IMPACT REPORT

September 2025 — June 2026





the stop





Growing Community. Feeding Change.


the stop

Land Acknowledgement

The Stop is located on the territory of the Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Haudenosaunee, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Given the historic context of the land on which The Stop resides, it's imperative that we draw attention to the devastating impacts that decades of colonization have imposed upon Indigenous peoples. We stand in solidarity with Indigenous peoples and other racialized communities that are seeking to reclaim their identities, health, land, and community resources.



Our Mission

The Stop strives to increase access to healthy food in a manner that maintains dignity, builds health and community, and champions equity.

Letter from our Executive Director



Dear Community and Supporters,

When people ask me what our organization does, the simplest answer is that we provide healthy food to people who need it. But the truth is, we do so much more than that.

Every meal shared,
every fresh food item selected,
every garden tended to,
every conversation around a chopping board,
every volunteer shift,
and every new partnership,
represents something so much bigger.

Together, these actions create spaces where people are met with empathy and dignity, where relationships are built, where community is strengthened, and hope rediscovered.

This past year at The Stop, we experienced a constant demand for our services. Rising food costs, housing instability, and deepening inequities continue to bring more people through our doors than in previous years — a daily reminder that food insecurity is not simply about food. It reflects broader and often complex challenges related to affordability, health, opportunity, and belonging.

At The Stop, our response has been equally multifaceted. We have deepened existing partnerships and developed innovative, strategic collaborations with organizations and professionals to help build knowledge, confidence, and resilience across our community:

- With the City of Toronto, we launched the **Gateway to Advocacy and Food Security** program, increasing access to meals for marginalized individuals and supporting them in navigating the complex system of services and available resources.
- We deepened our collaboration with community organizations across the city to expand food growing and community gardening initiatives, building local food resilience and a connection to land and food.
- We enhanced access to legal support for tenants through a new partnership with **West Toronto Community Legal Services, supported by the Department of Justice Canada.**
- We expanded our **Homeless Connect Toronto** event, bringing together health care providers, legal supports, employment services, government agencies, library outreach, tax clinics, pet care, and many other community resources in one welcoming space.



And as we look ahead, our focus will continue to extend beyond increasing the number of meals we serve or the pounds of food we distribute. Success, to us, is measured by the possibilities we help to realize.

Lasting change is not created by a single program, policy, or organization. It is created by people working collectively toward a shared vision of a healthier, more equitable community.

I am incredibly grateful for our staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, donors, funders, community partners, and supporters. Your compassion, collaboration, expertise, generosity, and unwavering commitment make it possible for The Stop to respond to today's needs and imagine what tomorrow can become. Thank you for your belief in the future we are building.

A future where healthy food is not a privilege, but a right.

Where tomorrow offers more hope than uncertainty.

Where community is defined by belonging.

Where everyone has the opportunity to flourish.

With gratitude,

Shae London
Executive Director



Our Fiscal Year Has Changed

With our fiscal year now ending on June 30, this impact report reflects a shortened 10-month period, from September 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026.

EMERGENCY FOOD SERVICES

The Stop's emergency food services connect people to good, healthy food through our Drop-In Meal Program and our Food Bank.



Serving Community Support, One Meal at a Time

For many community members, The Stop's Drop-In Meal Program is the only place they regularly access warm, nutritious meals, in an environment they trust. We offer breakfast and lunch every weekday across two sites at 1884 Davenport Road and Wychwood Open Door at 729 St. Clair Avenue West. An additional dinner service is offered on Thursdays at Wychwood Open Door. **The need for Drop-In meals has increased; we served 13% more meals compared to the previous year.**

Drop-In meals also feed the soul. Community members are invited to stay after dining to connect over games and activities, including bingo and karaoke. Staff also facilitate a range of new creative programming to support self-expression, such as creative writing workshops, sewing and textile workshops, and musical instrument sessions.

"We're trying to cultivate programming that supports community mental health," says Shaynara Katwaroo, Community Services Supervisor.

While the Drop-In Meal Program prioritizes warm and healthy meals, it also serves as a connection point to accessing various essential services. In partnership with the City of Toronto's Employment and Social Services Department, we developed a new program under their Innovative Case Management (ICM) initiative. Available at Wychwood Open Door every Wednesday, the program brings community advocacy coordinators directly to those who need support in housing, health care, taxes, and more.

