



# 2021/2022 Annual Impact Report


**Project  
SHARE**  
 Our Community At Work

**30** YEARS  
**INCORPORATED**  
**1992-2022**



**SHARE THANKS**

**Project S.H.A.R.E.**

**FALL FOOD DRIVE**

**October 4th, 5th and 6th**

**HUNGER AFFECTS 1,000 PEOPLE EACH YEAR IN THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS**

**Non-Perishable Food Drop-off Points:**

- Community Development
- Community Free Markets
- City Hall
- Niagara Falls Community Centre
- Catholic Mission / The Bells

**MUST REPLENISH SHELVES**

**Project SHARE supplies down**

**PROJECT SHARE FINDS Housing in Niagara is scarce, expensive**

**For more information, call 357-5121**

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[www.projectshare.ca](http://www.projectshare.ca)

(905) 357-5121

# #OurCommunityatWork



## 2021/2022 Board of Directors

**Chair:** Irma Sebastiano

**Vice Chair:** Anna Luciano

**Past Chair:** Brian Pellow

**Treasurer:** Mick Wolfe

**Secretary:** Trent Dark

**City Council**

**Representative:**

Lori Lococo

**Directors:**

Perry Wong

Julia Fabiano

Jim Ferraro

Italia Gilberti

Tom Snodgrass



## Message from the Chair and Executive Director

This past year was another challenging one as we continued to face the challenges of the covid-19 pandemic. More new families came to us for emergency assistance for the very first time and we continued to adapt our essential services to provide consistent, client-centred service in a safe way to our neighbours who were struggling to meet their basic needs.

We distributed more support services to meet this need including record breaking amounts of emergency food, toys and gift cards.

This year marked our 30th year of incorporation. While we are grateful to have helped families become fed, housed and healthy for over 30 years, we continue to strive for a future where families are able to meet their own basic needs and the need for food banks is no more. Until that time we will continue to provide emergency support services and advocate for systemic change.

We worked with a team from Leadership Niagara this year to create our new strategic plan. With input from staff, volunteers, clients and donors we set five strategic goals to focus our efforts for the next five years; client-centred service, organizational sustainability, community engagement, staff and volunteer development, and capacity building.

We are continually grateful for the incredible generosity we receive from our community partners, donors and volunteers, and the dedication of our staff and board of directors. Together we can lead the fight against hunger and empower those in need.

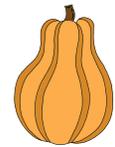
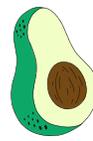


Irma Sebastiano,  
Chair of the Board



Pam Sharp,  
Executive Director

# About Project SHARE



**VISION** To end the struggle against poverty and empower those in need.

**MISSION** Project SHARE provides essential support services that improve the lives of Niagara Falls individuals and families in need.

**VALUES** We believe in

- Interacting with all members of our community with dignity, respect, compassion and understanding.
- Working as a team and with our community to provide whatever help is needed.
- Providing services based on inclusivity, equity, cooperation and collaboration.
- Growing an effective organization through open communication and fiscal and social responsibility.
- Investing in opportunities for our staff to develop their roles.

## Units of Emergency Support Services Provided



**3,675**

households served



**6,844**

individuals served

**28 %**

of households have 1 or more children

**22 %**

of households accessing Project SHARE services were NEW

**51 %**

required specific items like baby food or formula, diapers, Ensure and hygiene products.

**29 %**

of clients are 19 years old and under



**842 NEW FAMILIES  
ACCESSED OUR EMERGENCY  
SUPPORT SERVICES FOR THE  
FIRST TIME DURING  
2021-2022**



## SOME PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST YEAR!



### Emergency food program

Was utilized over **19,000** times during the last fiscal year.

**977,026** pounds of food was distributed to people in need.



### Community gardens

Project SHARE manages three community garden sites, offering **145** garden plots that are used by Project SHARE and Niagara Falls families to grow their own produce. The garden produced more than **2,675** pounds of fresh food that was distributed through our emergency food program.



