



NEIGHBOUR

— 2 —

NEIGHBOUR

2021/2022

ANNUAL REPORT

n2ncentre.com

PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

If 2020 was a year of adapting to change in programming and growth in numbers, 2021 was a year of investing in our infrastructure to adapt to that change and growth.

We started the year with the arduous process of transitioning our data over to a new database. After much thoughtful investigation and consideration, our development team, leadership team, and board, felt that Raiser's Edge was the best investment to serve our ever-growing donor base and provide the most apt tools for our finance and fundraising teams. This invaluable database has not only proven to be effective in our processes but also has provided continuing professional development opportunities for so many on our staff. What an amazing tool to bring into our organization!

Thanks to \$150,000 of funding provided by the Ontario Trillium Foundation's Resilient Communities Fund, Neighbour to Neighbour Centre was able to update its technology and provide equipment and renovations to allow the reopening of our services and keep our clients, volunteers, and staff safe. We were also at this time able to add more windows into offices for more access to natural light, open concept spaces for team collaboration and stand-up desks to allow for more physical movement throughout the day.

This year really gave us an opportunity to take a good look at ourselves as an organization and see where we want to be in the future, who we want to be along the way, and what our next best steps are for how to get there. Together, board and staff spent many hours dreaming, planning, and doing the hard work of building our strategic plan. We are extremely excited to roll up our sleeves and dig into implementation in 2022. Along with the strategic planning, we as an organization and staff have begun a lot of inner personal work. Beginning with Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression (ARAO) training sessions in winter of 2022 we have begun to form an Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (EDI) Committee to continue this

ongoing and important work as we move forward. This committee will be staff-led and we couldn't be more proud of the vision they have for this organization.

Speaking of staff, we were sorry to say goodbye to our Manager of Administrative Services, Jennifer Gold, as she embarked on a brand-new adventure with the Alzheimer Society of Brant, Haldimand Norfolk, Hamilton & Halton. On the plus side, we were able to welcome back a long-time employee of N2N Centre, Mark Raymond, into this position and are so happy to have him back with us.

We are heartbroken to announce that we lost a very dear friend and colleague this year. Deban Brunette spent most of her 21 years at N2N building our literacy program and working with volunteers to ensure thousands of local school-aged children learned the love of reading. She was a fierce advocate of education, had the most wonderful laugh, and has left an incredible legacy in this community. It is our promise to Deban to continue to honour this legacy everyday.

After six years, the City of Hamilton notified Neighbour to Neighbour Centre that they would no longer be providing tax levy funding to match the 200,000 annual allocations provided by Community Food Centres Canada. In 22/23 the Centre was redirected to the City Enrichment fund process for future financial support.

The Building Task Force of the Board has continued its work on assessing future needs of N2N and our clients, with a view to maximizing space resources for current and future programs and services. As part of its mandate, BTF is exploring staff requirements and potential partnerships.

We are incredibly proud of the staff and volunteers at Neighbour to Neighbour Centre and know that while we will have challenges ahead of us, we will continue to work together to overcome those challenges and provide ongoing support to our clients and community.

DAN HOLSTEIN

President of the Board

DENISE ARKELL

Executive Director






HAMILTON COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE

Two years of COVID-19 have taken a real toll on communities—physically, mentally, and emotionally. Food insecurity remains a serious issue as the cost of living continues to rise across the country. And Community Food Centres have proven to be an invaluable resource, offering nourishing food and meaningful, regular connections for community members.

PROGRAMS OFFERED IN 2021

Hamilton Community Food Centre (CFC) is proud to be part of this national movement. From takeaway meals to good food boxes to check-in calls, we were there to support.

