



Red Door

Ending family homelessness one family at a time.



Newsletter

Spring 2014

We can't do it without you!

Join the Family Guardians today by pledging a monthly gift to help end family homelessness, one family at a time.

For information on how to join and membership benefits:

Call: 416-915-5671 x232 or email:
reddoorshelter.ca/monthly-giving



Join Team Red Door!

Walk, roll, or run with us in the 2014 Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge on October 19th and help raise \$25,000 to provide over 1000 food bank visits for 105 families.

It's a fun event for everyone. Entry is free with a minimum fundraising pledge and prizes will be awarded to our top fundraisers.

Join today! For more information visit:
www.reddoorshelter.ca/marathon

More than just Groceries - an Urgent Need

"Just knowing that the support is there, knowing that the food bank is there for us - it's like a burden is lifted off my shoulders." – Eve, a mother of 3

For mothers like Eve, our weekly Food Bank is an essential service after moving out of the shelter.

Every week, Eve is able to visit the Food Bank and receive the food she needs, as well as donated supermarket gift cards. The TTC fare to cover her transportation costs to and from the Food Bank is especially appreciated.

For Eve, the Food Bank is about more than just groceries. It's a helping hand through a critical time. It provides a sense of security and peace of mind, knowing that at the end of the month, she won't have to choose between paying the rent and feeding her children. That kind of support is invaluable.



Every week more than 50 families use our Food Bank.

"There is a severe lack of safe, affordable housing in Toronto right now, and the increasing cost of private market rent is not manageable for many families. It is becoming increasingly difficult for families to make ends meet" says Andrea Simon, Operations Coordinator at the Red Door.

The average family moving out of the Red Door into a private market rental spends nearly 67% of their income on rent alone. This puts them in a very vulnerable position, and at high risk of being homeless again, which is why transitional support like our Food Bank is vital.

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Support from the Food Bank makes a difference. Over 95% of the families who access the Food Bank and other transitional services after they leave the shelter remain successfully housed and achieve their goal of independence.

We simply can't provide this vital service without your support. Due to high demand we are in urgent need of food donations and financial donations to help families over the next few months.

We Urgently Need your Help

- 1) Give a financial gift today and help fund our program costs.
- 2) Donate non-perishable food. For a list of high priority items visit reddoorshelter.ca/programs/food-bank
- 3) Join Team Red Door to raise funds on our 5K or Half-Marathon team. Visit reddoorshelter.ca/marathon

A Mother's Day Treat

Over 63% of the families we serve are single mothers. Mothers who have escaped homelessness and abuse are under tremendous stress, so it means a lot when they have the opportunity to relax and enjoy time with their children.

On Mother's Day, the families at our Queen Street shelter were treated to a fabulous full course brunch courtesy of local realtor Alex J. Wilson and Joshua Hendin, owner of Treeline Catering. It was an incredible spread and a wonderful gift that brought smiles to many faces.

Thank you to Joshua and Alex, and all of the kind supporters who gave special donations for Mother's Day!



Delicious treats were aplenty at a catered Mother's Day Brunch for our Family Shelter residents

Healing through Art

When a family is evicted and faces homelessness, it is traumatizing for the children. Without support that goes beyond basic shelter and food, the effects of homelessness and its root causes can last throughout a child's lifetime.

Last year Red Door was able to provide Art Therapy for 15 school age children at our family shelter, most of whom had come with their families after being evicted, or being forced to leave unsafe housing. All of the children were found to be dealing with issues such as negative self beliefs, aggression, and lack of confidence as a result of their experiences.

"Art therapy is an excellent medium for children to work through difficult issues, and it gives them a positive environment to feel comfortable sharing their feelings" says Carol Latchford, Director of Client Services. Led by a trained art therapist and psychotherapist, the sessions are helping children express their negative emotions in a safe environment, and build on their personal strengths.

We are very grateful to a generous family who donated \$15,000 in honour of a family member's birthday to make these art therapy sessions possible.



Did you know? At any given time more than 50% of our shelter residents are children. Every year we serve more than 400 children through a variety of programs that focus on healthy childhood development and education.

