



**Annual
Report
2004/05**

The Year in Review

Message from our Board President and Executive Director

The first-person stories that lie at the heart of this annual report illustrate some of the serious issues that so many in our community face: inadequate income, social isolation and skills that far too often go unrecognized. They also speak to the ways that people are striving to stabilize and improve their lives, and the important role The Stop plays in this process. We are continually gratified to find—as you will read—that community members regard The Stop as a caring, respectful and enabling organization.

A new strategic plan, developed over the past year, will ensure we remain such a place in years to come. This plan will see us focussing on four strategic priorities: healthy food, social justice advocacy, a greater leadership role in the food security sector and organizational health (fundraising, staff development and capital enhancements).

Having a clear sense of where we're going over the next five years is critical as we prepare for new initiatives (for example, our greenhouse project at the historic Wychwood TTC car barns), and look for creative ways to cope with the increasing demand on our programs. While the fact that we worked with 4,000 additional people this year is a reflection of growing need and inequality, it also confirms that our breadth of programming and focus on dignity works. People want to be active participants—as cooks, gardeners, volunteers and engaged citizens—in tackling their poverty and food concerns.

In 2004–2005 the board continued to strengthen The Stop's governance structures by developing new financial policies, fundraising guidelines and an evaluation process linked to clear work plans for each board committee. Major renovations to our program space made it significantly more welcoming and people from both near and far continued to visit us to learn how our unique community food centre



approach might be adapted to their own settings.

A sincere thank you to our talented board, skilled staff, committed volunteers, supportive partner organizations and generous donors. Our reputation as a vital and responsive community resource is thanks to you. Particular recognition must be paid to Celia Harte, our retiring board president, for five years of passionate and dedicated leadership. To those of you who are unfamiliar with our work, we hope that the stories and information in this annual report will inspire you to join us in making our neighbourhood and this city a better place for everyone to live.

—Charles Lennox, Board President
and Nick Saul, Executive Director

The Stop by numbers in 2004–2005:

- **13,871** people used our programs and services
- **2,600** lbs of fresh produce were harvested from our garden and greenhouse
- **26,435** healthy meals were served through our community kitchens and drop-in café
- **94%** of babies born through Healthy Beginnings had healthy birthweights
- **1,200** children from classes ranging from junior kindergarten to high school planted seeds and learned about growing healthy food
- **211,428** meals went home in food bank hampers to community members

Our Mission Statement: The Stop Community Food Centre strives to increase access to healthy food in a manner that maintains dignity, builds community and challenges inequality.

What we do

The Stop's core programs

Urban Agriculture is a year-round organic vegetable production and food systems education initiative.

Sean's* grandfather was a farmer, so you could say he comes by his green thumb naturally. But he admits he still had a lot to learn about gardening. So this past summer, he spent about five hours a week planting, transplanting, watering and weeding in The Stop's 8,000-square-foot urban garden. "It's been an amazing learning experience for me," says the 25-year-old, whose day job is in musical instrument repair. "We grow everything from tomatoes, broccoli, swiss chard and zucchini to unusual things like callaloo, which is a leafy green popular in the Caribbean. It's all pesticide free

and organic, and everything we grow goes to The Stop's food bank or drop-in café." In the winter, Sean spends about two hours a week in The Stop's greenhouse, located at a nearby high school. "One of the greatest things I've learned is the importance of being self-sufficient. Why not plant a tomato plant in your backyard, and pick your own fresh tomatoes instead of paying \$2.99 a pound for them at the grocery store? The taste of a tomato fresh off the vine compared to one that's been trucked 3,000 miles—there's just no comparison."



The Community Kitchens are communal cooking groups that bring people together to learn, cook, eat and socialize.