### Snacks n' Sneakers

**465** children received support from our Snacks 'n Sneakers program during the summer of 2021. Children ages 4 - 17 received sneakers and a backpack full of school supplies and snacks to get their school year off on a positive start. Parents tell us that back to school can be just as stressful as Christmas. Thanks to the support of many individual donors along with our corporate partners Canadian Tire Bank, PenFinancial Credit Union, and Food Banks Canada After the Bell program.

Supported by:



Snacks n'  
Sneakers

PenFinancial  
Credit Union





## Christmas meals and gifts

**3,953** individuals received a grocery gift card to purchase their Christmas meal, and gifts for children 17 years old and under



## Housing support

**403** households received support with utility payments

**533** households received support with transportation (to access emergency programs)

**461** families accessed our Homelessness Prevention program. As a member of the Niagara Consortium for Housing Stability, we worked with a consultant from Org Code to review our Homelessness Prevention program following best practices and a client centred, no wrong door approach to service.

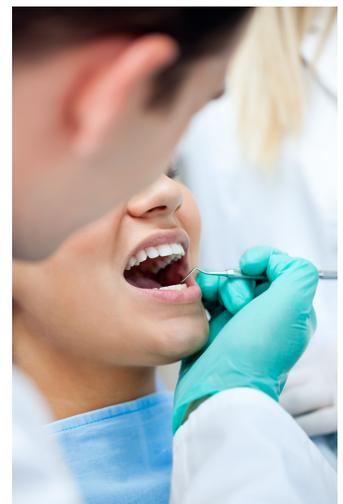


## Healthy Living

**Emergency prescription funding program:**  
A partnership with local pharmacies assists clients with emergency prescription expense once per year (pain-killers or narcotic products excluded).

**Eye Glass program:**  
A partnership to assist clients who are in need of eyeglasses without any other assistance available. The client pays for half of the cost for basic glasses.

**Brushed Aside and Dental Cleaning program:**  
The Brushed Aside program helps clients in need of dentures or extractions with an interest free loan of up to \$1,000. The Dental Cleaning program was launched to provide adults with a preventative dental cleaning. These programs were funded in part by the Niagara Region through the Niagara Prosperity Initiative.





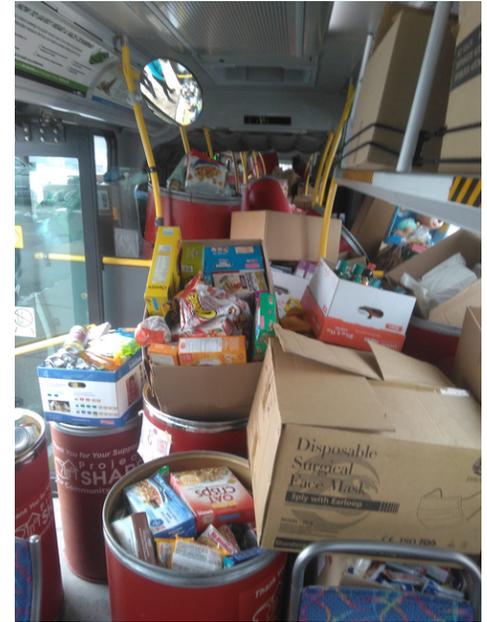
# Christmas time at Project SHARE

## Stuff the Bus Toy and Food Drive & the BCM Insurance Good News Breakfast

Amount Raised: **\$239,456.62** (\$110,419.92 in monetary donations, and \$129,036.70 worth of Toys and Food).

This joyous event saw over 50 local community groups, organizations, schools, and businesses collect food, toys, clothes and monetary donations for people in need! A big congratulations to the students, staff and families of Greendale Public School for winning our school challenge and to Kettlebells Niagara for winning the corporate challenge for the Stuff the Bus 2021 donation drive!

Thanks to the incredible support from our community, we broke the record again! Our Stuff the Bus campaign wrapped up with our Good News Breakfast and the Bell Media Great Holiday Food Drive, and we were happy to announce that 2,200 pounds of toys, 37,000 pounds of food and \$110,419 in monetary donations were collected to ensure that all of our neighbours would enjoy a holiday meal with their family and children woke up to gifts under the tree. This is an important time of giving and we are grateful for every donation that helped ensure none of our neighbours go hungry. Special thanks to our sponsors BCM Insurance, Greg Frewin Theatre, Niagara Falls Transit, 105.7 Move FM, 610 CKTB, YourTV Niagara, Service Master and everyone who participated, donated, and volunteered to ensure our BCM Insurance Good News Breakfast and Stuff the Bus campaign was a success. We can't do what we do without #ourcommunityatwork!



