



2021 MID YEAR UPDATE



Kerr Street Mission
Oakville's Mission of Hope



May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

More Than Just Food

Often when I have an opportunity to speak at an event, company or group I will be sure to say ***“Kerr Street Mission is NOT a food bank!”*** And then I will follow that with ***“YES we do distribute food to people in need, however our mission and the care we provide is SO MUCH MORE than food.”***

In this report and the last few, much of the information is about our food programming and that is because food is such a BIG part of what we do. During the pandemic, the increased need for food and the restrictions on other programming led us to focus more time, effort and resources into food services. We still have lots of work to do to make sure that ALL those in need in our community have access to the healthy food they need. At the same time, I marvel at the progress our staff and volunteers have been able to make in regards to three of our key goals: a consistent supply of food, more healthy food options available, and a greater percentage of produce and proteins distributed.

Staff have been working hard in other areas as well to improve programming and to find ways to get people the help and support they need. To learn more about the incredible impact of the Neighbour Care Network or the new CAP Debt program please don't hesitate to call or check out our new website. To see more of the activities and experiences that the Summer Programming/Day Camp program provides, check out our Kerr Street Mission Social Media posts.

I am continually amazed and filled with appreciation and admiration for the compassion and generosity of our community of supporters. Your giving has made it possible for us to provide essential care and a community of support for those in need – and together we are making a difference for so many in our community.

THANK YOU and Blessings!

Gary O'Neill
Executive Director
gary@kerrstreet.com | 905-845-7485 ext 202

Sustainability Update

How can we estimate revenue during a pandemic? COVID-19 changed the fundraising landscape for charities like KSM as some donors lost jobs, many corporations suffered financially, numerous foundations changed their priorities and there was uncertainty about the availability of the emergency funding that governments provided early in the pandemic. When we began this year we were committed to maintaining the staff structure required for current operations, purchasing the additional food required to meet the increased need, investing so we could respond quickly to the emerging needs in our community and allocating the necessary funding to maintain and improve our facility. The only thing we could do was make our best guesstimate and then trust God to provide for our needs.

We are happy to report that our donor community has, again this year, demonstrated tremendous compassion, generosity and commitment to Kerr Street Mission and to those in our community that are struggling to make ends meet. From January to July of this year, donations received were 7.8% greater than in 2020. This is amazing news especially considering that we had a 26% increase in the same time period in 2020. Over that same time period, January 2019 to July 2021 our expense budget has increased by over 37% as we have implemented program improvements, added new services in response to COVID, increased food purchases to meet demand and invested in needed infrastructure. Again it is your compassion, generosity and faithful support that has made it all possible. You are a blessing!

KSM's Choose Fresh Program literally saved my life

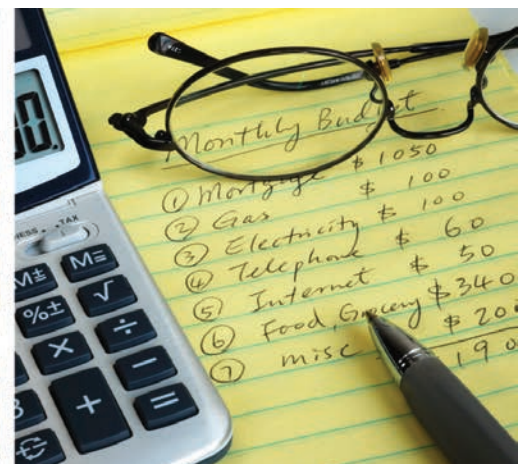
- Don, KSM Client

We love being able to share positive stories about the difference KSM has made for those we serve. Don's story is one of those. There are many individuals and families in our midst that have serious financial issues. For many, the loss of income, the social isolation, and the uncertainties of the pandemic not only added to their financial struggles, it significantly impacted their mental health.

