



Red Door

Ending family homelessness one family at a time.



Newsletter

Winter 2014

You did it!

Thanks to your tremendous support we raised \$181,000 over the holidays! Your generosity will help to build a bright future for hundreds of children and families.

Share with us!

What do you think of the Red Door? We'd love to hear from you! Share your thoughts, ideas and feedback with us:

416-915-5671 ext. 232
fundraising@reddoorshelter.ca



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reddoorshelter.ca/share-feedback

Gifts of Hope

By Bernnitta Hawkins, Executive Director

"I cried when we received all of the gifts. My children would not have had a Christmas without your kind donations. Thank You."

– Yandira, mother of 2

At the Red Door, the holiday season is an incredible time. The shelter is a-buzz with activity, and a sense of excitement is in the air. We experience such an outpouring of generosity from the community with hundreds of supporters like you coming together to share the joy of the season with our families.

For our staff, it is truly wonderful to see the smiles on the faces of so many moms and children. For moms like Mary, the gifts mean so much more than their material value; they are truly gifts of hope.

Mary and her family arrived at the Red Door just 3 weeks before Christmas. She had fled to Canada with her two young daughters from Nigeria where she had experienced violence and abuse. "I was afraid for the life of my children, and we had no support" said Mary. When she arrived at the shelter she was clearly distraught. She was nervous about starting a new life in Canada and was very concerned about her children and not being able to provide for them on her own.

Mary had heard from her case worker that during the holidays the shelter receives many donations for the families staying there but she didn't really know what to expect because she had never celebrated Christmas. When the gifts arrived, she was overwhelmed by the generosity.

There were jackets, boots, hats and other winter attire, and even special items just for her like cosmetics and perfume. She also received gift cards for groceries and houseware stores as well some small appliances that she could use when they were ready to move into a new home.

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When Mary opened the basket of toys that were given especially for her children, she started to cry. “Right now, for the first time in so long, I feel hope – like there is a weight being lifted off my shoulders”. It gave her hope for her children, and she knew they would be happy even during this difficult time. “Receiving all of these gifts, I feel loved and that there are people here who care about me. I feel safe, and I can’t say thank you enough”.

Many more families like Mary’s were thrilled with the generosity they received. So many amazing donors, groups, and workplace teams gave their support to help families at the Red Door experience a joyful holiday season.

Over 140 families were provided with wonderful gift packages, courtesy of groups like the Basketeers, Holiday Helpers, the Shoe Box Project, the Annual Basket Drive for Women, Santa Comes to Bay Street, Project A.J., and many wonderful family sponsors.

More than 16,000 lbs of food was donated from Second Harvest and many community donors, not to mention over 180 turkeys delivered. We also collected and distributed over \$23,000 in grocery and department stores gift cards.

Through our new Holiday Helper Gift Registry, families were provided with some of the items they need to help them start a new home when they are ready to move out of the shelter.

On top of all of this, you also gave over \$181,000 in funds to help us continue running the programs that are critical in helping families rebuild their lives after experiencing homelessness and abuse.

To everyone who helped make this holiday season bright, and to all of you who have supported us through the year, thank you. What your generosity gives to mothers like Mary is beyond measure. Thank you for giving the gift of hope.



A touching donation from two young donors who brought in toys collected on their birthdays for children at our shelter for the holidays.

One of a Kind Support

Every year thousands of people flock to the One of a Kind Christmas Show & Sale. This year, the “Give Local” campaign encouraged attendees to make a small donation to Red Door with their ticket purchases.



Over \$7,000 was donated by One of a Kind Show visitors!

By the end of the week, over \$7,000 was raised! The One of a Kind team also donated \$2,500 in Loblaws gift cards to support our food bank.

Manager Andrew Moyes, was delighted with the level of

support. “We are very proud that our community was able to offer this support during the holiday season and we are thrilled to know that we were able to benefit those who are in need.”

Believe it or not

To celebrate their Grand Opening, Ripley’s Aquarium made a tremendous donation to the Red Door to help those in need in their new community. We were delighted to receive a cheque for \$10,000 plus a special gift to our families - 200 complimentary passes to the Aquarium!

Many of our residents had been talking about how much they would love to visit the aquarium so they were overjoyed when they received this wonderful gift. Thank you Ripley’s for making holiday wishes come true for our families.



A Mother's Tribute

For over 13 years, Fran Marinic-Jaffer has been organizing Project A.J., a donation drive that delivers clothing and gifts to the families at the Red Door. Each year Fran purchases, collects, packs and hand delivers more than 130 boxes geared to different age groups.

