





*Downtown Ottawa, photo by LIGHTStudio
2023*

Challenges Downtown, and Across Ottawa

The past year was a busy one for Operation Come Home. We made significant progress on our core objectives, despite the extremely challenging situation for organizations responding to homelessness in Ottawa. Youth homelessness peaked in 2023, and agencies like Operation Come Home experienced higher levels of program demand than anything seen before.

Our team took advantage of the increased numbers in our drop-in to make progress on key initiatives. We expanded our services to be open 7 days per week. Our team successfully launched a new housing social enterprise. And we helped more youth achieve their goals in employment and education, far exceeding our past records for these services.

YEAR IN REVIEW



Housing

In partnership with the City of Ottawa, we supported youth to find and maintain housing in Ottawa. We also grew our efforts to provide units to youth directly, through master leasing.

42 clients achieved new housing
1,700 Hours of social support provided
82% of our youth maintain their housing for more than 2 years.



Social Enterprise

Operation Come Home operates three social enterprises that provide paid employment to youth, and help them build their resumes. This helps them long-term, as they can then move into successful private-sector employment.

41 youth employed
7,872 hours worked
71% achieved further employment in private-sector organizations



Employment

Staff provided youth with help to find and maintain employment in the community. Many youth needed only informal or immediate help, while others joined structured programs to find new jobs.

602 clients served
72% Achieved employment
51 employers engaged across Ottawa



Education

Working with our partners the Ottawa Catholic School Board, and youturn, we supported youth to complete high school through our onsite school program. In 2023 we increased enrolment and classroom hours completed.

72 youth enrolled in school
1,600+ classroom hours completed
5 graduates enrolled in post-secondary organizations



Drop-In Resource Centre

Youth coming to Operation Come Home receive hot meals, basic necessities, and crisis support 7 days per week. While in our Resource Centre, youth join programs that help them achieve their long-term goals.

14,900 meals served
752 individuals supported, aged 16-25
473 received help with housing



Housing

Operation Come Home helps youth find and maintain their housing. Our team supports youth to reunite with family, find new places to live, navigate the social services system, or resolve conflicts that cause housing insecurity.

Over the past year, our work has become increasingly challenging. Like many communities in Canada, Ottawa experienced an significant increase in the number of people seeking housing support. At the same time vacancy rates in Ottawa, particularly downtown, fell to record lows.

To counteract these trends, our team responded by :

- Expanding our work with Master Leasing, increasing the number of units available to youth;
- Increasing the on-demand supports available to youth in our drop-in Resource Centre, helping youth facing housing precarity to achieve stability;
- Providing case management support to 64 youth during 2023; and
- Assisting 42 youth as they found and moved into new homes.

Our work in this area is supported by the City of Ottawa, which provides funding support for our housing team, and for our master leasing program. The City has had significant challenges dealing with this multi-faceted rise in homelessness, and has done an excellent job managing a difficult and evolving situation. We are grateful for the support of City staff and elected officials as we work together to address this ongoing crisis.

Results

33 youth were reunited with family

21 youth were housed through master leasing

64 youth received ongoing case management support provided by our housing team to find and maintain their housing

42 youth were successfully housed in new apartments

Our Housing Team is
generously supported by:



Ministry of Children,
Community and Social Services





Social Enterprise

Operation Come Home helps youth achieve their goals in employment through the management of three social enterprises. These organizations supported youth in 2023, enabling them to participate in paid work, build their resume, and move into new, private-sector jobs.

BottleWorks

bottleworks.ca



BottleWorks picks up empty alcohol containers from restaurants, bars, private households, and condo buildings, and returns these containers to the Beer Store depot for the deposits. In 2023, BottleWorks returned a record-breaking 1.1 million empties. We employed a total of 18 youth who worked more than 3,100 hours.

FoodWorks

foodworksottawa.ca



FoodWorks is a full-service from-scratch catering organization that has been operating since 2017. Youth who join FoodWorks learn culinary and service skills from our Executive Chef Tim Stock, to prepare them for careers in food businesses, customer service, and related fields. FoodWorks employed a total of 23 youth in 2023, who together worked 1,764 hours.

HousingWorks

housingworks.ca



HousingWorks is our newest social enterprise, and has two main functions. Our team leases apartment units from landlords, and provides these units to youth through occupancy agreements. We also provide apartment cleaning, painting, light repair and turnover services to any building owners in Ottawa who require these services. HousingWorks launched these services in December 2023, employing two youth for a total of 85 hours.