It's important to note that Drop-In meals don't have catchment areas like other public programs. This made The Stop an ideal partner for ICM, connecting people to local services wherever they may live in the city.

> Human connection is such a powerful motivator for people in this space. They're meeting over food, but it's really about neighbours coming together in this community.



— Shaynara, Katwaroo, Community Services Supervisor

From September 2025 to June 2026

Total Drop-In Meals Served Across Locations

69,491

13% increase

Average Daily Meals Served

1884 Davenport	Wychwood Open Door
312	200

We're also offering other social needs support with free personal care items at wellness tables and inviting special guest speakers to provide health and hygiene education. At Wychwood Open Door, our ongoing partnership with Homeless Connect helped folks at risk of or experiencing homelessness access the resources they need to maintain their health and wellness; these resources included eye appointments, haircuts, and free shoes. At 1884 Davenport Road, we brought in health specialists to provide hearing tests, Hepatitis C education and testing, blood pressure checks, and diabetes resources.

"Pooling resources builds capacity as a city," says Shaynara. "We're bringing those resources directly to the community."

Dignified food access does more than feed people — it fills hearts and builds resilience within our neighbourhoods. As long as there's a need for warm meals, you can find the Drop-In team ready to serve.

> Because of The Stop Drop-In, I have been able to prepare myself for the future to study and train to become an educator and I'm so grateful for the space. I feel sad over the weekend when you're closed.



— Olivia, Drop-In Community Member

EMERGENCY FOOD SERVICES

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Food Bank Feeds Community and Heals Volunteer

Every Friday, you'll find Carol and Andy Lim at 1884 Davenport Road, helping guests find fresh and nutritious produce and foods. Both retired, they began volunteering at The Stop's food bank to connect with their community and help address food insecurity. Ultimately, this experience has transformed their lives, too.

While they each take on different roles — Carol is on the frontline helping guests fill their baskets and Andy is in the back portioning, packaging, and restocking food — they see themselves as a big part of making The Stop such a welcoming place. "We see the direct impact [in what we do]. We see the smiles in the community," Carol says.

The need for food banks remains high. Every month, The Stop serves an average of 2,120 individuals and registers 104 new members. Last year, we saw an increase of 4% in total hampers served. And it's volunteers like Carol and Andy that make it possible to meet this need.

The Stop's food bank offers fresh, healthy food to the community, including those with dietary needs. Carol recalls when a guest who had suffered a previous heart attack asked her to help with his food selection. "I was surprised [he shared his health concerns]," she says. "He's happy with The Stop. With all the food banks that he goes to, The Stop has a lot of healthy items."

Participating in our food programs has an incredible effect of forging community and confidence in dignified ways. For Andy, volunteering at The Stop helped him heal and rediscover his sense of self. In 2016, Andy was in a motorcycle accident that caused a traumatic brain injury, and he had to relearn everything, including walking, talking, and fine motor skills.

From September 2025 to June 2026

4,973
people supported by The Stop's food bank

9,364
hampers served

2,611
seniors
8 % increase

5,235
households with children

"It was like I was a nursery student," Andy recalls. His occupational therapist recommended working with food to build his fine motor skills. By volunteering at The Stop, he has redeveloped his dexterity in a safe, socially engaged environment.

Carol has seen an incredible transformation in Andy since they began at The Stop. Carol mentions that Andy often says, "Life is too short, we have to be happy." With this motto in mind, the pair are committed to making life better for their community.

> "You really touched my heart. It was bare bones in my kitchen [at home]. What you helped me out with today will keep us going. I'm really touched by all the work you do. I love The Stop. We appreciate you.



— Food Bank Service User



COMMUNITY BUILDING

The Stop builds community through peer support, parenting programs, and mental health and wellness services.



Empowering Residents through the Community Advocacy Program

"For someone who's gone multiple days without eating, providing them a meal is really big," says Marial Addario, Community Advocacy Senior Coordinator at The Stop's Community Advocacy Program (CAP). "Giving someone a meal *is* crisis management. That's why food is an entry point to uncover other ways we can help."

In the CAP office, the team helps community members find support navigating government systems. They're on site four days a week at 1884 Davenport Road and once a week at the Wychwood Open Door location, with hours coinciding with the Drop-In Meal and Food Bank programs.

Marial knows that the initial step to engaging with CAP takes courage. The team's open-door policy welcomes community members whenever they're ready. "We don't want to be overly clinical or formal," she says. "We want people to be comfortable just dropping in."

