the community, advocating for equity and engaging with those who are most vulnerable and disconnected from civic processes and decision-making in their community.



In 2022...

Coming out of the pandemic, inequities were amplified and SCAN worked with residents to ensure that Scarborough's candidates understood the importance of priority issues (affordable housing, transit and community safety) through the development of a community platform.

2022 was an important year for SCAN as we saw both the provincial and municipal elections take place. SCAN worked collaboratively with the community to host election events in all ridings and wards in Scarborough, engaging thousands of community members. Events included all-candidates debates, meet-and-greets, town halls, social media campaigns, and tabling at various events to share relevant and educational election information in Scarborough communities.

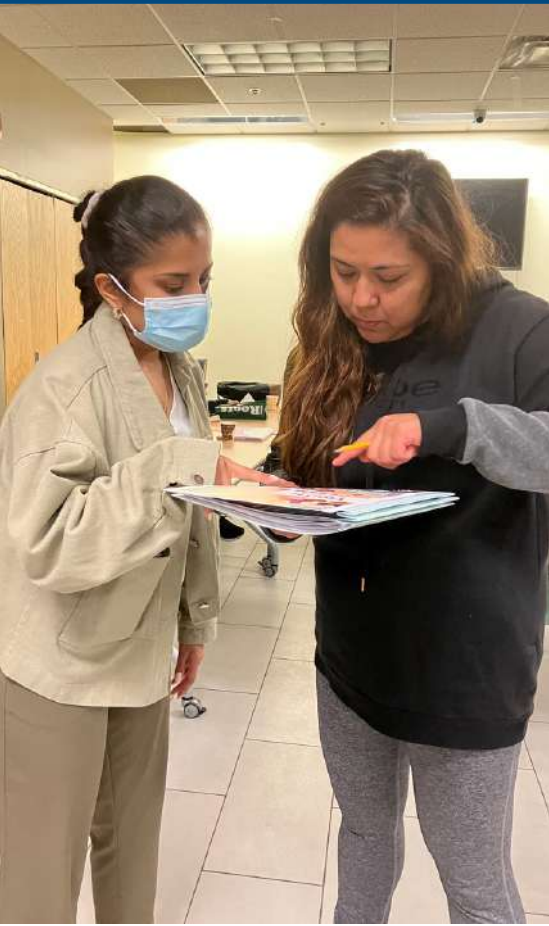




SCAN also worked with the community to build the skills and knowledge needed to hold elected officials accountable with a civic workshop series being offered to youth and adults, in addition to community summits which allowed community members to come together and develop action plans that work towards systemic change. Some of the events and workshops hosted were:

Back to Basics Workshop Series: A new workshop series where participants gained an understanding of our political system, how to engage in civic action, and issues of affordable housing, public transit, and community safety (25-40 participants attended weekly)

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Youth Workshop Series: A new workshop series geared towards youth, where participants gained an understanding of our political system, voting basics, and civic engagement basics (21 participants attended weekly)

Youth Summit: SCAN hosted it's first summit for youth, creating an opportunity for youth across Scarborough to meet with expert panellists to discuss issues of affordable housing, public transit, and community safety, and to explore how they can become more active in addressing these issues.

Why We Vote

Why Vote
Every vote matters.
My chance to choose
someone who represents
my values.

democratic
engagement
exchange
at Ryerson University

engagedemocracy.ca

Why Vote
To keep our
democracy intact,
and our freedom(s).

democratic
engagement
exchange
at Ryerson University

engagedemocracy.ca

Why Vote
Can't complain
if you don't
vote.

democratic
engagement
exchange
at Ryerson University

engagedemocracy.ca

Why Vote
Housing issue.

democratic
engagement
exchange
at Ryerson University

engagedemocracy.ca

Why Vote
To have true representation
of students and their needs
not those imposed by a
minority of autocrats.

democratic
engagement
exchange
at Ryerson University

engagedemocracy.ca

”

“We are so grateful to you and your team for everything you did to foster engagement during the municipal elections. You are truly a democracy champion! When daily headlines remind us of the threats to our democracy, your work serves as an inspiring reminder of what is possible when communities work together.”

