StreetHealth

2024 TOP 100 CHARITY
Charity Intelligence's Highest Rated Charities
★★★★★

SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER

338 Dundas Street East, Toronto ON, M5A 2A1
416.921.8668 ext. 229 and 274
info@streethealth.ca
www.streethealth.ca
Charitable Registration # 11920-0541-RR0001

StreetHealthTO | street-health-community-nursing-foundation | streethealthtoronto

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we share this update with you, we find ourselves navigating very uncertain times. With the government's decision to shut vital safe consumption sites (SCS) across the province, including five partner sites in Toronto, the future remains uncertain for people who depend on these often life-saving services. **Street Health's Overdose Prevention Site (OPS)** will remain open, as it is not a site within 200 metres of a school or daycare. However, the impact of the other site closures is deeply concerning.

SCSs are a critical part of the support system for individuals who rely on the poisoned street drug supply. The full consequences of these closures are difficult to predict, but we expect to see more overdoses in public spaces and increased demand on emergency services.

At Street Health, we are committed to supporting those impacted by these closures, but the reality is that the need for harm reduction programs has never been greater! These programs—whether through access to resources, supplies, community outreach, peer-to-peer support groups or our OPS—are a lifeline for individuals. Harm reduction provides not only safety and care but also a bridge to health and social services that is often inaccessible to many.

We continue to offer essential services to the community and our commitment to serving our clients is stronger than ever. And - we still need your help. Our OPS has operated solely through the generosity of our donors since 2019. As the needs of the community grow, so too does the pressure on our ability to keep up with demand for our services. Your support, whether through a donation, spreading the word about our work, or advocating for change, has never been more important.

As we face this challenging time together, we are grateful for your continued belief in our work. We remain steadfast in our mission to care for individuals experiencing homelessness and we thank you for standing with us.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Lin Sallay M.A.
Executive Director, Street Health

The Impact of Safe Consumption Site Closures

We're sharing some powerful insights from Street Health staff and clients about the ongoing closures of safe consumption sites across Toronto and Ontario. These voices reflect the real-world impact of these closures on communities already facing significant challenges. From concerns about public health and safety to the emotional toll on individuals who rely on these services, their words highlight the urgent need for continued harm reduction efforts. Hear the voices of those directly affected and join us in advocating for solutions that prioritize the health and well-being of some of our most vulnerable community members.

"The closures are a short-sighted decision that directly contradicts the overwhelming evidence of their positive impact on the most vulnerable members of our community — it will only exacerbate the health crisis we are facing from our poisoned drug supply." - Blair B.

"Loss of community, loss of a safe place to use drugs. It's the worst thing that could happen to me." - Client

"I lost my brother Tanner to an overdose, and the pain of that loss will never go away.

SAFE CONSUMPTION SITES SAVE LIVES.

They offer people a chance to stay alive long enough to find support." - Tyler W.

"SCSs have a positive effect on the areas they serve: local crime rates and deaths and hospitalizations from overdose have decreased, and vulnerable people are getting referrals to services they need.

Since 2020, SCSs in Ontario have reversed over 20,000 overdoses — potentially fatal medical events that could mean the loss of parents, children, friends, lovers and neighbours.

The cost is too real. This is a fight we cannot afford to lose."

- Pat F., Harm Reduction Worker

"My workers will be gone, the people who care about me." - Client

"The goal of SCSs is to keep people alive by providing compassionate care — something they have always excelled at. There is very little being done to support these communities, so we need to keep these spaces open to keep people alive. Every life lost is a tragedy with a lasting impact." - Megan K

"The drugs are too toxic for this to be okay." - Client

"The SCS is a lifeline for me. This is tragic!" - Client

"We will mourn tragic & unnecessary deaths caused by bad policy. Safe injection sites are life-saving healthcare." - Liz, Nurse

Heartfelt thanks for your In-Kind donations

We want to extend our deepest gratitude to the groups, individuals, and everyone who donated items in-kind to support our work. Your generosity makes a significant difference in the lives of those we serve, and we couldn't do it without you. Our services rely on the kindness and support of community members like you, and we are truly thankful for your continued contributions. Your donations help ensure that we can provide essential resources to those who need them most—thank you for standing with us and making a real impact.

As we continue to support our clients, we want to highlight some of the items that are in the greatest demand. If you're able to help, here are some of the things we're currently in need of (must be new and unused):

- Socks
- Underwear (all sizes, for men and women)
- Sleeping bags
- Shampoo and conditioner (sample and travel sizes preferred)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste (small size)
- Razors and combs
- Individual size: tissues and hand sanitizer
- Moisturizer and lip balms

Seeking Board Members!

Street Health's Board of Directors is a volunteer community board. The Board is currently recruiting new members, including positions for those with experience related to accounting, marketing, fundraising and/or people who have lived experience of homelessness and/or substance use. We are seeking and encouraging applications from Indigenous and Black individuals and individuals from diverse, racialized, and marginalized communities and backgrounds who are reflective of our diverse community. There are 10 board meetings in a year, once a month with the exception of the summer months.

If you are interested in community health initiatives, governance and making a positive impact in the lives of vulnerable community members, contact board@streethealth.ca for more information and/or to apply.