CAP offers one-on-one consultations to solve immediate issues, such as liaising as an English-speaker with a government agency by phone, helping to fill out complicated paperwork, or referrals to other community organizations.

We also provide programming to address some of the community's most pressing issues. This year, the Tenants' Rights Legal Advice Clinic, in partnership with West Toronto Community Legal Services, offered free support with a housing lawyer and our Tax Clinics helped 129 folks file their taxes accurately and gain access to $240,793 in tax benefits and refunds.

Be(come) Your Own Advocate Program Results

I feel more confident advocating for myself

66.7% Strongly Agree

33.3% Agree

I learned practical tools I can use in real life

77.8% Yes

22.2% Somewhat

Our newly revamped community action training program, Be(come) Your Own Advocate (BYOA), gave participants the tools to use their lived experiences as a means to self-advocate for themselves and communities. Throughout the 10-week program, participants learn how to conduct research, keep records, fill out forms, and decipher legalese while also developing critical thinking, persuasive communication, and contingency planning skills.

The advocacy office is vital to supporting the community. Often, there are multiple factors that contribute to food insecurity, including poverty, the high cost of living, inadequate government assistance, housing, employment, education, technology, and language barriers. The advocacy team is there for community members, helping them find the stability needed to thrive.

"It's very common that someone comes in and says, 'I thought this was just a food bank'," Marial reflects. "They realize that we're creating an entire community and ecosystem of support."



Healthy Beginnings, a Steady Presence for Parents & Babies

Last year, we helped 109 community members access essential pregnancy and early childhood resources. For over 30 years, the Healthy Beginnings program has supported new and expectant parents through workshops with pregnancy and postpartum experts — from doulas to mental health providers — as well as a range of benefits, including food bank access, childminding, and a support network. Our ongoing partnership with Parkdale-Queen West Neighbourhood Community Health Centre's Great Start Together program extends our reach to an additional 165 families in Toronto.

URBAN AGRICULTURE

Our Urban Agriculture programs bring communities together through growing and sharing food.



Growing Communities at Earlscourt Community Garden

Nestled in Earlscourt Park, our 7,000-square-foot community garden is full of life with diverse plants and vegetables springing from its soil. "The big focus [last year] was reconfiguring Earlscourt Garden to maximize the growth space," says Rob MacEwen, The Stop's Green Barn Supervisor. **Under his guidance, we increased the active growing space by nearly 30% and yielded close to 350 kg of vegetables, which we shared with gardeners, volunteers, and our Drop-In Meal Program.**

Much of this expansion involved strategic planning to create a harmonious ecosystem where plants can thrive. When last year's planning began, Rob was relatively new at The Stop and he was keen to collaborate with the community. This included frequent conversations with Herman, who helped to establish the garden in 1998. "Herman has such a rich memory of what can grow here and how much you can yield," Rob shares. "He provided context of what's possible to grow."

Rob also chatted with the community gardeners — such as Shaheen, who's been a member for over 15 years — to gain their insights on the expansion project and continue diversifying the crop selection, including the introduction of corn, watermelon, and Jamaican pumpkin.

> There's this dignified way that people enter The Stop, where the stigma of visiting a food bank is dissolved. Some people think that they're alone. Once we realize that no one's above anyone else, we end up supporting one another.



— Rob MacEwen, Green Barn Supervisor

The garden expansion was also made possible by corporate volunteer groups, who did much of the heavy lifting: edging and building plant beds, weeding, and flipping compost. Without their assistance, we wouldn't have had such a productive year.

Inviting groups from outside the community, including schools, sheds light on the urgent state of food insecurity. "Many of them don't know [The Stop] exists or that community gardening is prevalent in Toronto," Rob shares. "They may not understand the systemic injustices that are happening in the city because they're not directly connected to it."

Connecting people with fresh, culturally signifcant food and educating community members on the importance of food access is what makes our urban agriculture programming impactful. Together, we're cultivating garden networks that nourish people and enrich the roots of our communities.



BY THE NUMBERS

Our fiscal year has changed. With our fiscal year now ending on June 30, this impact report reflects a shortened 10-month period, from September 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026.

