

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



**HORIZONS
FOR YOUTH**
LEAVE THE STREETS BEHIND



A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD PRESIDENT

In 2020, Horizons for Youth's residents faced two crises - homelessness and COVID-19. Homeless youth did not have the option to safely stay at home when the pandemic was declared. Youth had to choose to stay at shelters, which are high-risk environments for the spread of COVID-19, sleep rough, or return to potentially abusive and neglectful households.

To say the least, this year was challenging, alarming, and stressful for our residents. Homeless youth were an extremely vulnerable population before the pandemic, and the health crisis caused greater risks to their physical and mental health.

Understanding the increased risks to homeless populations during the pandemic, Horizons for Youth took many steps to protect the health and safety of our residents and frontline workers. We are proud of how our agency responded to the pandemic and cared for our residents during this challenging time. Because of these actions and a lot of luck, we had no COVID-19 cases at our shelter in 2020. We also provided enhanced mental health care to our residents to help them cope with increased uncertainty, anxiety, and isolation.

Horizons for Youth's achievements in responding to the pandemic were possible because of our generous community. Many individuals, corporations, and foundations made incredible financial donations, held fundraisers, and donated needed supplies like food and personal protective equipment. We thank our community for their support of our mission to shelter, prepare, and guide homeless youth to achieve wellness and become contributing community members.

We are grateful to be part of your community.



DAVID ARMSTRONG
BOARD PRESIDENT



FILOMENA WILLIAMS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



MEET AARON

Aaron* came to Canada as a 23-year-old refugee, fleeing civil conflict and violence in Ethiopia. Before the conflict erupted in Ethiopia, Aaron had a good life. He had graduated from university and was working for a non-profit that advocated for better healthcare for patients.

When he came to Canada, he was completely alone and had no where to go.

“I’m lucky because I could have been sent anywhere, I feel lucky that I was sent to Horizons. That I was able to meet the people I met, and they helped me get where I am today,” says Aaron.

Aaron lived with us from November 2019 to March 2021. This may seem like a long time to live at an emergency shelter, but many of our residents stay with us for over a year. Their journeys from crisis to independence are onerous and therefore, they need time to find employment, save money, improve their mental health, finish school, and develop the skills they need to live independently.

During Aaron’s time as a resident, he accessed many of our services including our daily Life Skills education program, mental health care, and support applying for his refugee claim and work permit. He achieved many goals while living with us. He finished an Information

Technology training program, found a full-time job in this field, completed his refugee claim, and made many friends.

“I think the biggest thing that was helpful [during my time at Horizons] was interacting with the staff. They really helped guide me in the right direction...especially with immigration, going to school, finding a job. Another thing is the mental health counsellors were pretty helpful – having conversations with them was definitely a plus,” Aaron expresses.

Although Aaron was incredibly productive while living at Horizons for Youth, his time at



our shelter was difficult because of the COVID-19 pandemic. When the health crisis was declared, our agency quickly implemented new regulations to protect the health and safety of our residents, including restricting resident travel in and out of the building, promoting physical distancing, and requiring everyone to wear personal protective equipment.

“The pandemic was challenging, but...I definitely felt like all of the regulations put in place really helped the residents and staff there stay healthy and prevent outbreaks... There was no outbreak when I was there, which is a testament to these measures.”

Although all of our residents experienced increased stress and isolation because of the pandemic, Aaron says, “what gave me hope to keep on going was I had a lot of things going on. I was doing school. I was working from home for half of the pandemic. Those things helped me maintain my mental health.”

In March 2021, Aaron moved out with two other residents with whom he had become good friends. They found a three-bedroom apartment within each of their budgets. Aaron reveals that the pandemic helped him build stronger relationships with the other residents. “During the lockdown, it was so hard to be alone, so it was great to have other residents close by to chat to and support each other.”