## Christmas Family Sponsors

Our Christmas Program provides holiday meals to families and gifts for children 17 & under. Much of this support comes from donors who adopt or sponsor families who need a little extra help. During Christmas 2021, families in need were sponsored by more than 150 community groups, churches, businesses and individuals. The Christmas Sponsor program provided \$37,515 worth of toys, clothing and gifts, and \$1,796 in grocery gift cards to families to help them celebrate the Christmas season.

When a sponsor registers for the program, they choose the number and size of families they wish to support. They are then matched and receive information about the children in the family so they can shop for gifts or gift cards.

Each family receives approximately \$25 per person for groceries and \$50 worth of gifts per child.

# Community outreach - Project SHARE is ensuring widespread awareness of services and increased participation in fundraising initiatives

#OurCommunityatWork is raising awareness and funds for Project SHARE all through the year. We are honoured to receive support from events taking place in our community. If you have an idea, we'd love to hear from you and would be happy to help get you started!



Blackburn Brewery hosted a Backpack drive for our Back-to-School program in 2021: "Our very first 'Pack The Bus' Drive for School Supplies in support of Project SHARE was a terrific success. And it's all because of you, our phenomenal community! You really stepped up in a big way — and now so many students across Niagara Falls will have the supplies they require in order to have a successful school year!"

Third party fundraisers are events or initiatives organized by an individual, company or organization that is not an official Project SHARE event but benefits the work we do, the people we support and the programs we offer. Third party fundraisers are an important resource for connecting to our community, raising funds, and increasing awareness of Project SHARE. It is an opportunity for you to engage your creative resources and encourage your team to think big and have fun! Acting independently and with Project SHARE's approval and support, third party events help us extend, enhance and sustain our emergency services to EMPOWER those living below the poverty line in Niagara Falls. We require the financial support of those who believe in our work and recognize the importance of ensuring that emergency food along with 16 other emergency services are available to all of our friends and neighbours.

Community members, groups, and businesses raised **\$53,915** in 2021-2022 to help feed neighbours in need through Project SHARE by running third party fundraisers.

Contact [events@projectshare.ca](mailto:events@projectshare.ca) for more information on how to run your own Third Party event!

## Meridian Credit Union Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) Event

**Amount Raised: \$52,780** Total from 631 donors, and \$7,500 from Sponsorships, in 2022

**Coldest Night of the Year** is an outdoor winter walk that raises awareness and support for emergency services and enables us to help Niagara Falls families and individuals who are living below the poverty line. Support from this event allows us to have fully trained client service workers who meet one-on-one with individuals to provide emergency support services including food and homelessness prevention to an average of 100 families every day.



# New Update: Formation of the Feed Niagara Network



The Feed Niagara network is a group of nine Feed Ontario member food banks working together to better service the Niagara region. The purpose of this network is to work collectively to end hunger and poverty in the Niagara region, uniting Niagara food banks through Feed Ontario's member network, resources and support. Together we work to stop hunger in Niagara through care and compassion. We are proud to partner with the following agencies through Feed Niagara:



**Niagara Food Hub:** An initiative of Feed Niagara this year was to pilot a Niagara Food Hub. This new project was a collaboration between Project SHARE, Community Care St. Catharines & Thorold, Community Care of West Niagara, Port Cares and the Hope Centre. Agencies made use of shared, off-site, warehouse storage space and bulk food purchasing to increase individual agency capacity to better serve our communities. The Niagara Food Hub pilot project was funded in part by the Niagara Region through the Niagara Prosperity Initiative.

## Volunteer support - Project SHARE is building a strong volunteer base to ensure client needs are met

### Volunteer program

Project SHARE relies on the support of our volunteers. In a typical year, volunteers provide knowledge, skills and time that account for the equivalent of close to 7 full-time positions. Volunteers play a key role in our operation. They help clients navigate our food room while selecting their groceries, sort and prepare food, assist at events, fulfill various tasks important to the success of our Christmas & Back to School programs, and work in our community gardens.

