

**CROUCH**  
**Neighbourhood**  
**Resource**  
**Centre**



*2024*  
*Annual*  
*Report*

*The*  
*Heart*  
*of the*  
*shift*

# LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

As I reflect on my final year serving as Chair of the Board of Directors at Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre, I am filled with deep gratitude and pride. The year 2024 challenged us in ways we could not have predicted. Yet, at every turn, through every obstacle, what endured was the very heartbeat of this organization—our people, our mission, and our community.

At the core of every pivot, every difficult decision, and every success was something steadfast: Crouch's Heart. Through resilience, compassion, and unwavering dedication, our community continued to show up—staff, volunteers, residents, donors, and partners—all working together to ensure that Crouch remained a vital hub in the Hamilton Road neighbourhood.

The heartbeat of our neighbourhood was loud and clear and once again reminding us of the power of neighbours who never give up.

Some gifts arrived quietly but changed everything—like those from a neighbour who, time and again, stepped in exactly when we needed them most. Their support carried us through some of our most challenging days.

It has been an honour to serve in this role and to witness the extraordinary spirit of this organization. I step away knowing that Crouch is not just ready for what's next—it is ready to thrive.

Stronger. Together. Always.  
With gratitude,



Rebecca D'Souza  
Chair, Board of Directors

# INTRODUCTION



Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre (Crouch) works to build a healthy community where everyone belongs and can access resources with dignity. Our organization has a 50-year history of community development and food security initiatives within the neighbourhood surrounding the London, Ontario, main street of Hamilton Road. In 2024, more than 3,694 residents accessed programs and services through Crouch.

## MISSION

To build a healthy community where everyone belongs and can access resources with dignity.

## VISION

A thriving community where everyone reaches their potential.

## VALUES

**Accountability:** We manage resources with transparency, efficiency, and care.

**Compassion:** We meet community members where they are at and walk with them on their journey to meet their goals

**Dignity:** We recognize the right of all residents to live in dignity and to participate fully in society. Our interactions with community members and collaborators are centred on the right of each person to be valued and respected for their own sake.

**Creativity:** We evolve along with the needs and dreams of our community

**Collaboration:** We work closely with residents and partners to achieve strong outcomes for the community we serve.

**Equity:** We provide services in a way that honours the diverse lived experiences, talents, and needs of each resident. We address equity gaps by providing basic needs supports that allow residents to focus on other pressing challenges and opportunities.

# A YEAR IN REVIEW

*The Heart of the Shift - when things changed, so did we – together and stronger.*

2024 challenged us in ways we couldn't predict. But at the core of every pivot and every setback was something deeper: our hearts, Crouch's Heart — our people, our mission, our community. We remain deeply inspired by the resilience and strength of our community. The dedication of residents, staff, volunteers, donors, and partner organizations has ensured Crouch remains a vital hub in the Hamilton Road neighbourhood.

This year's AGM is not just a reflection of what changed, but a celebration of how we changed — together and stronger moving forward together and stronger.

Despite a \$120,000 reduction in core annual funding beginning in 2024, our team adapted, shifted priorities quickly, all while proudly supporting 3,694 unique individuals through a broad range of our impactful programs.

Food insecurity remained a pressing and top priority issue. Last year we distributed nearly 61,000 food items through over 6,500 visits to our Food Cupboard and staff also supporting the weekly Mobile Food Bank Truck visits. Thanks to our partners, our seasonal Green Thumbs Garden Program and our Pop-Up Fresh Produce Market brought fresh greens to individuals and families. And let's not forget our furry friends, thanks to monthly donations of pet food from No Empty Bowls Program, through the Humane Society.

Securing and stretching every existing and new dollar was essential. We were thrilled to welcome a new community partner, Dough Boys Pizza, to the Crouch family. They generously stepped up to offset the cost of our monthly hot lunch by donating and serving a pizza meal to over 80 residents each month — a tradition they proudly continue.

Our Winter Warmth Program provided coats, boots, and 100 warming kits to 539 adults and 96 children—offering both warmth and dignity. Priority was given to individuals living rough and to children in our neighbourhood. In partnership with 519 Pursuit, we also distributed over 6,100 pairs of socks—an increase of 50% compared to last year!