Over the last few years we have been working hard to improve the quantity and quality of healthy foods that are available in our Food Market because we believe that healthy food and eating well will help improve both physical and mental well being. And we believe that is true for infants to seniors and everyone in between. Don, who is 65, was struggling financially prior to the pandemic. He owned his home, but relied on rental income from tenants, some of whom were inconsistent with rent payments. Don didn't feel he had the energy to deal with his renter issues or with his mounting debt. His kind spirit and empathy often resulted in him forgiving past arrears and just trying to make ends meet without the rental income. The cost of healthy food and the effort required to prepare nutritious meals was too much for him. Poor diet, limited finances and high debt all compounded to create feelings of despair and depression. Thankfully Don reached out to KSM for help.

KSM has many different programs that support our neighbours in need in their times of crisis. Don was registered for the Choose Fresh program and was encouraged to come to our Food Market weekly. After months of eating the nutritious meals provided through the Meals to Go program and the other healthy food from Choose Fresh and the Food Market his health and energy improved. That is when Don reached out and asked about our Debt Program.

By making healthier food choices, Don's physical and mental health improved to a place where he was ready to tackle his debt. We are happy to report that Don is now working with our CAP Debt program coordinator to get his debt under control and to give him hope for a better and healthier future.





It has been a very busy time in Food Services. Due to COVID-19, we had to quickly change how some of our programs ran. However, it also has allowed us the opportunity to expand existing programs and begin new ones. Here's a quick look at what has been going on this year.



What's the difference between
Choose Fresh and Choose Fresh Lite?
Scan the code to find out!



For the past two years, our Choose Fresh program has been a great way to get more consistent healthy food into the homes of our clients. This year we launched Choose Fresh Lite. This program was developed to better accommodate the eating habits of smaller families (1-2 people) providing access to a smaller package of Choose Fresh. It is meant to be more accessible to those who have other budget constraints as well. By offering a smaller package size, we can support smaller families in reducing food waste, and ensure that all of the healthy food directly benefits the family.



The Fresh Food Box for Halton program was recently revitalized by KSM in the summer of 2021 through the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. As a result of the pandemic, the original "Halton Fresh Food Box" program was halted due to not being able to gather volunteers and facilitate the distribution of boxes.

KSM's revised program provides up to two boxes of fresh produce per month instead of just one, knowing that the single delivery per month was not enough to sustain the needs of the participating families. The boxes are priced at \$10 and \$20 depending on size and contain an assortment of fresh fruits and vegetables. Along with the box is a recipe that highlights a product clients may be less familiar with.

We are currently working with 10 partner distribution sites throughout Halton and a local vendor to pack and distribute these boxes to clients.

Thank You!



Thank you to Feed Ontario for providing KSM with the funding to purchase some new refrigeration units. Through this investment, we are better able to provide clients with access to fresh and frozen foods within the market space. Clients can see, identify, and select for themselves the foods that will most benefit their families.

Thank you to other retail partners like Walmart, that have allowed us to increase the amount of fresh food we are distributing within our market to roughly 40% of the food available!



FOOD SERVICES IN NUMBERS

FROM JANUARY - AUGUST 2021



656

is the average number of people accessing food from KSM each week. (29% more than in 2020 for the same time period)

This is the equivalent of roughly 245 families weekly.

400

children have been served.

School aged children also received snack packs through the support of Halton Food for Thought.

458

unique families have been served.

(104 were first time visitors)

1,219

unique individuals have been served.



FOOD DONATIONS

OVER 80,000 lbs of food has been donated.

Over 30,000 lbs (38%) of it has been perishable and fresh foods.



The heart Behind the Mission

KSM is a place that brings people in the community together. There is such an emphasis placed on building connections and seeing yourself in light of how you relate to and impact others. Being at KSM has enabled me to spend my days working to serve the staff, volunteers and clients who are all integral pieces of the KSM family. Knowing that what I do can have a positive impact on others makes every challenge so rewarding and worthwhile.

Dan Nguyen
Manager, Food Services



4,605

food packages have been put together and delivered.



NEIGHBOUR CARE UPDATE

Case after case we have realized that people in crisis and distress struggle to think clearly, to make good decisions and to follow through with necessary actions. As a result, their situations almost always become more complicated and more difficult to resolve. We have also seen that very few people understand what services and resources are available or how to access them, so they often fail to receive the help they need.