Aaron claims that the most helpful thing about living at Horizons for Youth was the security. “My time at Horizons allowed me to find stability and gave me peace of mind to focus on education and finding a job. Not only for me, but also for my friends. This is the biggest advantage of staying there...The staff were helpful in assisting us keep going and motivating us. **I wouldn’t be where I am today without them.**”

**Name changed to protect the confidentiality of this resident*

2020 ACHIEVEMENTS

NO COVID-19 OUTBREAKS

We are proud to announce that Horizons for Youth had no COVID-19 outbreaks in 2020, which is an incredible achievement given that our agency is a congregate living environment. We followed strict health and safety practices to keep our residents and frontline workers safe, such as restricting resident travel in and out of the building, providing personal protective equipment to all staff and youth, and enforcing strict cleaning and disinfecting practices.

ADAPTED PROGRAMS IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

Horizons for Youth had to adapt many of our programs to promote physical distancing and respond to the emerging needs of our residents. For example, our Life Skills Program Coordinator designed individualized plans for each resident to help them find employment, advance their education, and build personal and social development skills. While our youth missed participating in large-group life skills training programs, they still received the support they needed to prepare for independence.

SUPPORTED 200+ AT-RISK YOUTH

136 of the most vulnerable people in our community found safe refuge at Horizons for Youth in 2020. We also continued to support over 100 Community Support clients – former residents that live independently, but still rely on Horizons for Youth for support. We provided our Community Support clients with guidance, virtual counselling, and emergency food and care packages.





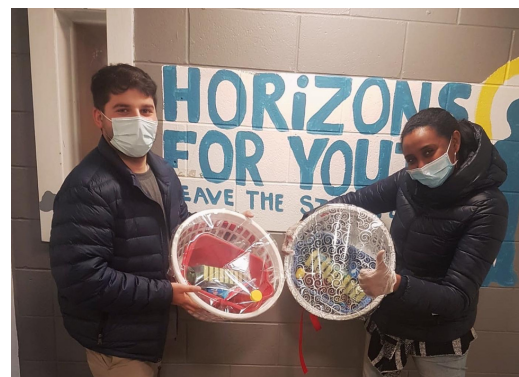
Picture of the Homework Hub

OPENED OUR NEW HOMEWORK HUB

The 'Homework Hub', the addition to our shelter, was completed in the fall of 2020. This new room provides our residents with a quiet space to do homework, apply for jobs, and look for housing. Thank you to The Ontario Trillium Foundation for fulfilling a dream of ours and funding the construction of this space.

PROTECTED OUR FRONTLINE WORKERS

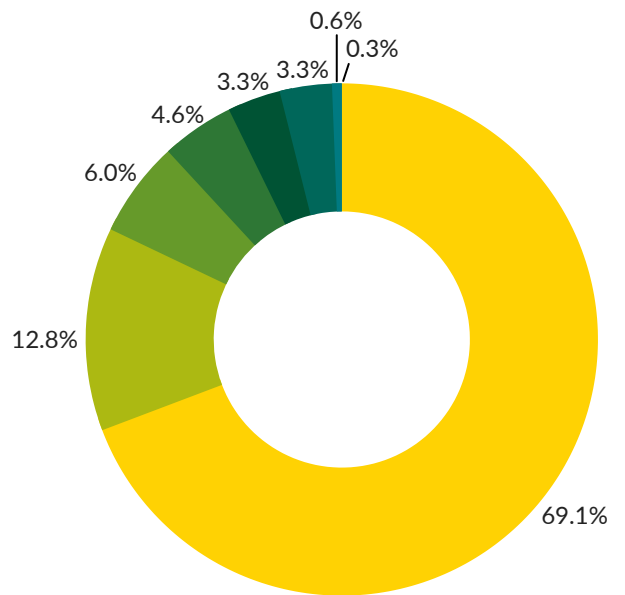
Horizons for Youth's frontline workers reported that they felt safe and cared for by our agency in 2020. Our incredible workers risked the health of themselves and their families to continue caring for our residents. We are proud that 100% of them reported that they believed our agency responded appropriately to COVID-19 and 95% said that they found innovative ways to perform their jobs during the crisis.