Our Tax Volunteers made a significant impact, hosting 3 weekly income tax clinics over a two month period in addition to some volunteers supporting 7 additional sites and organizations. Together, this dedicated crew, completed over 3,300 tax returns for low-income residents, connecting them to essential financial supports and securing over \$16,000 through the CRA CVITP Grant Program.

New funding from Ontario Trillium Foundation extended a life line in reigniting a new Volunteer Engagement Program - priorities shifted quickly and a new Volunteer Resource Program was developed and recruitment underway for volunteer positions in the fall.

Over 150 applications were received, with at least 30 applications submitted for each position. Following the screening, approximately 40 applicants were interviewed in December. 20 volunteers were selected, representing all positions. New recruits were ready to step in where extra human hands and hearts were needed! We continue to grow this new Crouch team into 2025.

Programs like Cards and Games Group and the Women's Art Club fostered connection, creativity, and emotional support on a weekly basis inspite of funding running low. We carried on and carried through with some minor shifts!

Participation in our after-school and summer camp programs grew, enriching the lives of many children and their families. We lost significant funding for our Child & Youth Program in 2024 - we were left a little bruised and battered, but like a resilient child, we jumped up, brushed ourselves off and hit the ground running!

Community spirit shone at events like our Summer Block Party and Fall Harvest Fest, which brought together nearly 800 residents of all ages.

A national postal strike tried to take down our 2nd annual Direct Mail and Holiday Campaign however we persevered and raised nearly \$10,000, proving again that the generosity of our neighbours knows no bounds. Speaking of generous neighbours, one in particular made a significant difference this year. Their thoughtful and timely gifts to our Food Cupboard helped carry us through some of our most challenging moments. Always checking in, always asking where they could help next—their quiet generosity has been a true lifeline.

Crouch's story is still being written — by every child, every neighbour, every volunteer, staff member, and supporter. Every setback and every win shapes the Heart — the Crouch Teal Heart — helping it grow and shift. This organization, hand in hand with its community, is ready for whatever comes next. Stronger. Together.

Thank you to all of our Crouch Supporters - thank you for being at the Heart of the Shift!



Angi Woodcock, Executive Director

# CORE SERVICES



## NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT SERVICES BASIC NEEDS AND ADVOCACY

Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre (Crouch NRC) supports residents who are experiencing the effects of poverty by meeting basic needs and by increasing income stability through access to social benefits. Providing for immediate basic needs such as food, clothing, hygiene and baby items and doing so in ways that convey our respect, value, dignity, and care for all community members not only bridges urgent gaps but helps to develop relationships and social networks.

The goal of the program is to empower residents so that they are in a position to increase their housing and income stability and move themselves out of poverty - a challenge that first requires that their basic needs are met.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre (NRC) uses a holistic, community focused approach to its work that is grounded in the principles of empowerment, inclusion, justice, self determination, and collective action. Working with residents, local organizations, and partners, Crouch NRC ensures that, across the neighbourhood, residents and groups have opportunities to 'know and be known', to engage and participate in local initiatives and to ensure that the programs and services provided are responsive to local wants and needs.