In six years, Paulo* has missed only four weeks of cooking class at The Stop's community kitchen. "I love the two or three hours I spend here each week. It's such a pleasure to cook with other people," says the 65-year-old, who spent 30 years cooking in Toronto nursing homes before retiring in 1994. Paulo's skill in the kitchen means the other participants—about 20 of them each week, men and women of all ages—look to him for cooking advice. "I show them very basic techniques and then let them do it

themselves," says the 65-year-old, who emigrated to Canada from Italy in 1955. Pasta and pizza dough from scratch, stuffed peppers and hearty soups are menu favourites. "Sometimes it doesn't turn out perfectly, but we have a good time. And everybody gets to eat. No one goes home hungry, and people even take home the leftovers. It's amazing how much good food you can make for all those people for about \$30." Paulo has even brought his 11-year-old granddaughter to class on occasion. "The class keeps me occupied. I don't want to stay home and sit in front of the TV all day." He laughs, "It's not time for that yet."

*PSEUDONYMS HAVE BEEN USED TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY.

The **Food Bank** provides members with a 2–3 day supply of nutritious and culturally appropriate food once a month.

“People at The Stop have been so good to my kids, and to me,” says Sandra*, a 42-year-old mother of two. “When we first came to Toronto almost three years ago I was really worried because we didn’t have enough food. But we felt really welcome at The Stop. People here treat you with respect, they listen to you.” For Sandra and others



just knowing The Stop is there makes all the difference. “Sometimes you just need a place to rest, to sit down for a few quiet minutes and have something to drink. Just spending a bit of time here feels great.” Sandra also volunteers in the food bank

once a month and, thanks to her initiative, kids who come to The Stop now have books and crayons to play with. “I also volunteer at another organization, and they were sometimes getting children’s books and art supplies and things like that, and they didn’t

need them, so I have been bringing them to The Stop.” Sandra recently started a full-time job as an administrative assistant, but she still finds time to volunteer. “The Stop is a very necessary part of the neighbourhood. I want to continue to help.”

The **Drop-in programs** provide nutritious meals and activities that help reduce social isolation, as well as offer information on social issues and community resources.

Mina is on social assistance and was having trouble making ends meet, so The Stop’s drop-in lunch has been a real help to her. “I found out about the drop-in by accident when I came by to collect groceries at the food bank. One of the volunteers said I could sit in the drop-in and have a lunch. It was amazing—a huge plate filled with rice, vegetables and chicken. I was amazed when they told me I didn’t have to pay for it.” She says The Stop is



a hugely important part of the neighbourhood. “People in the area think of The Stop as their second home. They rely on it. If money is a little tight, if they don’t have enough to eat, they know they can always

come here,” says the 39-year-old single mom. During the summer, when school was out, her children came to join her while she did her volunteer placement cooking for The Stop’s cafe. “I want them to

grow up with the notion of a social conscience and caring for other people,” she says. “They’re really proud of themselves when they know they’ve helped someone else out.”



Healthy Beginnings is a perinatal nutrition and support program for low-income pregnant women.

The **Family Support Program** is a one-on-one peer support initiative for families with newborns.

It was a freezing cold December when Louisa*, who was eight months pregnant, arrived in Canada from her native Mexico. She says she felt isolated, lonely and scared—until the day she and her husband happened to walk by The Stop, knocked on the door, and heard

about the Healthy Beginnings program. She started attending the weekly drop-in program, and was also connected to a Spanish-speaking peer worker who helped her tackle her depression, find new housing (she and her family had been living in a shelter), and link her with local programs and services. “The workshops gave me great information on things like nutrition and taking care of a newborn, and I got to talk to other moms, which was a huge support to me,” says Louisa, 33. Because of the support she received, she says she felt an overwhelming desire to help others; she now gives shoulder, leg and foot massages to the women in the Healthy Beginnings program.

“My experience at The Stop has made me a better wife and mother, and a better person. I feel great about myself and have made so many new friends. I thank God I was able to find a place like this in my time of need.”

Our volunteer program provides opportunities to community members and others to contribute to all the activities at The Stop.

When Jasmine* arrived in Canada from Bangladesh in 1995 she thought finding a job would be easy. “We came because we heard Canada needed doctors,” says the 42-year-old general practitioner, whose husband is also a physician. After eight years in Montreal, the couple and their teenage daughter moved to Toronto in 2003. “I have applied for several physician’s assistant jobs and had a lot of interviews but as soon as they hear I’m a physician they don’t call back. It’s very painful.”