Save the Red Door Campaign

By Bernnitta Hawkins, Executive Director

Since the launch of our Save the Red Door Campaign in March we have received an incredible outpouring of community support to help us keep our doors open at 875 Queen St. Local residents, community leaders and politicians have all stepped forward and taken actions which are beginning to turn the tide in our struggle.

Because of a legal dispute, the building that houses our long-term home was put into receivership. Developers have bid on the property, placing our future in jeopardy. But with the incredible groundswell of support behind us the Red Door now has a voice and is a force to be reckoned with.

There are nearly 50,000 signatures on our petition to date and we have gotten the attention of key stakeholders. At our last community meeting, former Mayor David Crombie joined our fight, and is heading a leadership team who are reaching out to all levels of government for support.

On May 22nd, Councillor Paula Fletcher put forth a motion at the Community Development and Recreation Committee meeting to commit the City to work towards a solution for Red Door. The motion passed unanimously. This was a key step forward. The next step will be to gain full support from City Council at their June 10th/11th meeting.

Our successes so far are truly thanks to supporters like you. We are very grateful for your support in this fight and we look forward to sharing more good news with you soon.

With warm thanks,



Bernnitta Hawkins
Executive Director
Red Door Family Shelter



Many local residents are standing with the Red Door.



Hundreds of supporters gathered at Ralph Thornton Centre for our Emergency Community Meeting.

Help Save the Red Door

Together we've made great progress but we need to keep the pressure on the key decision makers:

- 1) We need your councillor's support of the motion to work towards a solution for Red Door. Please phone your councillor and ask for their commitment on this upcoming motion. Visit our website for a script to follow and to find your councillor's contact info: www.reddoorshelter.ca/save-the-red-door
- 2) We need to reach 50,000 petition signatures before the June 10th/11th Council meeting. Please sign our online petition and share widely with your contacts: www.change.org/savethereddoor.
- 3) Donate to support our campaign at tiny.cc/givetosavereddoor

Keep up to date with our campaign

www.reddoorshelter.ca/save-the-red-door



facebook.com/SaveTheRedDoor



follow #SaveRedDoor on Twitter.



Leaving your Legacy - Common Questions



Q. Can only wealthy people leave a gift in their Will?

A. No. Anyone can arrange to leave a charitable gift from their estate, regardless of its size. Most bequests are made by ordinary, hard-working people who want to make a positive difference to their community after they're gone.

Q. Is it difficult to include a gift to charity in my Will?

A. No. Your financial planner, lawyer, accountant or insurance agent can help you leave a gift. These professionals can tell you about the best gift vehicle and tax benefits for legacy gifts.

Q. How do I know the gift will be used in the way I intended?

A. The best way is to let the charity know when you are including them in your Will. Your lawyer can also help you with the correct language for your Will so that your intentions are clear.

Q. How will leaving a gift to charity in my Will benefit my family?

A. Your estate will receive a donation receipt for the full value of your bequest gift. The resulting tax credits will reduce taxes owing on your final tax return. This helps increase the remaining value of your estate for your beneficiaries.

When the time is right please consider leaving a gift to Red Door in your will.

To join the Red Door's Legacy Giving Society, please contact: Kathryn McKechnie, Fund Development Manager
416-915-5671 x230 kmckechnie@reddoorshelter.ca

Save Postage Fees

Canada Post has significantly increased the cost of postage. To help us continue to keep our administrative costs low we invite you to join our email list.

If you would like to receive our communications electronically please contact us, or visit our website to change your preferences online.

Call us: 416-915-5671 ext. 232
Email: fundraising@reddoorshelter.ca

Visit:
reddoorshelter.ca/change-contact



Thanks to all our supporters young and old!

For their birthdays, instead of receiving gifts Grace and Oliver decided that they wanted to help other children in need. Together they raised over \$1,000 and collected toys and gifts to deliver to our shelter. We're so proud to see children like Grace and Oliver taking the initiative to make a positive difference in their community. Thank you for your support!



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