FOOD ACCESS	FOOD SKILLS	EDUCATE & ENGAGE
<p>These programs increase access to healthy food and improve health</p> <p>Weekly Take Out Meals: Healthy Dinner and Friday Lunch</p> <p>Saturday Café - Grab & go breakfast takeout</p> <p>Affordable Produce Market: 1-2x per week</p>	<p>These programs build healthy food skills and behaviours</p> <p>Intercultural Community Kitchen: Cooking meals and sharing stories from across our cultures</p> <p>Kid's Club: Hands-on meal kits for children aged 6-12 to cook at home</p> <p>Cooking Up Justice Youth Kitchen: Ages 13-18 cooking meals and learning about the food system</p> <p>Garden Days: Growing food and plants in the community garden</p>	<p>These programs reduce social isolation and increase community engagement</p> <p>Mindful Movement Wellness: Physical activity and social wellness meet-ups</p> <p>Community Action Training: Free 12-week course promoting community care</p> <p>Community Action Network: Outreach activities</p> <p>Advocacy Office 1:1 support</p> <p>Planting the Seeds of Belonging: Workshop designed to create inclusive community spaces</p>
 <p>13,165 healthy meals sent home</p>	 <p>166 food skills sessions offered</p>	 <p>56 Education and Wellness sessions with 630 visits from community members</p>

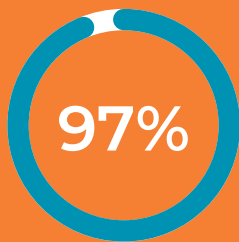
WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

“The food was really nice, the experience was different than other meal programs. I liked the atmosphere of meeting others.”

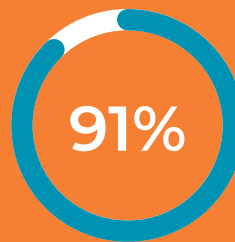
“I see my friends. People know me. I feel that my ideas are heard and I like to help in the community kitchen.”

“[Without the CFC] It would be difficult for me to afford healthy food.”

“The staff is really friendly and I feel [like] myself in this healthy environment.”



feel they belong to a community at the CFC, despite the isolation of the pandemic.



said that Hamilton CFC was an important source of healthy food during COVID-19.

Community members reported having less stress knowing our services existed — as a safe outing and a way to connect socially.

Even in these challenging circumstances, Hamilton CFC remains committed to supporting our local community. This means helping people stay connected and access healthy, culturally-appropriate food. And it means advocating for progressive policy change that solves food insecurity and poverty over the long term.

Hamilton CFC is one of fifteen Community Food Centres across Canada that are bringing people together to grow, cook, share, and advocate for good food for all in partnership with Community Food Centres Canada.



EMERGENCY FOOD

EMERGENCY FOOD DEPARTMENT

The emergency food department was excited to reach the milestone of **collecting and distributing over 1,000,000 pounds of food** in 2021. This was made possible through the generosity of businesses, individuals, community groups, schools, food hubs, and faith-based congregations, ensuring the 1,200 families we serve every month on Hamilton Mountain were supported.

We are extremely grateful for the support of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Emergency Food Security Fund to assist with Neighbour to Neighbour's modified food bank service delivery model, gift cards and home delivery program support during the COVID pandemic.



Our Emergency Food Services program acknowledges the support from Food Share Hamilton for two new programs:

- The Priority Food Project ensures the donation of meat, eggs, dairy and essential non-perishable food items every week
- Menstrual Products Program is available monthly for individuals and families

Our work would not be complete without the tireless commitment from **115 Emergency Services volunteers who contributed 10,763.75 hours of their time and energy** to assist families in need as greeters, food bank servers, warehouse receivers, runners, sorters, packers, and drivers.

CLIENT QUOTES & STORY

"You have no idea how you have helped me; I am so very grateful!"

"Thank you for your care and thank you so much for the support!"

Sixty-five-year-old Jackie has limited mobility and can no longer drive to the food bank to receive food every month.

Jackie's 40-year-old daughter unexpectedly passed away and Jackie has recently received full custody of her teenage granddaughter. Her granddaughter was suffering from severe tooth pain.

Jackie's limited mobility, and the high cost of food and fuel has made it difficult for Jackie's family to make ends meet.

Jackie reached out to Neighbour to Neighbour for assistance. Our home delivery program staff connected with Jackie's physician regarding her condition, and Jackie was added to our home delivery program. She receives a monthly call confirming her home delivery drop off date and a check-in on her needs and a monthly delivery of fresh and non-perishable food from our volunteer team of drivers.