Jasmine and her family are on social assistance and use The Stop’s food bank; Jasmine also volunteers there, packing hampers and helping to distribute them.

“I feel like I’m helping people who are in the same situation as we are,” she says. “It’s like group therapy. I help between 50 and 80 people every time I’m here and I feel so good doing it.” Jasmine recently applied to a food and nutrition program at a local university. “It would be nice to be able to use my medical background and be able to find a good job here. When I do, I’ll still continue to volunteer at The Stop. It’s like a family to me now.”



Thanks to The Stop's 2

The Stop thanks the following funders and donors for their generous support over the past year. We'd also like to acknowledge the significant contributions made by over 700 individual donors.

FAITH GROUPS

Centennial-Japanese United Church
 Christ Church ACW—Coboconk
 Christ Church Deer Park
 Christ Church Deer Park ACW
 Church of St. Timothy—
 St. Andrew's Group
 Church of Transfiguration ACW
 Deer Park United Church
 Eglinton St. George's United Church
 Exultate Chamber Singers
 Fairlawn Heights United Church
 First Narayever Congregation
 Flora McCrea Group of Timothy Eaton
 Memorial Church
 Grace Church-on-the-Hill—Brandon
 Group
 Grace Church-on-the-Hill—
 Outreach Committee

Hillcrest Women's Fellowship
 Holy Cross Priory
 Kingsway Lambton United Church
 Patterson Presbyterian
 St. Barnabas ACW
 St. James Cathedral York Group
 St. John's Church West Toronto
 St. John's Norway ACW
 St. Mark and Calvary Church
 St. Philips ACW, Martha Group
 The Church of St. Clement—Eglinton,
 ACW
 The Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields
 The Church of St. Timothy
 Timothy Eaton Memorial Church
 Toronto Conference of the United
 Church
 Women's Community Service
 Club—TEMC

CORPORATIONS

ACE Bakery
 Azure Publishing
 Bain & Company Consulting
 Bank of Montreal
 Britannia Pub
 Campbell Michener & Lee Inc.
 Carrot Cache Community
 Resources Inc.
 CIBC
 DHL Express (Canada) Ltd.
 Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts
 Galloping Groomer
 Gilbert's
 Grand & Toy
 Great West Life Assurance Company
 Heidrick & Struggles Canada Inc.
 IBM Employees Charitable Fund
 Imagnus Canada
 Inco
 JB Productions Inc.
 Kalmoni Establishments

Lennox Millar
 Manulife Financial
 McLean's Employees
 MPI Productions
 Nav's Executive Corporate Catering
 Ltd.
 NRI Industries Inc.
 PPG Canada Inc.
 RBC Foundation
 Sproll's Fine German Bakery
 TD Bank Financial Group
 TD Canada Trust
 TD Friends of the Environment
 Foundation
 Telus—Eaton's Centre, Dufferin Mall,
 Yorkdale and Bloor flagship store
 The Gilder
 The Printing House
 Thomas Allen & Sons Ltd.
 Unilever
 Wal-Mart/Evergreen

FOUNDATIONS

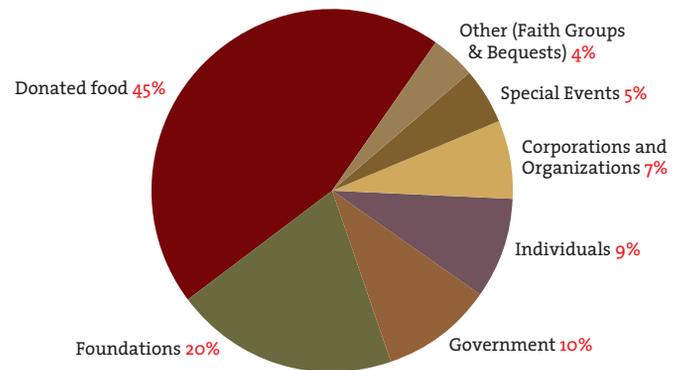
Audrey S. Hellyer Foundation
 B&B Hamilton Fund—at The Toronto
 Community Foundation
 CHUM City Christmas Wish
 F.K. Morrow Foundation
 Helen McCrea Peacock Foundation
 HOPE Volleyball Toronto
 Inasmuch
 Murray Family Charitable
 Foundation
 Nelson Arthur Hyland Foundation