The project has special meaning for Fran as it was something she started in memory of her son A.J. who passed away many years ago. This project has been an ongoing way to honour him by helping other children and families in need during the holidays.



Fran, Founder of Project A.J. delivering another wonderful donation of gifts for Christmas.

Happy Holiday Hampers

For the second year Beverly Harney and her group have collected and delivered hampers filled to the brim with everything a family needs to make a fabulous holiday dinner - complete with a turkey, all the fixings, and even a table cloth and candles to add that special touch.

"It's that attention to the details that made it so special" says Cathy Bedford, outreach worker at the Red Door. "Beverly and her group really encompass the spirit of the holiday season."



The Holiday Hampers crew, Beverly, Lauren, Jessi, Mawnan, Alex, and Lee.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our 2013 holiday program!

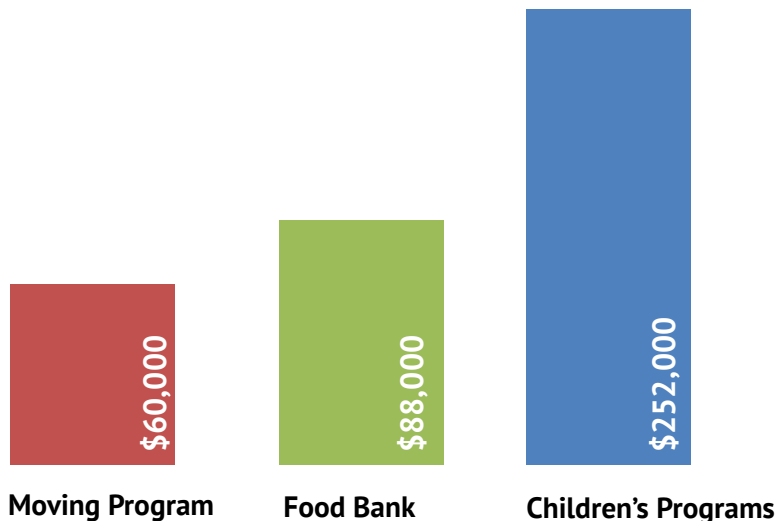
For a complete list of holiday program supporters visit our website:

reddoorshelter.ca/our-donors/holiday-2013

How your donations help

With over \$400,000 raised to date this fiscal year, your gifts are helping fund core programs that provide families with the support they need to rebuild their lives. It is only with your generous help that we are able to provide these programs that go beyond emergency food and shelter to help residents achieve their long-term goals of stability and independence.

This year, funds raised are supporting our Moving Program which helps families move into their own homes, our Food Bank to support families who have recently moved out of the shelter, and our Children's Programs to provide healthy development and recreational opportunities.



CBC Features Former Residents Giving Back

If your TV was tuned to CBC over the holidays you may have seen us! We were thrilled to be featured on CBC's The National and Our Toronto. The segments featured some of our residents who told their stories, and profiled two former residents who are now giving back to the families at the Red Door today. Kozeta, a former refugee from Albania who now owns a successful hair salon, came back to the shelter before the holidays to give mommie make-overs. Luz, who escaped to Canada from war-torn Columbia and has been working as a cook at the Red Door since 2009, talked about how she received the strength and support to be where she is today.



Maria and Ashley receive the finishing touches on their make-overs

Watch the segments here:

reddoorshelter.ca/news/news/red-door-residents-give-back

Calling all runners - we want you!



Team Red Door will be participating in the 2014 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge in October. We're recruiting for a special Half Marathon Team - the "Team Red Door Champions". Led by Liam O'Sullivan, top Team Red Door fundraiser for the past two years, our goal is to recruit 15 champions who will each raise \$2,000 in pledges. So far we have 7 members on the team but we need your help to reach our goal.

Want to join? Contact us:

fundraising@reddoorshelter.ca

416-915-5671 x232

For more info visit: reddoorshelter.ca/marathon

Serving our Donors

Mark is here to help!

Want to hear from us a bit more, or less?

Want us to send you an e-newsletter instead of sending it by mail? Lost your tax receipt? If you have these questions or any others, Mark Zurawinski, our friendly Fundraising Coordinator is here to help.



Email: mzurawinski@reddoorshelter.ca

Phone: 416-915-5671 x232

At Red Door we value our donors and supporters and respect your privacy and personal preferences. Without you, it would not be possible for us to continue to help families affected by homelessness and abuse. Thank you for your support.



Red Door
FAMILY SHELTER

Ending family homelessness, one family at a time.

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