Our Social Enterprises are generously supported by:



TELUS



United Way
East Ontario



Employment

Helping youth find stable, long-term employment is one of the most important actions we can take to improve their future well-being.

During 2023, Employment was our most in-demand program. A total of 602 individuals sought employment help. Of these, 293 youth received immediate help with referrals, resumes or applications. 249 joined formal programs. 177 of our youth found work, many achieving their first job.

We were able to achieve these milestones despite significant headwinds in our community. Most of our youth achieve their first jobs downtown, within walking distance of the shelters and other services they access. Yet the downtown core experienced significant challenges in 2023. Continued use of hybrid work and working from home has lessened demand for restaurants, bars, and retail stores downtown. These employers responded by cutting back their hours and reducing staffing levels.

All the trends indicate that hybrid work is here to stay, and many downtown offices have changed their organizational structure as a result. To adapt to these trends, our team supported youth to achieve employment in other neighbourhoods in Ottawa. We have also worked to expand the fields we support youth to join, increasing focus on the skilled trades, tourism and property management.

Our work in employment is supported by RBC, the Province of Ontario's Skills Development Fund program, as well as Economic and Social Development Canada.

Results

293 youth received immediate help to obtain or retain employment

60 clients were referred to community programs

249 clients joined a formal employment program at Operation Come Home

177 youth have since successfully obtained new jobs

10 youth have returned to school

Our employment programs are supported by:





Education

People with lived or living experience of homelessness, along with those involved in the justice system, are significantly less likely to achieve their high-school diploma by age 18. As a result, fewer are able to move into post-secondary education.

This lack of educational attainment has significant long-term impacts. Youth without high-school attainment are at a disadvantage when working on their long-term goals. They also experience reduced well-being, poorer health, and difficulty expressing optimism for their future.

Operation Come Home operates an education program that works to support youth to achieve their goals in completing high school. Our program operates in partnership with Ottawa's most innovative school board, the OCSB. We also partner with another community agency, youturn, to support youth in their goals.

During 2023 we had a total of 73 youth enrolled in our education program, broken out across both school years. These youth completed courses in all subjects and grade levels, from grade 9 english to grade 12 math, with the support of our incredible teacher, Bethany. For three of our youth, their hard work culminated in our graduation ceremony, held in June 2023.

Our work in the education program was supported by the Kiwanis Club of Ottawa, the Ottawa Catholic School Board, and the Wesley M. Nicol Foundation.

Results

73 youth registrations were made in the John Bosco Achievement Centre, counting both school years (2022-23 and 2023-24)

1600+ classroom hours were completed

41 credits were earned

5 students moved on to post-secondary education, receiving scholarships

3 youth graduated in June 2023

Our education program is proud to partner with:





Resource Centre

Many youth who come to Operation Come Home seek support to maintain their wellness. In our daily drop-in Resource Centre, youth join our programs, receive hot meals, get basic necessities, access crisis support, and get help navigating the social services system.

Our team of 6 drop-in workers provide support to youth with the ultimate goal of helping them end their experience of homelessness. Along the way they provide daily assistance to help youth. This includes basic necessities like personal care products and hot meals. Providing this support gives our youth an incentive to continue coming to Operation Come Home each day.

While here, youth are invited to join programs that help them achieve their long-term goals. Our staff help youth access housing supports, enroll in employment programs, recruit new employees to work in our social enterprises, and invite them to join our education program. We also talk to youth about reunite with their families, where possible, and refer them to other programs and services in Ottawa they need. The drop-in is the linchpin that makes all our other programs possible.

Our drop-in services are coordinated to work alongside other youth-serving community programs and organizations. We work closely with Youth Services Bureau, local church programs, and the shelters to coordinate our operating hours, and ensure youth always have a warm place to go.

Our work in the Resource Centre is supported by RE/MAX Hallmark Realty and Hallmark Giving, the Kiwanis Club of Ottawa, the Ottawa Food Bank, the City of Ottawa's Community Safety and Well-being Program, Knifewear, and private donations raised through events like our 24 Hours challenge.