## CHILD AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING

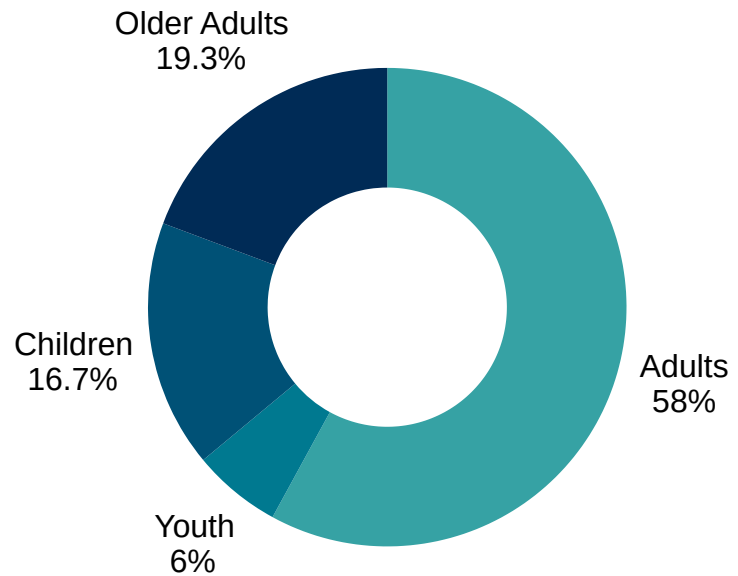
Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre plays an important role in extending low-barrier, supportive, and safe recreational opportunities to children, youth, and families. They meet participants where they are at and take the time to identify and develop their unique talents and interests. Through this program, children, youth, and families living in the Hamilton Road and area neighbourhood are supported with equitable access to recreational programming that develops skills, increases self-esteem, and builds social capital.

During the school year, Crouch operates a daily, no-fee afterschool program. In July and August, the Crouch "Summer Splash" day camp operates 5 days a week, emphasizing physical activity, gardening, hygiene and health, emotional and social regulation, and nutritional equity.

# IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

## UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS SERVED

Adults	2141
Youth	222
Children	618
Older Adults	713
Total	3694



**60,763**

**Food Items  
Distributed**

**3,260**

**Meals  
Served**

**3301**

**Income Tax  
Returns Filed**

**585**

**Winter Coats  
& Boots  
Fitted**



## Community Events

Thanks to the incredible support of our partners, volunteers, and residents, community spirit was alive and thriving at both our Summer Block Party and Fall Harvest Fest. The Harvest Fest emerged as a truly resident-driven initiative, while the Block Party—hosted in collaboration with Crouch Public Library and proudly supported by TD Bank Group—has become a beloved summer tradition. The dedicated Crouch team, including both staff and volunteers, remains committed to supporting and empowering future resident-led efforts to strengthen the Hamilton Road neighbourhood.

## Women's Art Wellness Group

Despite experiencing homelessness, Tanya finds stability and hope in the Women's Art Group at Crouch NRC, in partnership with CMHA. Even after losing her apartment to a fire, she remains committed to the weekly sessions, traveling an hour each way. For her, the group is a vital safe space, offering solace and creative expression during difficult times, highlighting the power of community support.

## Cards and Games Co-ed Wellness Group

Cards and Games Wellness Group at Crouch has been such a bright spot in the week. It's more than just playing games – it's about laughter, connection, and feeling part of a community. New participants meet wonderful people and always leave feeling uplifted and supported. It's a welcoming space where everyone belongs

## Volunteer Engagement

CVITP Lead Volunteer and past Board of Director for Crouch NRC, Diane MacMillan, received the 2025 Mayor's New Years Honour Award celebrating her volunteer work through income tax clinics supporting seniors for over two decades.

**Story of Renewal and Joy:** "I have just been laid off, and I have been so bored staying at home. Having the opportunity to volunteer for the Hot Meal Program made me feel alive again. Serving my neighbours brought me immense joy. Thank you." — A Community Member



# IMPACT STORY: CHILD AND YOUTH



## Empowering Inclusion for a Non-Verbal Child with Autism

In 2024, our Summer Splash Camp welcomed Lily, a non-verbal girl with autism, whose parents longed for her to experience summer camp like her brother. They worried about communication, sensory challenges, and social engagement, but with a dedicated inclusion worker, Emily, we created a personalized plan to support her.

Initially, Lily struggled with the new environment, but with sensory-friendly activities, quiet spaces, and patient guidance, she grew more engaged and independent. By summer's end, her smiles, laughter, and newfound connections spoke volumes. Her family was overjoyed to see her thrive in a space where she was truly understood and included.

Lily's journey is a testament to the power of inclusion—where every child, regardless of ability, can belong and shine.