2020 FINANCIALS

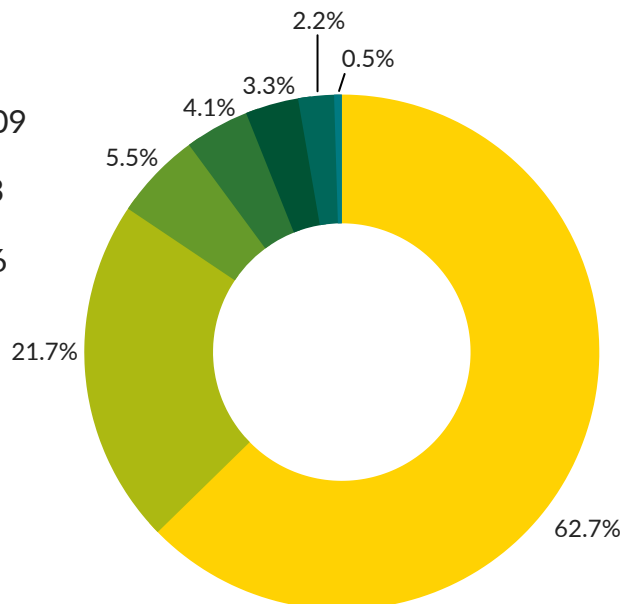
EXPENSES

■ Shelter Program.....	\$1,178,113
■ Building Maintenance.....	\$218,463
■ Amortization of Property & Equipment...	\$103,041
■ Administration.....	\$78,282
■ Residents' Needs.....	\$56,117
■ Housing Help Program.....	\$56,051
■ Development.....	\$10,445
■ Household.....	\$5,178
Total.....	\$1,705,690



REVENUES

■ Government Funding.....	\$1,214,709
■ Fundraising & Donations.....	\$421,053
■ United Way.....	\$106,226
■ Property & Equipment Grant Amortization...	\$78,570
■ Client Support.....	\$64,675
■ Employment Programs.....	\$43,513
■ Interest & Other.....	\$9,301
Total.....	\$1,938,047



OUR SUPPORTERS

MAJOR FUNDING PARTNER (\$1,000,000+)

- City of Toronto

BENEFACTORS (\$100,000+)

- United Way Greater Toronto

VISIONARIES (\$25,000+)

- The Harold E. Ballard Foundation
- The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation
- Toronto Foundation
- MONAT Canada

LEADERS (\$10,000+)

- The Home Depot Canada Foundation
- Bell Canada
- Lawson Foundation
- Golden Bee Homes Inc
- MLSE Foundation
- Fondation Echo
- The Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Traquair Family Foundation
- PayBright
- Aston Family Foundation
- Frederick and Douglas Dickson Memorial Foundation
- LoyaltyOne
- The Hustler Young Men's Bible Class Foundation
- The Rotary Club of Toronto

BELIEVERS (\$5,000+)

- Check Point Software Technologies Ltd
- Second Base Youth Shelter
- Erik Parnoja

- Second Harvest
- Alan Moody
- Altas Partners
- Blythwood Road Baptist Church
- North York Harvest Food Bank
- Sprucegrove Investment Management Ltd
- St. Andrew's Charitable Foundation
- The Hylcan Foundation

ADVOCATES (\$1,000+)

- Mazon Canada
- Richard Wilks
- The McLean Foundation
- Ontario Realtors Care Foundation
- Joanne Dereta
- Christopher Brejak
- Starbucks Foundation
- Joyce Chan
- The BLG Foundation
- Unifor Social Justice Fund
- Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Canada
- Trek for Teens Foundation
- University of Toronto First Aid Society
- Bell Media
- Nicholas Skrypek
- Catherine Purvis
- Constantine Adamopoulos
- Andrew Sheiner
- Brian Courtney
- Dean Levitt
- Jo's Snowflake Fund at Toronto Foundation
- Kathleen Taylor
- Marilyn E Cook
- Patrick Brown
- Saro Creative Canada
- The Savvas Chamberlain Family Foundation
- Walmart Canada



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