



THE STOP'S IMPACT REPORT 2017

As The Stop Community Food Centre comes together to mark our 35th anniversary, we're filled with renewed focus and determination.

We've long understood the immediate benefits of bringing people together around good food. But after 35 years of doing this work, we're still continually inspired by the ways our community members are taking this approach, running with it, and truly making it their own.

For so many, a shared meal at The Stop leads to something more transformative. It can provide a path to a new friendships, renew a person's feelings of self-confidence, or help someone to recognize the vital role they play within their community.

We think one of our volunteers recently said it best. "At The Stop, I'm not just hanging in the social safety net, I'm helping to build it."

Drawing on this powerful idea, in 2017 we focused our attention on four areas of impact: meeting immediate food needs, building on community strength, bringing people together to share in and support our work, and aligning our efforts to change the broader narrative around poverty and food access.

We are so grateful for your contributions to this work, and proud to report on the impact of your support. On behalf of all of us at The Stop, thank you for being a part of this vibrant community building.

Rachel Gray
Executive Director



the stop
community food centre

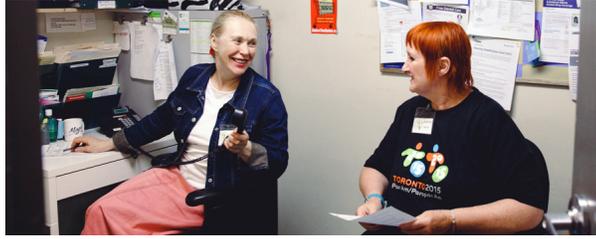
1. Meeting Immediate Needs

The first step is bringing people in the door. For most of our community members, an introduction to The Stop comes from accessing the healthy food served in our **Drop-in program** and at the **Food Bank**. In 2017, we served up over **57,2168** nutritious meals and prompted countless conversations around the table.

Many of these visitors go on to become Peer Advocates—members of The Stop community who use their knowledge and lived experience to support others facing poverty or marginalization. In 2017, these Peer Advocates made over **900** referrals to connect their neighbours to housing, legal, and income services.



“I CAN DEPEND ON THE SERVICES AT THE STOP, AND NOT GO HUNGRY OR BE ISOLATED.”



“IF THEY DON'T HAVE IT, THEY'LL HELP FIND IT.”

9,478

healthy food hampers given out in our Food Bank



\$154,420

in refunds and benefits returned to 138 participants of our Free Income Tax Clinic.



2. Building Stronger Communities

The Stop's community kitchens and gardens aren't just about cooking and growing healthy food. They're spaces for sharing knowledge, building skills, and forging new connections between people of all ages, experiences, and backgrounds. Our **Community Kitchen, Garden, and Volunteer** programs welcomed over **1,520** participants, including **269** youth at our Mashkikii;aki'ing (Medicine Earth) Medicine Wheel Garden.



“WHEN WE DO THIS WORK, PEOPLE CAN LET GO.”

86%

of participants said their program makes them feel useful or productive

“THE STOP MEANS SERENITY. I FEEL A WHOLE DIFFERENT PERSON AS I WALK THROUGH THE DOORS, A FEELING OF TRUST AND WORTHINESS.”

85%

said programs gave them opportunities to share their knowledge

“COMING TO THE COMMUNITY KITCHENS AT THE STOP IS FOR ME AN EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL WORKOUT.”

3. Bringing People Together

Our work is deeply rooted in the Davenport West and St. Clair West communities, but we know that people across the city want to connect around something bigger. Our events allow guests to come together in celebration of good food, while supporting the sustainability of The Stop's vital programs.

In 2017, our **6** fundraising and community events showcased **440** chefs to **3,000** attendees and generated **\$1.1M** to fund our work. **The Stop's Farmers' Market** at Artscape Wychwood Barns—one of Toronto's only year-round farmer's markets—welcomed nearly **150,000** visitors last year, celebrated its 10th anniversary, and added over **\$3M** to the local food economy.



"I LOVE THAT I CAN SUPPORT THE STOP'S FIGHT FOR FOOD SECURITY THROUGH WHAT I DO BEST, FOOD EVENTS!"
—BERTRAND ALÉPÉE, THE TEMPERED ROOM

4. Changing the Narrative

When someone struggles to put food on the table, it's not really about food at all. The Stop is working with our partners to build understanding of the many connections between poverty, food insecurity, identity, and health.

In 2017, we were part of consultations on both the national and local **poverty reduction strategies**, and on the National Food Policy. We also presented at the Jeanne Sauvé Forum Series on **Social Connectedness and International Development**.

It's critical that when we work to inspire social change, we also examine our own practices. We received the Toronto Foundation's **Vital Ideas/Vital People Award** in 2017, which enabled us to incorporate an Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression framework into our volunteer training program. This will equip our volunteers with deeper awareness about the structural aspects of poverty.



"THE STOP LED ME TO TRUST MY CAPACITIES AND SKILLS. I LEARNED TO FEEL THAT I HAVE ENOUGH, AND THAT I AM ENOUGH."

77%

of participants say a Stop program helped them think differently about the challenges they face



**We can't do this work alone.
Donate. Volunteer. Lend Your Voice.**

The Stop Community Food Centre

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