We are so appreciative of the dedication of our volunteers. They are vital to Project SHARE's ability to serve our community.



# 7,061

volunteer hours supported Project SHARE

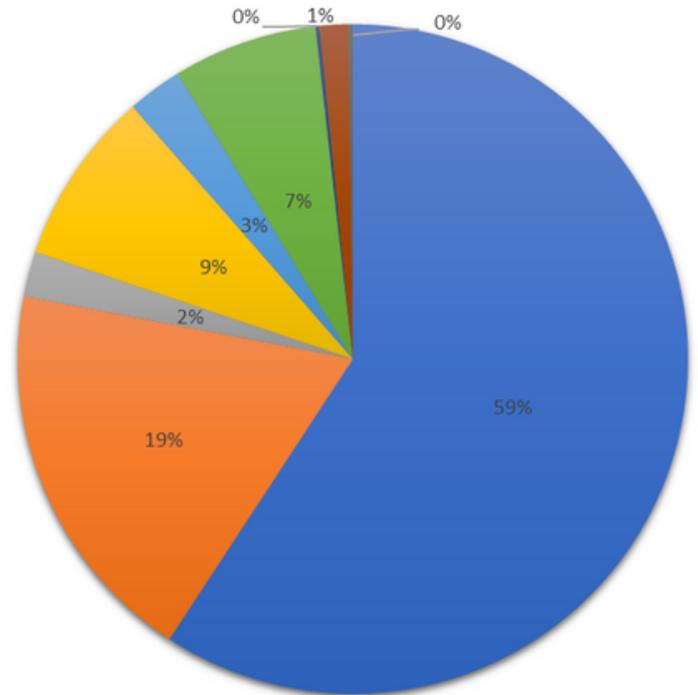
# \$133,452

Monetary value of volunteer time contribution at Niagara's 2021 Living Wage rate of \$18.90.



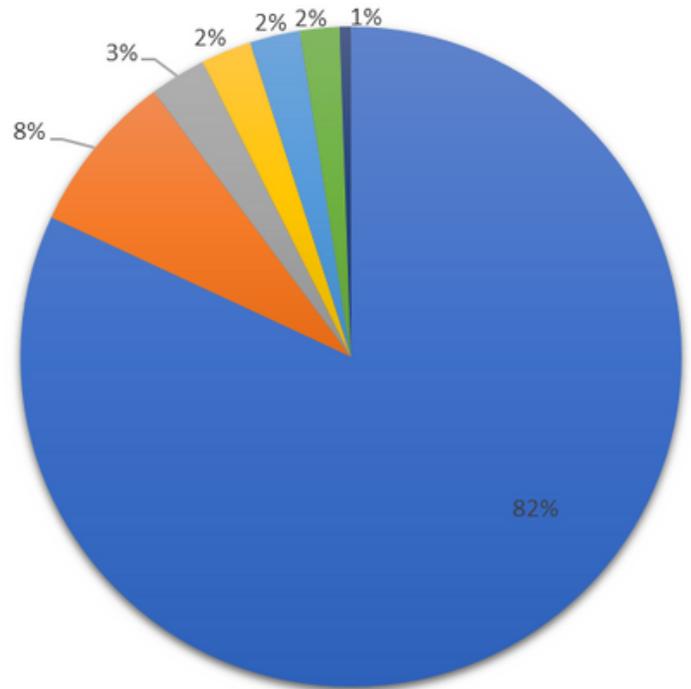
# Finances

**2021-2022 Revenue**  
**\$ 4,685,238**



- Food, Toy, and Clothing contributions
- Monetary donations and fundraising
- City of Niagara Falls
- Grants
- Utilities programs
- Niagara Region
- Federal and provincial government grants
- Amortization and miscellaneous
- Bingo and Nevada

**2021-2022 Expenses**  
**\$ 4,733,035**



- Client Services
- Salaries and benefits
- Fundraising
- Occupancy and maintenance
- Office and professional fees
- Depreciation
- Insurance and vehicle

# Programs and Services

## Food Security

### Emergency food program

Clients can come once a month for a regular pick up of perishable and non-perishable groceries, and one bonus perishable pick up, including bread and produce.