Nick & Lynn Ross Charitable
 Foundation
 Patrick and Barbara Keenan
 Foundation
 Rotary Club of Toronto Charitable
 Foundation
 Sir Joseph Flavelle Foundation
 St. Andrew's Society of Toronto
 T. Donald Miller Foundation
 The Auxilium Foundation
 The Caring Foundation
 The Charles Johnson Charitable Fund

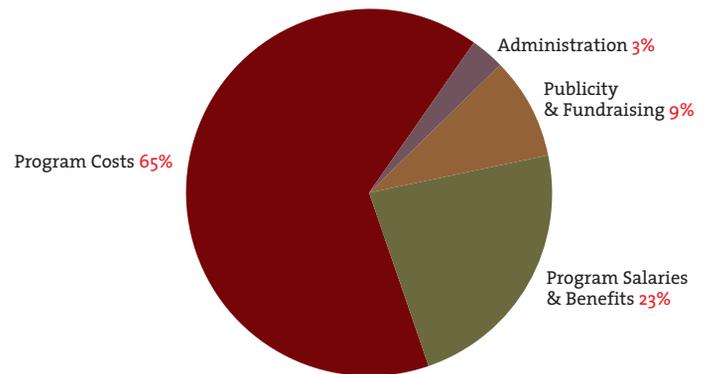
The Children's Emergency
 Foundation
 The Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation
 The George Cedric Metcalf Charitable
 Foundation
 The George Lunan Foundation
 The Harbinger Foundation
 The Hermant Family Foundation
 The Howard and Carole Tanenbaum
 Family Charitable Foundation
 The Julie-Jiggs Charitable Foundation
 The McLean Foundation

The Ontario Trillium Foundation
 The St. George's Society of Toronto
 Charitable Trust Fund
 The Salden Foundation
 The Sprott Foundation
 Tippet Foundation
 Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation
 United Way of Greater Toronto—
 Winter Relief Grant

Income 2004–2005*



Expenditure 2004–2005*



*Complete audited financial statements are available upon request.

004/2005 Contributors

This list was compiled in October 2005 and includes those who have contributed since May 2004.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Federal

Health Canada
· Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program
Human Resource and Skills
Development Canada

Provincial

Ministry of Community, Family and
Children's Services (Early Years)

Municipal

City of Toronto
· Food and Hunger Action Fund
· Homeless Initiatives Fund
· Community Services Grants
Program
· SCPI

ORGANIZATIONS

Appleby College
Bishop Strachan School
Canadian Ethnocultural Council
Deer Park Public School
Ontario Natural Food Co-op
Steelworkers Humanity Fund
United Steelworkers of America—
various locals
West Toronto Dental Society

IN-KIND SUPPORT/ COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Absolute Location Support Services
Access Alliance Multicultural
Community Health Centre
Allseating
Alternative Grounds
Andrea Curtis
Annette Street School
Artscape
Ascot Avenue Community Daycare
AutoShare
Azure Publishing
Beaujolais Private Investment
Management
Beckta Dining & Wine
Bell Mobility Foundation
Bishop Marocco/Thomas
Merton School
Bistro Tournesol
Borden and Elliot Foundation
Britannia Pub
Calphalon Culinary Centre
Carleton Village Public School
Church of the Advent
Citizens' Environment Watch
City of Toronto—Parks & Recreation
City of Toronto Public Health
CONNECT Information Post
Daily Bread Food Bank
Davenport-Perth Community Church
Davenport-Perth
Neighbourhood Centre



Deer Park Public School
Dish Cooking Studio
Dovercourt Public School
Edward Burtynsky Photography
Elementary Teacher's Federation of
Ontario
Evergreen
FoodShare Toronto
Habonim Synagogue
Havergal College
Heidrick & Struggles Canada Inc.
Heritage House Bed & Breakfast
Holtom's Bakery
Humbercrest Public School
Hutoshi Hair & Skin Studio Inc.
Independent Order of Mechanics
J.B. Productions Inc.