In addition, Jackie benefited from other services for eyeglasses and her granddaughter was able to visit our dental bus.

The Neighbour to Neighbour Home Delivery Program reduces barriers to food, connects isolated individuals, and redirects families to additional needed services.

FOOD BANK

- Collected and distributed over 1 million lbs. of food valued at 2.6 million dollars
- 44% of all food distributed focuses on fresh produce, meats and dairy
- 2,669 households per year and 8,235 clients
- 13,533 community visits to the food bank, 9% increase from previous year
- Over 40% of our food bank clients are children under 18 years of age
- Over 19% of our clients are older adults (50+)

HOME DELIVERY

- 1,233 home deliveries completed
- 66% of home delivery clients experience long term limited mobility
- 11% of home delivery clients experience mental health challenges
- 8% have respiratory difficulties

CHRISTMAS MARKET PROGRAM

- 1,399 households served at our Christmas Food Market — a 16% increase in households served from previous year



FAMILY SERVICES

Our strength is in our diversity of wrap-around services we provide through internal and external partnerships.

UTILITIES SUPPORTS

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Plan (LEAP) and Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) programs continue to provide financial relief to low-income households, and in these times with dramatically increasing housing and food costs, having these grants and rebates saves households from eviction. The LEAP program dramatically increased its funding in 2021/22 and we were able to assist **224 households by providing \$89,988 in grants** with an approximately 10% repeat customer rate. The Ontario Electricity Support Program monthly rebate will assist **1609 persons in 558 households by providing \$706,728** over the next 24 months, directly contributing to their housing affordability.



MIDDLE EAST OUTREACH

Our Middle East Outreach (MEO) worker provided direct support to 2817 interactions with households, of which 228 were brand new to this service. Through these interactions she was also able to refer 55 households to the OESP program, resulting in **\$80,760 in rebates improving the housing affordability for 268 individuals.**

COMMUNITY COUNSELLING

Although counselling never stopped through the pandemic, with great relief we were able to finally welcome back the Community Counsellors in September 2021. The value of this service remains extremely high, and we continue to partner with various services. The counsellors, student interns and Manager of Family Services all served the community with approximately 3070 visits, meetings, and phone calls last year.

CLIENT STORY

Narmin, our Middle East Outreach worker, continues to grow her reach and her impact with every hour that can be added to her availability. MEO will be available all days that the food bank is open, which is 28 hours per week, plus the monthly trans non-binary shopping day.

Narmin recently welcomed a household very newly arrived in Canada, who reached out for Emergency food assistance. They were then offered the Ontario Electricity Support rebate program and financial advice through our Money Matters Program. There are 2 adult women in the household who had never had their own bank accounts, and so Narmin and a financial counsellor spent time providing basic financial literacy information about the importance of establishing personal financial history and financial independence. They were encouraged to consider opening their own bank accounts.

The women left and returned the same day with their husbands and identification, and Narmin assisted them to contact a financial institution of their choice, and to each open their own account. They are a very caring and supportive family, and no persons were preventing them from having their own accounts. These women simply needed to know why it was important, that they could do this for themselves, how to get started, and a person who spoke their first language to help them navigate and trust the systems that they were jumping into.

A NEW PARTNERSHIP

The Family Services and Emergency Food departments are also very excited to welcome a brand-new partnership with Autumn Getty, 2SLGBTQAI+ Community Development Worker from Compass Community Health. We invited Autumn in to provide consultation on our approaches serving trans and non-binary persons, and she challenged us to consider offering a monthly shopping opportunity for trans and non-binary persons and their families. We accepted that challenge immediately.

Autumn joins the MEO worker, utilities support, community counselling and the Dental Bus for this service serving critical needs for trans and non-binary persons and their families.



Groceries
for low income earning
Trans & Non Binary persons
and their families

Illustration of a diverse group of people, including an elderly woman with a cane, a person in a wheelchair, and a young person, standing together.