The Democracy Engagement Exchange Team

SMCAT

South Markham Community Action Table

The South Markham Community Action Table (SMCAT) is a collaboration of agencies, community members, various levels of government, and other invested stakeholders that have been brought together as part of York Region's Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan to address the priority issues of mental health and mental well-being and housing stability.

Throughout the year, our main focus areas in South Markham were surrounding housing stability and mental health and well being.



"Don't put everyone in the same box, because they are not."

*"South Markham CAT has done great work in the community and I would like to see that continue. So many residents benefited from this project showcasing what the community can do when there are resources in place to facilitate events, programs, educational sessions. I look forward to future engagements. A job well done by the team."
SMCAT Member*

Housing stability was successfully tackled through three key initiatives. The Housing Stability Speaker Series provided workshops for service providers and community leaders, equipping them with knowledge on programming, resources, and navigating systems to support individuals facing housing concerns. The Real Stories of Markham Project, a captivating photo documentary, shed light on the varied experiences of Markham residents grappling with housing issues. The Municipal Election strategy was also implemented with the group releasing a candidate survey, as well as hosting an all candidates debate.





All off this work was culminated through the South Markham Housing Summit which brought together residents, community members, and service providers for fruitful discussions and strategic planning towards solutions-based actions.

These three main activities were in addition to in-depth conversations had within sub-committees, working groups, and meetings with residents and community members to build familiarity around civic engagement, rights and responsibilities for tenants, and eviction prevention. One major factor across all of these activities and conversations was the newly proposed then approved Provincial Bill 23.

Bill 23 brought up highlights as well as concerns with residents as members navigated what its implications were for housing in the community.



Members actively involved in organizations such as the Ontario Health Table, York-Durham Health Network, and groups dedicated to assisting youth and seniors. Given the complexity of this issue and the multitude of priorities within the field, South Markham CAT decided to focus on areas that were not being adequately addressed by other tables, networks, or groups. The subcommittee recognized the need for additional efforts to support mental health and formed a strategic partnership with existing CAT partners and York University to conduct a research study on mental health. The study will explore community-driven strategies and activities that promote individual and collective mental wellness.



"It's been great getting to know the members better and have opportunities to collaborate. There are events and collaborations that occur throughout the course of the year which has been wonderful to be a part of - everyone really comes together."

SMCAT Member

South Markham Quick Action Grants



Quick Action Grants support the ground-level agency and grassroots work done in the South Markham community, ultimately supporting the priorities of the Community Action Table. Funded through the United Way of Greater Toronto, the project was able to fund 3 agency projects and 12 resident-led initiatives that supported the priority of mental health and mental well-being.

"I wish I had these opportunities for my family when I was younger, these are such great topics to cover especially from a cultural perspective since so many of these topics are so taboo."

A resident participant from Wilclay P.S. Community Connections



The resident-led initiatives engaged over 700 residents and included activities such as a paint night, various health and wellness sessions and events where families could come together and form connections in the community. Overall, the projects had some amazing impacts; a large one being that initiatives were able to reduce the stigma of mental health within newcomer and immigrant communities.

NSVET

North Scarborough Vaccine Engagement Team

ACSA led the City of Toronto funded, North Scarborough Vaccine Engagement team, a team of 12 organizations and resident groups with the goal of increasing vaccine uptake in Scarborough.

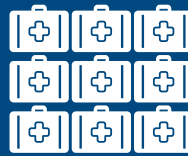
The NSVET was a consortium of over 12 different agency partners who worked collaboratively to enhance vaccine confidence and access for equity-deserving groups in Toronto. By hosting numerous vaccine clinics, health events and outreach sessions, the team had tremendous success in increasing the vaccine uptake across North Scarborough.



In 2022...



3,000+
Home visits



34
Community - Based
Clinics supported



3,000+
COVID vaccines
served to individuals

This project saw much success seeing vaccine rates for those receiving primary doses in North Scarborough rise from 55% to over 80%. A key factor of success was the project hired over 15 community ambassadors (residents) from all across Scarborough. The ambassadors were representative of Scarborough residents, spoke multiple languages and many were leaders in their communities. This contributed to the success of the vaccine engagement work as those residents who had questions about vaccine safety had people they could speak to that were seen as trusted sources of information.