EMERGENCY FOOD ACCESS

DROP-IN MEALS

69,491
meals served onsite

54,217 at 1884 Davenport Road
15,274 at Wychwood Open Door

Enough drop-in meals were served to feed a full Rogers Centre **1.75X**

Last year, we witnessed a **+12%** increase in food costs across all programs

FOOD BANK

22,848
is the number of times people were reached

9,364
hampers distributed

4,973
individuals served

2,283
households served

2,121
average individuals served per month

GOOD FOOD MARKET

66
market days

3,790
visits

14%
increase



URBAN AGRICULTURE

COMMUNITY GARDENS

155 kg
food grown

60
participants

97
program sessions

627
meals shared on-site

10 METRE GREENS (SOCIAL ENTERPRISE)

267 kg
microgreens grown

$8,250
sold at Farmers' Market

+154%
increase in yield

+148%
increase in sales

422 kg
food grown across programs

SEEDLING GIVEAWAY

5,680
seedlings distributed

125,984 sq. ft.
estimated growing space (equivalent to 26.8 basketball courts!)



FARMERS' MARKET

The Stop's Farmers' Market is open year-round and hosts **65 farmers and prepared food vendors.**

102,015
visitors

65
vendors

23
BIPOC vendors

240.5 kg
organic local produce donated to food programs



COMMUNITY BUILDING

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY PROGRAM



948
office visits

61
referrals to community services

TAX CLINIC

Provides assistance for those facing barriers to filing their tax returns and accessing income benefits.

129
tax returns

$240,793
returned in tax benefits and refunds

ID CLINIC

Provides assistance in replacing lost or stolen IDs like health cards, birth certificates, or records of landing.

224
IDs distributed

VOLUNTEERING

18,074
volunteer hours

178
active volunteers

$7,105
market vouchers redeemed



As part of our volunteer recognition program, volunteers receive a $2.50 market voucher per shift, which can be redeemed at our Good Food Market or The Stop's Farmers' Market. The equivalent of **2,842 volunteer shifts were redeemed in food vouchers.**

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

Programming and services for pregnant and post-partum community members

$28,140
dispensed in grocery cards



109
on-site participants

165
online participants

40
in-person workshops

992
meals shared on-site

887
food hampers distributed

151
referrals to additional resources and services

COMMUNITY KITCHENS

Cooking lessons for participants with limited or no access to prepare meals

31
participants

149
meals shared on-site



EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Support and activities that provide a break from difficult or traumatic experiences

214
community members reached per week on average

64
sessions

47
referrals to community programming, such as food bank, drop-in meals, or volunteering program

VISION FOR TOMORROW



"It soon became clear that, for many, food was not what they were asking for. They weren't coming back for baloney sandwiches — they were coming back for Shirley's smile! So I began asking them about their stories, and found we were making friends."

The Stop's founder, Reverend Cam Russell, wrote these words on our 25th anniversary, reflecting on the organization's humble beginnings with his wife, Shirley. Now, as we look forward to our 45th anniversary in 2027, we can't help but reflect on how much has changed, and how much remains the same.

We help people live the lives that they want to live. For some folks, that means providing a warm meal and conversation; for others, it's guiding community members toward stability. No matter the need, we're there.

It takes a strong network of community partners to connect people to resources and improve access to nourishing food. Over the coming years, we aim to fortify Toronto's urban agriculture movement, sharing our knowledge and skills with organizations across the city to create more local food systems.

We are also eagerly continuing our partnership with the University of Toronto's Faculty of Arts Science, providing mentorship and education possibilities through their Sandbox program where students work alongside our team to build community engagement skills and learn to solve problems in real time. This opportunity builds the capacity of tomorrow's changemakers to address some of this city's greatest issues.

As we look forward, we are committed to continually sourcing from local producers and using more ingredients grown in our gardens for drop-in meals. Building resilient and reliable local food systems is a part of the future that we envision.

Until we reach this goal, The Stop will remain a place where folks can come for healthy food and a warm conversation. Where community members are treated with dignity and kindness, and connection rather than isolation. Where we collaborate in collective action to design holistic food systems that honour culture, history, and personal experience.

At The Stop, we believe that nutritious, sustainable, and culturally appropriate food is a human right for all.