SUPPORTS AVAILABLE:

- Trans support worker
- Settlement worker
- Dental Health Bus
- OESP & LEAP electricity rebates & grants
- OneSight free eye glasses program

Plus, referrals to:
employment services,
intimate partner
violence counsellor,
financial advocacy
counsellor...

LAST FRIDAY EACH MONTH, 1PM-3PM
NEIGHBOUR TO NEIGHBOUR FOODBANK
NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY

Autumn Getty, 2SLGBTQAI+
Community Development Worker
905 523 6611 x2022 | agetty@compassch.org

NEIGHBOUR 2 NEIGHBOUR
28 Athens Street
Hamilton Mountain
905 574-1334 x300

COMPASS
COMMUNITY HEALTH

MONEY MATTERS FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

Money Matters continues to be a vital assistance to households. With 32 new households this past year we are assisting approximately 3 new households per month to seek financial grants, work with landlords to have appliances replaced, advocate repayment plans and reducing interest accrued on predatory loans, recovering from online-gaming and dating scams, applying for first bank accounts, budgeting, and completing documents for program referrals. Our financial counsellor provides this flexible service on site 1.5 days per week, as well as in community as necessary so that isolated and home-bound persons can also receive this life-changing service.

Our Funders:

- Congregation of the Sister's of St. Joseph
- Hamilton Community Foundation, Pandemic Relief Fund
- Hamilton Community Foundation, Delaware Fund
- Hamilton Community Foundation, Edith H. Turner Fund
- City of Hamilton, City Enrichment Fund
- City of Hamilton, Net Levy

Our Community Partners:

- Autumn Getty & Compass Community Health Centre
- Canada Summer Jobs
- City of Hamilton Dental Health Bus
- City of Hamilton Vulnerable Supports Team
- Clarisse Otshudi & Interval House
- Goodwill Industries
- Hamilton Community Legal Clinic
- Immigrants Working Centre
- Interval House & The Women's Centre
- McMaster University School of Social Work
- Mohawk College
- Ontario Electricity Board and Alectra Utilities
- VPI Employment Services. City of Hamilton Dental Health Bus



Special thanks to the knitters, crocheters and sewers who hand craft beautiful baby items and winter clothes for Emergency Food and Family Services program participants. We distributed approximately 120 baby layettes and many hundreds of toques, scarves, mitts, gloves, slippers, and socks.



VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

Volunteers continue to be the backbone of what we do here at Neighbour to Neighbour. Welcoming them back into our sites has brought a warm and welcoming energy into our programs and services. We could not run the way we do without volunteers.

In 2021/22, though still very much in the pandemic, N2N volunteers were involved in re-opening programs and services that had been suspended, while continuing to successfully run our essential services that never took a break:

- Collecting and distributing over 1 million lbs of food to community through our food bank
- Supporting our *Sharing and Plot Gardens*
- Preparing and serving the *Take-Home Meals* take-out for individuals and families seeking nutritious food
- Planning and implementing *Kids Club* programming for youth aged 6-12
- Assisting our *Cooking up Justice* program for youth aged 13-18
- Providing *Community Counselling* for individuals needing social, emotional, and financial crisis support

As programs re-opened, more community members joined our volunteer teams. We are thrilled to have 100+ volunteers in the schools once again as our tutoring programs re-open this fall.

COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR 2022

\$125,863

\$ Verified

43

Teams

301

Walkers

1,228

Donors

\$16,000

Sponsorship

32

Volunteers

February marked not only our ninth annual Coldest Night of the Year Walk but our biggest to date! **43 teams, 301 walkers and 15 sponsors came together to raise an incredible \$125,863!** The Hamilton community really rallied around this hybrid event. About one third of participants walked in the comfort of their own neighbourhoods while the other two-thirds joined us on Concession Street and walked along the beautiful Mountain Brow, taking in the sights that our glorious city has to offer. Thank you to 32 onsite volunteers who helped keep all of us organized and safe. We can't wait to do it all again next winter at our 10th Annual Celebration!