NSVET also owes much of its success to its community partners. NSVET partners like Carefirst, Hong Fook, CICS, SEAS Centre and others were able to implement a targeted campaign to support East and Southeast Asian youth and older adults by having community ambassadors implement a culturally-specific COVID-19 vaccine appointment registration system.

Partners like Tamil Civic Action, Malvern Family Resource Centre and others were able to engage Tamil youth and seniors through targeted initiatives including a Youth Mental Health Awareness Forum.

"This project [NSVET project] that had served communities and residents of North Scarborough to beat the pandemic and build stronger and more equitable communities."

NSVET Community Ambassador



This forum brought together Tamil youth and a Tamil physician, a Tamil social worker and a Tamil educator together to provide mental health supports alongside information about COVID-19 vaccines and public health measures. Partners like ACSA and the Canadian Centre for Refugee and Immigrant Health Care were able to set up micro-clinics in a wide range of community spaces to serve the homeless population and communities without status.

The Canadian Centre for Refugee and Immigrant Health Care was also our primary source for hundreds of home vaccinations.

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"We shared successes and disappointments, times and places, but most importantly, we shared passion and empathy until each of us lived in the hearts of others. Being a part of this team is not just sharing the work; it is sharing knowledge, skills, relationships and love."

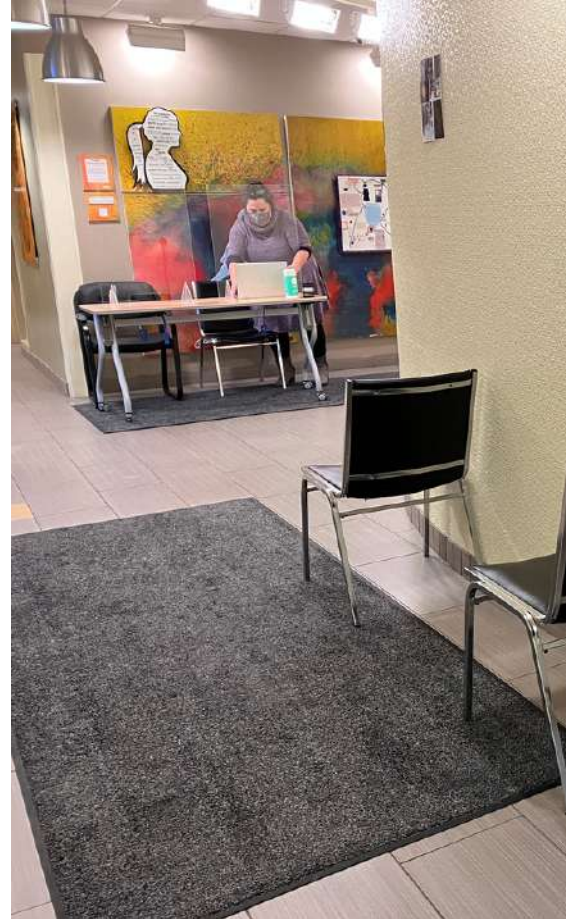
NSVET Community Ambassador



FEPS

Financial Empowerment & Problem - Solving

The Financial Empowerment and Problem Solving (FEPS) program offers financial education, supports and problem-solving services to people living on a low income. FEPS is able to provide the best support possible, as it focuses on putting income back into the pockets of those who need it most.



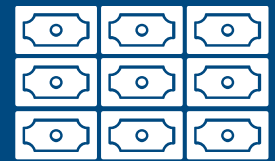
In 2022...



1,561
clients served
in Tax Clinic



2,000 +
Tax returns submitted



427
Clients applied for various
financial benefits

In 2022, our FEPS program was able to offer a mix of virtual and in-person appointments to assist people in the way that suited them best. We returned over \$6.5 Million dollars in tax credits and other benefits into the hands of members of our community living on a low income. The Financial Empowerment and Problem-Solving (FEPS) program is much more than just tax filing. Our workers help people resolve long-standing and knotty financial issues, help people access benefits that they were not aware of and learn to have a more positive relationship to their money.