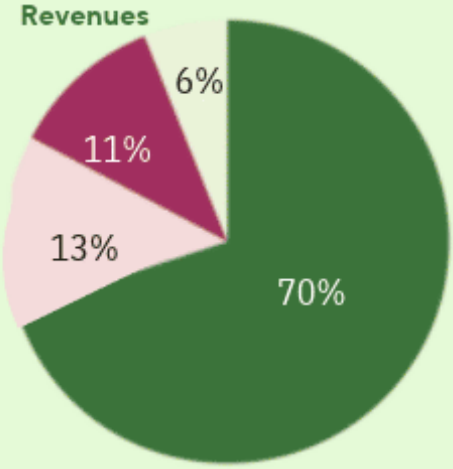
Join us.



Financials

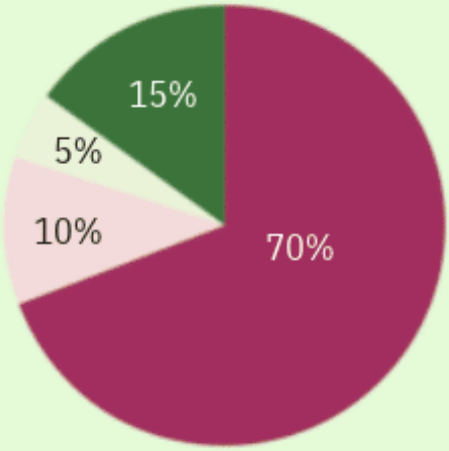
With our fiscal year now ending on June 30, these financials reflect a shortened 10-month period, from September 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026.

Revenues



Monetary donations	$3,145,926
Food donations	$599,107
Government funding	$504,333
Other revenue	$264,932
	$4,514,298

Expenses



Programs	$3,183,066
Fund development	$513,688
Social enterprise	$206,495
Administrative	$665,646
	$4,568,895

A Collective Poem by the Wychwood Open Door Community

Written during the Drop-In Meal Program, facilitated by The Stop staff member EJ Kniefel

"Wychwood Open Door's little world is nothing if not a series of repetitions," says EJ. "Between the rhythm of familiar faces in a familiar space, a new sound emerges. Between breakfast and lunch: a writing group. Each week, we responded to one of a series of questions, gathering lines into a collective poem, transforming individual answers into something shared. Our poems became something to sing."

I woke up with a body
I spent so many years trying to overcome
A good normal dream
Pain in my hip
My brother, my partner, my house
There's a flow and a spark
As I focus on what is important
My avocado is ready
I am thankful to wake up
Today belongs to me
To writing group
To being with all of you
Sometimes just listening
A new day, a new beginning
Who I am, who I am becoming
There I was, in between the two
My breath is slowed down
It remembers me
Maybe this is me healing



6 Ways You Can Support The Stop

Visit **thestop.org** for more information



Group and corporate volunteering



Fundraise for The Stop



Host a food drive



Volunteer



Become a monthly donor



Make a legacy gift

SUPPORT THE STOP COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE

Through shared meals, advocacy services, and urban agriculture, we bring people together, build connections, and create a more resilient, equitable community. Your donation helps provide nutritious food, deliver essential programs and create welcoming spaces where everyone can access support with dignity.

Scan to Donate

Program Snapshot



10 Metre Greens



Emergency Food Service



Healthy Beginnings



Drop-in Meals

Our Values



Embody Inclusion
We are welcoming, inclusive, and barrier-free.



Build Community
We build community through food.



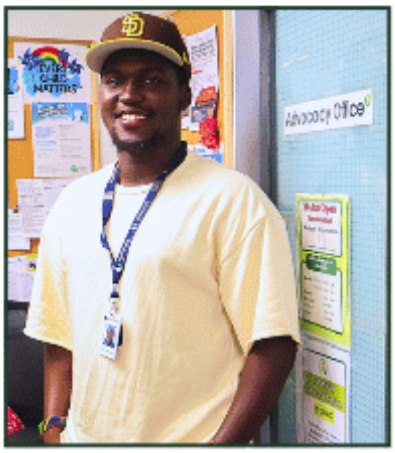
Create Pathways
We collaborate to deliver programs and services that meet our diverse community needs.



Respect Everyone
We treat everyone with dignity and respect.



Be Accountable
We operate with integrity and transparency



Advocate for Change
We use our resources to champion the voices of our community.

The Stop Community Food Centre
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Toronto, ON M6H 4E1

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601 Christie Street
729 St. Clair West

Website: thestop.org
Email: general@thestop.org
Phone: 416-652-7867

Connect with Us:

@thestopcfc

@thestopcfc

@the stop community food centre

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Charitable Registration Number:
119-192-763-RR0001

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