Results

752 youth registered to receive drop-in Resource Centre support during the past year

14,900 hot meals were served

473 youth sought help to find or maintain their housing

379 youth received immediate crisis support

151 youth participated in life-skills programs like cooking classes, sewing programs, and other organized activities

Our drop-in Resource Centre is supported by:



Youth Testimonials

Operation Come Home's work is shaped by our most important constituency: our youth. Their voices inform the priorities of our organization and shape our work at every phase. We are proud to support these incredible and resilient young people, and work with them every step of the way.



Operation Come Home was there for me when I needed help the most. On my hardest days I was sleeping on the floor of an ATM, but now I am on track to achieve my dream of being a firefighter by studying at Algonquin. I really appreciate all their help.

-Ali, 21 years old



The staff are great and will go out of their way to help you, in any way they can. They helped me get an apartment... got me set up with furniture... everything. It was amazing.

-R, 22 years old



One thing I would say is that... every youth is just as grateful as I am, just to have somewhere to go, that's open all the days of the week... and the fact that staff just want us to feel safe.

-Maryanne, 19 years old



What I really like about OCH is the friendly connection... the environment with the staff. And the little programs you guys have... Like Friday night movies - that was my favourite part of the week.

M., 18 years old

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Shirley Westeinde



Sanita Alias



Sunny Cohen



Paul Marshall



Claire Seymour



Graham Bird



David Schellenberg

Not pictured: Dr. Jennifer Miles

Financial Position

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

December 31	2023	2022
Assets		
Current		
Cash (Note 9)	\$ 407,804	\$ 919,038
Short-term investment (Note 9)	179	179
Accounts receivable (Note 4)	116,806	105,340
HST recoverable	65,680	77,540
Prepaid expenses	42,930	11,208
	633,399	1,113,305
Long-term investments (Notes 2 and 9)	781,686	767,431
Tangible capital assets (Note 3)	230,823	243,627
Restricted investment (Note 8)	5,000	5,000
	\$ 1,650,908	\$ 2,129,363
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 8)	\$ 80,887	\$ 62,888
Deferred contributions (Note 4)	739,115	966,214
Deferred capital contributions (Note 5)	175,178	168,070
	995,180	1,197,172
Net assets		
Unrestricted	250,083	506,634
Invested in tangible capital assets	55,645	75,557
Internally restricted reserve	350,000	350,000
	655,728	932,191
	\$ 1,650,908	\$ 2,129,363

Full financial statements and audit information are available upon request.
Please email info@operationcomehome.ca.

Operating Finances

Consolidated Statement of Operations

For the year ended December 31	2023	2022
Revenues		
Grants (Note 4)	\$ 2,683,464	\$ 2,236,401
Donations	432,510	473,903
Fundraising	68,541	62,311
Amortization of deferred capital contributions (Note 5)	56,064	38,955
Rental income	15,987	18,625
Housing Works rental income	110,310	15,540
Food sales and catering	134,991	65,487
Investment income	14,179	10,013
Other income	12,066	12,000
	3,528,112	2,933,235
Expenditures		
Advertising and promotion	65,766	32,432
Amortization of tangible capital assets	80,067	60,417
Automobile and travel	39,684	41,377
Bank charges and interest	13,070	12,764
Communications	37,212	21,859
Fundraising costs	33,627	12,297
Insurance	32,023	23,919
Office	73,669	54,250
Professional fees	55,717	43,835
Programming and supplies	143,631	90,559
Rent and utilities	408,400	297,451
Repairs and maintenance	52,136	72,942
Salaries and related benefits	2,201,096	1,600,932
Unrecoverable portion of HST	4,508	31,430
Youth programming	358,509	433,447
Youth salaries and wages	233,102	151,999
	3,832,217	2,981,910
Deficiency of revenues over expenditures before undernoted items	(304,105)	(48,675)
Other income (expenses)		
Unrealized gain/(loss) on investments	26,137	(70,262)
Gain on sale of investments	3,681	15,792
Gain/(loss) on foreign exchange	(2,176)	6,608
	27,642	(47,862)
Deficiency of revenues over expenditures for the year	\$ (276,463)	\$ (96,537)

Full financial statements and audit information are available upon request.
Please email info@operationcomehome.ca.

Thank you for helping us end youth homelessness

Questions? Please get in touch.



info@operationcomehome.ca

Operation Come Home

PO Box 56036 RPO Minto Place
Ottawa, ON K1R 7Z1

Phone Number: 613-230-4663
Toll free: 1-800-668-4663

operationcomehome.ca



Operation Come Home is a registered charity operating in Ottawa, Ontario.
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