Volunteers

ACSA would not be able to do anything if it weren't for its vast network of dedicated and committed volunteers. Over 2022, we saw a large increase in volunteers, as the demand for various programs continued to increase. Through this ACSA saw a variety of people ranging from those who are retired to students to those looking for Canadian experience. ACSA is very fortunate to have volunteers that speak a variety of languages – English, Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, French, Tagalog, Vietnamese, French, Portuguese among others. All volunteers are always willing to help wherever needed.



In 2022...



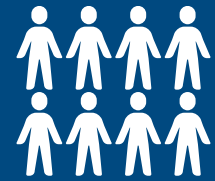
589

Volunteer Applications
received



130+

Active Volunteers



20,000+

hours committed by
volunteers

The biggest pool of volunteers is at the new ACSA Community Food Centre, where we rely on upwards of 20 volunteers on a daily basis to keep the program operating. Transitioning from a pre-packed bag system to a shopping model required a robust training program to be implemented.. There have been a lot of learning along the way and volunteers have played a pivotal role in ensuring those that come to ACSA have the best experience possible.





"I enjoy volunteering at the Food centre cause I enjoy support people. I feel very comfortable at the Food Centre, the staff and fellow volunteers are flexible and friendly and I learn a lot. I feel welcomed."

Community Food Centre Volunteer



Project FoodChain
@PFoodchain

We were stoked to deliver over 2000 bottles of water to the awesome folks at @ACSAtoronto for our unhoused neighbours.

Big thanks to @BlueTritonCA for the water donation,



THANK YOU DONORS

For making ACSA's Mission Possible!
#TOGETHERWEARESTRONGER



GlobalMedic
@globalmedicdmgf

@ACSAtoronto addresses a variety of issues in Scarborough including systemic poverty, hunger, housing, unemployment, accessibility and social isolation. Yesterday we provided them with 450 hygiene kits, menstrual hygiene products and cleaning supplies to support their operations.



- Holiday Food Drive**
- Donate to room 309
- | Donate | Don't | Don't |
|-------------|-----------|-------|
| Milk | Milk | |
| Fruit Salad | Meat | |
| Pasta | Cheese | |
| Oreo | Ice cream | |
| Bear Paws | Popcorn | |

ACSA's Board of Directors

The ACSA Board of Directors are volunteers giving of their time and talent ensuring adherence to the mission and vision of the Agency. ACSA Directors meet year round to support ACSA Management, support fundraising efforts, donate food and resources, support social media campaigns, check in with staff, and always show up a “can do” attitude!

A truly committed and dedicated group of people because they too believe that TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER and ACSA is grateful for your time and service to community.

Our Board

Manny Sousa

Chairperson

Jackie Tsui

Treasurer

Maria Lykos

Vice – Chairperson

Lauren McAllister

Seceretary

Directors

Afshan Ali

Mohiba Batool

Akil Bishop

Niramay Desai

Anastasia Gordon

Zahra Bhimani

Stanly Szeto



Locations

Agincourt Community Services Association

4155 Sheppard Ave East, Suite 100

Toronto, ON M1S 1T4

Tel: (416) 321 - 6912 ext. 321

Bay Mills Community Hub

365 Bay Mills Blvd

Toronto, Ontario, M1T 2G5

Tel: (416) 342 - 1527

Chester Le Community Corner

201 Chester Le Blvd, 2nd floor

Toronto, Ontario, M1W 2K7

Tel: (416) 491-3456 ext. 400

ACSA Child & Family Centre

4139 Sheppard Ave East

Toronto, ON M1S 1T1

Tel: (416) 299 - 9872

Dorset Park Community Hub

911 Kennedy Rd, Unit 105

Toronto, Ontario, M1P 2L9

Tel: (416) 292-6912 ext. 300

Agincourt South Drop - In

202 Markham Rd

Toronto, Ontario, M1J 3C2

Tel: 416-267-0115

Follow us on Social Media

@acsatoronto

Agincourt Community Services Association