### Community gardens program

Volunteers and clients tend plots at Our Lady of Scapular Church, the Gate Alliance Church and Westlane Secondary School that grow food for our emergency food program as well as for their own needs.

## Housing Support

### Homelessness Prevention program

Assistance with the search for affordable housing, Niagara Regional Housing applications, referrals and transportation to emergency shelters.

### Utility assistance programs

Emergency funding to prevent utility disconnection for gas or hydro. Other means of help include hydro deposit waiver letters along with referrals to partner agencies who may be able to assist further.

Ontario electricity support program (OESP) helps low income individuals with a monthly credit towards their hydro bills.

## Healthy Living

### Emergency prescription funding

A partnership with local pharmacies assists clients with emergency prescription expense once per year (pain-killers or narcotic products excluded)

### Eye glass support program

A partnership to assist clients who are in need of eyeglasses without any other assistance available. The client pays for half of the cost for basic glasses.

### Dental Programs

Our Dental Cleaning program provided a cleaning to eligible adults who did not have access to this preventative service. The Brushed Aside & United Way Dental loan programs help clients in need of dentures or extractions with an interest free loan.

### Streetworks partnership

Provides clients with harm reduction supplies. Staff are also trained on how to inject Naloxone which can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

## Training and Education

### Community Garden education

In addition to offering 145 garden plots in Niagara Falls for clients to learn to grow their own food, the Community Garden program focuses on education and training by teaching gardeners how to tend a garden. Throughout the season we try to offer opportunities that educate and promote growing, cooking and preserving organic products.

# Seasonal and Other Support Programs

## Christmas

Our Christmas program provides a holiday meal and gifts for children ages 17 and under.

## Laundry program

Laundromat vouchers and laundry soap are given to families without facilities so they will have clean clothes and bedding.

## Recreation funding

Project SHARE connects low income families with recreation funding opportunities for families to participate in organized sports and art programs.

## Transportation funding

Assistance with the cost of transportation in the form of a gas voucher or bus ticket to a medical appointment, and local bus tickets to return home after accessing monthly services to help reduce transportation barriers.

## Shoe boot program

In memory of Carmen Elefante, shoes and boots (both new and used) are given to people in need of proper footwear. This program is reliant upon donations and funding is limited.

## Clothing referral

Partnerships with Goodwill Industries and St. Andrew's United Church Shoulder to Shoulder program provide clothing necessities.

## Back to school program

Students receive new shoes, backpacks, snacks and school supplies to prepare for the school year ahead.

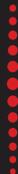
## CASH VS CANS

We often get asked which is better, cash or cans? Let us tell you that we rely on both! Monetary and food donations are equally important to providing essential support services that improve the lives of Niagara Falls individuals and families in need.

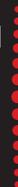
### CASH DONATIONS



allow us to purchase foods when donated food supplies run low or demand spikes



let us buy fresh foods and our most needed staples through bulk purchasing at a fraction of the retail cost



cover the additional costs of getting food into the hands of those that need it most (transportation, space, support)

### FOOD DONATIONS



allow us to respond immediately to the needs of our community



collection events help us share important information about hunger in our community and give lots of people a chance to help



rally entire communities together to take action against hunger in an easy to understand way



# 30 YEARS INCORPORATED

Left: Dedication event for the Dennis Bray warehouse, in honour of long time supporter and volunteer Dennis Bray.

Right: Current location of the Dennis Bray Warehouse



**February 13, 2022 marked Project SHARE's 30th year of incorporation, though the agency has been helping those in need for much longer.**

### **1983 – Emergency food program launched**

As an outcome of many campaign conversations with people who found themselves out of work during the 1983 recession, driven by the leadership of Wayne Thomson, Project SHARE initially began as a temporary measure known as Coordinated Outreach Emergency Services (COES). Mr. Thomson credits many prominent community members including Nancy Reynolds and Diane Sheppard, who were instrumental in its creation, and Charles Cheesman who was hired to oversee the daily operation. Supported by community donations and volunteers, COES distributed food to people in need in Niagara Falls. In the beginning, supplies were stored in a room in the basement of City hall.