VOLUNTEER OVERVIEW

251

Total Volunteers

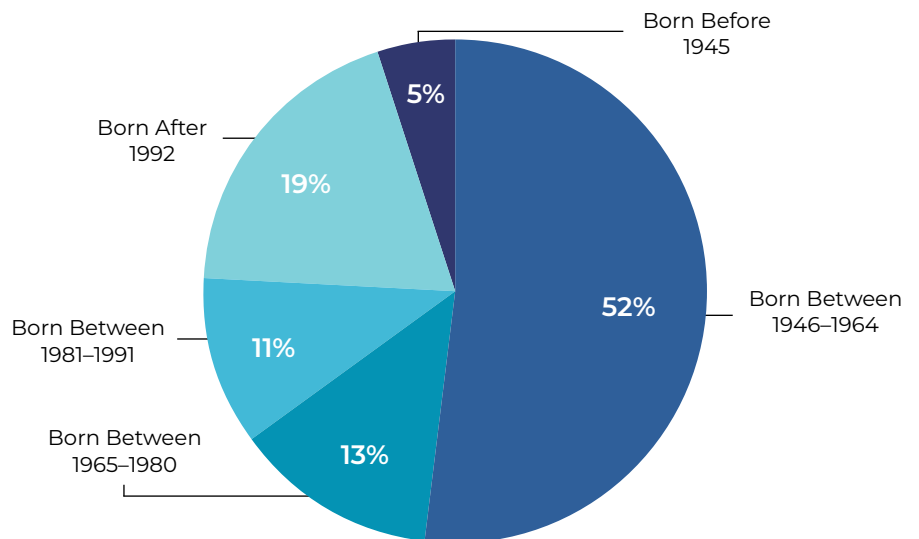
70

New Volunteers
Started

15,568

Total Volunteer Hours
Contributed

In 2021-22, our volunteers ranged
from 16 to over 85 years old!



MEET PATTI IDENOUE!

In 2021, Patti was honoured with the Hamilton Senior of the Year – Healthy and Active Living Award. That year, anyone enrolled in the City’s Chair Fit class, or Cardio Dance on Zoom, or in the HCoA course, “Navigating the Health Care System as Older Adults” also met Patti – ever enthusiastic and always smiling.

Patti has held at least 13 volunteer roles at 6 organizations! At Neighbour to Neighbour, she’s brought knowledge, energy, and leadership to the teams she’s led, been a part of, and beyond!

A 10-year N2N literacy tutor for 1-4 students, Patti’s been instrumental in updating the tutoring manual and creating efficiencies in the program for 120

volunteers (and indirectly impacting roughly 2380 students)! When the reading tutor program pivoted and went on-line during the pandemic, so did Patti, learning the Zoom platform from the hosting perspective.

For two years in our Community Food Program, Patti fit right in with the age-diverse meal prep team (teens to octogenarians), easily able to trade talk about food traditions, or any topic the group landed on. She could also very comfortably reach out to the person who needed extra encouragement to join in.

Patti has decades of experience as a worker, a volunteer, a leader, and a friend in the community. The greatest gifts she brings are her friendliness, kindness, and gentle, confident wisdom. It is a privilege to work alongside Patti, and we are honoured that she has chosen to give her time to N2N!



N2N LEADERSHIP TEAM

Denise Arkell,
Executive Director

Mark Raymond,
Manager of
Administrative
Services

Robyn Knickle,
Director of Development

Krista D'Aoust,
Director of Community
Food & Family Services

Amy Angelo,
Manager of Food Access
& Skills

Laura Ryan,
Manager of Family
Services

Charlotte Redekop-Young,
Manager of Emergency
Food Services

Deban Brunette,
Director of Educational
Programs

Marija Kupina,
Coordinator of Volunteers

N2N BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dan Holstein,
President

Steve Kartonchik,
Past President

Nick Davies,
Secretary

Denise Provencher,
Treasurer

Chris White,
Director

Marlene Atlas,
Director

Ann Higgins,
Director

George Kalacherry,
Director

Fareen Samji,
Director

Lorraine Hoult,
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Joti Vallabh,
Director

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