James Tse Photography
Joe's Grocery
Joseph Piccinnini
Community Centre
Kalmoni Establishments Inc.
Kids Can Press
Lakeview Estates
LEARN
Learning Enrichment Foundation
Loblaws
Midwives Collective of Toronto
Mountain Equipment Co-op
Native Men's Residence
New Moon Kitchen
North Toronto Memorial Arena
Once Again Nut Butter Inc.
Parcel Design

Perth Avenue Public School
Pet Emporium
Plant World
Primrose Housing Co-op
Project Water
Queen West Community
Health Centre
Question Limited
Rob Fiocca Photography
Rona Home & Garden
Rosedale Presbyterian Church
Royal St. George's College
Second Harvest
Sheridan Specialties
Sodexo
Soudi Boutique
St. Christopher House
St. Elizabeth Catholic High School
St. Joseph's Women's
Health Centre
St. Luigi Catholic School
St. Philip the Apostle
St. Stephen-in-the-Fields
St. Stephen's Community House
Stella Maris
Stephen Gregory
Stratford Festival
Street Health
Super Sprouts
Symington Place Tenant's
Association
Tatangelo's Wholesale Produce
Telus Mobility
T-FAL/Groupe Seb
The Amazing Food Service Inc.
The Body Shop
The Carmichael Inn & Spa
The Community Health Network—
West Toronto
The Composting Council of Canada
The Etobicoke Quilter's Guild
The Mabin School
The Marion Singers
The Printing House—
160 Bloor St. location
This is Wonderland—CBC
Tiffany & Co.
Toro Magazine
Toronto Food Policy Council
Toronto Housing Corporation
Toronto Zoo
Upper Canada College
Urban Restaurant
Verity
VIA Rail
West End Drop-In Network
West Toronto Community
Legal Services

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Bequests

· The Estate of Elizabeth Charlesworth
· The Estate of William Stevens

Leading by example

Creating new neighbourhood food programs by building on what works



This year The Stop participated in the Food Animators Project, an exciting partnership with FoodShare, Second Harvest and the Afri-Can Food Basket. Working in five underserved neighbourhoods that had the interest and capacity to start new food initiatives, the project was aimed at improving access to affordable, culturally appropriate and healthy food. Funded by The City of Toronto and the Toronto Community Foundation, the one-year partnership brought together a team of experienced staff members from each of the

organizations to help local agencies in North York, Scarborough and Etobicoke start new community gardens, community kitchens and fresh produce markets. Additional support was provided to emergency food programs to improve their services. The project was intensively evaluated and documented, in the hope that we can share what we learned with other service providers and provide tangible evidence of the value of these crucial programs. Copies of the final report will be made available on The Stop's website in December 2005.

The Stop Community Food Centre's Urban Agriculture Program is the proud recipient of the first-ever Green Toronto Award of Excellence 2005 in the category of Environmental Awareness. This award honours companies, organizations and individuals who have demonstrated initiative on behalf of Toronto's environmental well-being.



THE STOP'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Charles Lennox, *President* · Celia Harte, *Past President* · Rick Eagan, *Vice President* · Tom Currier, *Treasurer*
 Roseann Barry, *Secretary* · Alexis Archbold · Darcelle Hall · Gillian Hewitt · Winston Husbands · Seana Irvine
 Michelle Monteiro · Caroline Zayid

The Stop Community Food Centre P.O. Box 69, Station E, Toronto, Ontario M6H 4E1
 tel: (416) 652-7867 · fax: (416) 652-2294 email: nadien@thestop.org · website: www.thestop.org
 location: 1884 Davenport Road · charitable # 1191-92763-rro001

The following donated services for the production of this document: Andrea Curtis, Sara Curtis and Stephen Gregory
 All photographs by Katherine Marielle