The Neighbour Care Network (NCN) was established to leverage the power of community so that we could respond to the unique needs of each client and so that they had a better chance of changing their circumstances and getting to a healthier, safer and more stable situation.

There are many stories from the last few years of individuals and families experiencing life changing help through NCN. Here is how NCN works and why outcomes are better for clients with NCN support:

- Clients are paired with a volunteer who will walk alongside them and offer guidance, encouragement and accountability as they work towards changing their situation.
- KSM staff and the volunteers support and advocate for clients so any potential issues restricting services are resolved and barriers are overcome.
- The network of volunteers, churches and other community partners is leveraged to identify options, secure services, and negotiate discounts to make change possible.
- KSM's benevolence fund is accessed to cover short term or emergency costs when no other options are available and when it is a barrier to progress.

If you are interested in learning more, volunteering, providing discounted services or interested in donating to our benevolence fund, then please reach out to paula@kerrstreet.com.

The heart Behind the Mission

I love working with families and seeing them do well! It is my greatest joy to see families no longer needing our services. As sad as it can be to no longer see them, I know it means they are in a better place financially. I also love that before COVID during Family Dinners, some families who no longer needed KSM services would still come to the meal because they had built up a community of people around them. It shows the community aspect is just as important as the food that's served!

Michelle Lockhart
Manager of
Family Services



Helping Those Under the Burden of Debt

Kerr Street Mission is excited to announce we have launched a Debt program and through the support of the community we have dedicated staff working with and supporting clients. Several years ago we partnered with CAP Canada to launch a Debt Centre for Oakville. The CAP program required a trained volunteer to act as debt coach to liaison between the client and the certified debt experts at CAP Canada. The program was a great success as our KSM staff were continually able to connect people into the program. Unfortunately the volunteer moved and neither KSM or CAP were able to find a replacement.

During the pandemic the KSM Family Service Manager has become increasingly concerned about the debt she has been seeing families accumulate. Many are in arrears with rent. Many have accumulated Pay Day loan debt at extremely high interest rates. Others have reached the limit on their credit cards and are unable to pay them down.

Having seen the importance of the debt service and through the work with the Neighbour Care Network we understood this was a critical service that is needed for our community. Through the generous donations of three donors we have been able to secure the funding for the first year of operations.

If you are interested in learning more, volunteering or interested in supporting the program, please reach out to john@kerrstreet.com.

christians
against
poverty

CAP



SUMMER PROGRAMS UPDATE

Kerr Street Summer Programs have become a mainstay for so many of our families, and even more important after the challenges that the pandemic has brought. As COVID restrictions continued into a second year, many families continued to struggle financially and others were pushed further into poverty. Summer camp is an essential part of growing up, and so again this summer we were committed to providing another great experience for kids in our community. The Kerr Street Summer Programs offered kids and teens the opportunity to participate in a structured, full day camp program that focused on fun, positive developmentally appropriate activities.

We are so blessed to be able to share that our campers, staff, Leaders in Training truly had a summer to remember at KSM. This would not have been possible without the generous support of our donors who continue to give to our "Send a Kid to Camp" campaign. We are so happy to share that this year we raised \$160,000 that helped to fund our summer programs and to bring joy and fun back into our kids lives. Thank you to all of those who helped us. We truly value your support.

The heart Behind the Mission

One of the best things about my role is to be able to see youth who have grown up attending our programs and who have been mentored by our staff and volunteers come back years later and reflect on how meaningful their time spent with us was. It is an amazing feeling to see these youth doing well as young adults who still feel connected to this building and more importantly the people who cared about them and invested in them during that season of life.

Tim Moore
Youth Development Lead



Some Thoughts From Our Camp Staff...

"Camp has brought our kids new friends, interaction, social skills, leadership skills, relationships and most importantly family. Many of the kids we see struggle with family life and many don't have a sense of belonging - so camp gives them a place where they are welcomed, and a place where they can be themselves."

- Kristen, Counselor

"KSM Summer Programs are so important to every single family we serve. We are giving these families a chance to experience something they may not have the opportunity to receive without us. Words simply fail to describe how much of an impact the KSM Summer programs has had on our campers, their families and the staff."

- Caroline, Senior Counselor





Kerr Street Mission

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