### **1987 – Emergency food program continues to grow, additional services added**

By 1987, more than 20,000 people had received emergency food assistance and the city was seeing between 500 – 600 people each month accessing the service. The growing need for food security was identified by the Social Planning Council and led by then Executive Director Julie Darnay leading to the creation of Project S.H.A.R.E., an acronym for support, housing, awareness, resources and emergency.

### **1989 – Need for emergency food and housing help prompts development of Project SHARE**

In 1989, Project SHARE was providing emergency food supplies and operating their housing hotline for people in need, from their Victoria Avenue location. In 1990, Project SHARE took over the 21-year-old Christmas Basket program that had been operated by the Local Council of Women and launched SHARE Christmas.

### **1992 – Project SHARE of Niagara Falls is incorporated**

It became apparent that what was expected to be a temporary service, eliminated by the mid 1990's, was now a long-term community need. In 1992, under the direction of the board of directors chaired by Florence Sandercock, Project SHARE became incorporated and moved to a larger space on 1st Avenue and later secured their status as a charitable organization.

## **2002 – Doors open at 4129 Stanley Avenue**

The growth in services being provided and the increased community need resulted in a capital campaign to fund the purchase of Project SHARE's current location on Stanley Avenue. Securing a larger facility provided more space for the added client services, a client waiting room and adequate food storage space for as much as 250,00 pounds of food at a time, allowing the opportunity to take advantage of large food donations from provincial and national services.

## **2006 – Launch of first community garden**

In 2006, Project SHARE created their first community garden with the generous donation of land at Our Lady of the Scapular Church and many community partners. This garden contains 40 plots where families can grow their own produce for their families and large plots tended by volunteers which grow food for the emergency food program. Additional sites were added later as the Gate Alliance Church and Westlane Secondary School as demand for this program grew.

## **2017 – 25 years of incorporation**

When Project SHARE celebrated their 25th year of incorporation in 2017, 100 families were accessing programs each day and over 800,000 lbs of food was distributed. 12 client-centred programs and services designed to help individuals meet their basic needs were offered.

## **2022 – 30 years incorporated amidst a pandemic**

Today, Project SHARE helps more than 6,800 people each year by providing 17 programs and services that focus on five important areas including food security, homelessness prevention, healthy living, training and education and seasonal support at Christmas and back to school.

The current operating budget just over \$4.7 million, including the distribution of nearly 1 million pounds of food. Our programs are funded in part by municipal, regional and other grants and partnerships. We continue to rely on our valued corporate partners and individual donors to meet our fundraising budget of \$740,000 and 1 million pounds of food. In addition, we are grateful for the generous donations of time and expertise from our volunteers who provide dedicated service to our agency each year.

Our food bank was established to support people's immediate needs and we understand that we are not the solution. Through various programs we endeavor to empower those who access our services and provide the tools and support they need in the moment, while advocating for system change to enable people to meet their own basic needs in the future.

We find ourselves in the midst of the perfect storm of economic hardships as our community is impacted by rising food prices, high housing costs and low incomes. Today, 65% of Canadians who are food insecure are employed but they don't earn enough to make ends meet for a suite reasons, from high rents to caring for dependents.

As we move through 2022, our board of directors and staff are committed to continuing to strive for a future where everyone in Niagara Falls is food secure and the need for food banks is no more. We remain grateful for the generous support of our community in ensuring all of our neighbours stay healthy, housed and fed.

# #ourcommunityatwork





*The Food Room at Project SHARE is where clients can pick out the produce, bread, frozen items, milk, baby formula and diapers, and hygiene items that they need.. All items get weighed out before the clients go home, which is part of our inventory tracking system.*

Project SHARE relies on the support of donors, volunteers, third party event organizers and program funders. Thank you for the community support received throughout the year. This generosity helps us realize our vision to end the struggle against poverty and empower those in need.

# THANK YOU!



*The Branscombe Family Foundation*

## PROUD MEMBER OF



Special thanks to our dedicated volunteers who support #OurCommunityAtWork everyday!

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RR0001

# Project SHARE

Our Community At Work

Learn more about how you can help ensure none of our neighbours go hungry.

[www.projectshare.ca/donate](http://www.projectshare.ca/donate)



@projectsharenf



@projectSHARE\_NF



projectshare\_nf



Project SHARE  
of Niagara Falls