Crouch Child & Youth Services plays a vital role in creating lasting, positive change in the lives of children and youth along Hamilton Road. We are honoured to bare witness to the growth and progress that each day brings — proof of the power of accessible and consistent care, guidance, and community support. Together, we are not only meeting today's needs but also building a strong foundation for lifelong success and well-being. We are incredibly proud of the positive changes we see every day and remain committed to supporting the children and youth of Hamilton Road. Together, we are building a foundation for lifelong success and well-being.



# A SHARED STORY, “CHOOSE” BY MARC HENDERSON

It's that time of the night again.

That time you dread.

Restaurants, malls and churches lock their doors.

The sun sets and the city grows dark.

The wind picks up and you feel the bitter cold biting at your skin.

You knew this time would come.

You prepare yourself for reality.

The time has come.

It's time to Choose.

The man in his 70's or the woman in the wheelchair. Choose.

The guy in the alley or the girl in the doorway. Choose.

The woman who has been walking all day or the man the hospital dropped at the corner.

Choose. The girl who wants to die or the guy that's always kind. Choose.

The man who can't stop coughing or the woman who can't feel her fingers. Choose.

Choose who is warm.

Choose who will freeze.

Choose who goes inside and Choose who doesn't.

40 beds to 500 people. The sickening reality you face daily.

On the drive home you cry as you watch your people shiver.

Curled under blankets. Huddled in doorways.

You wonder who you'll lose tonight. Who won't make it.

You question the ethical state of our world as you hold your head in your hands.

You feel anger, hurt, sadness and disgust well up inside you.

Why some get denied basic human rights.

Not because they are not worthy or loved but because human greed has decided their lives aren't cost effective.

You can't breathe. Your heart aches.

You feel a pain that won't stop hurting.

Why for the love of God do we have to Choose.

Do you not see that every human life holds value.

How do you sleep knowing you hold all the cards.

There is more than enough for everyone.

Please don't make me Choose.

House our people. NO ONE SHOULD DIE IN THE COLD.

# A SHARED STORY, A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

## "CHOOSE"

By: Marc Henderson, Housing Focused Street Outreach Worker

CHOOSE, is not a story from a Crouch Outreach Worker, but from one of our community partners. Still, its weight is deeply familiar to us all. Together, we witness the heartbreak of residents facing homelessness. And too often, we are left with the ache of feeling that we can't do enough except to offer the very best of ourselves in that moment.

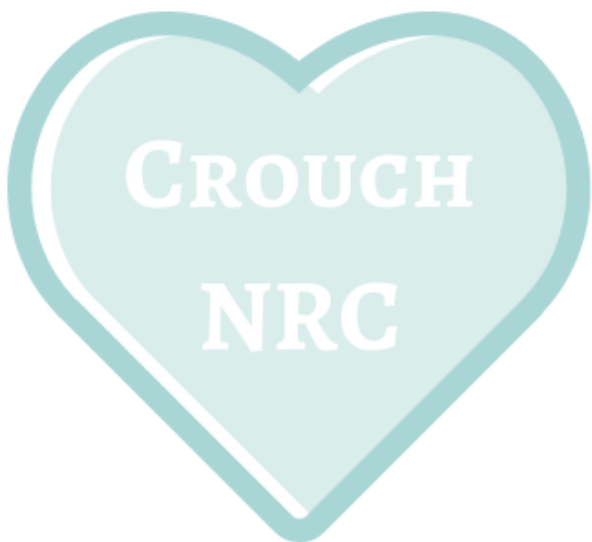
These are the moments that define our collective work: showing up, again and again, with care, compassion, and a fierce commitment to dignity. While solutions can take time, our response, on that day, matters. This story reminds us that no one shoulders this alone. As partners in community, we carry both the sorrow and the hope together.



These are the faces of Crouch residents. The faces we have had to choose from on any given night. These are our neighbours, the ones we couldn't always find a bed for, yet thankfully, they find their way back to us when the sun rises.

Meet Farzad and Joey. On this day, they came to share a hot pizza lunch and pick up food from our Food Cupboard. Despite spending the night outdoors, they arrived smiling—grateful, gracious, and grounded. Their presence is a powerful reminder of why we do what we do.

At Crouch, we aim to show up with compassion, consistency, and care. Walking alongside them is not just our work—it's our privilege.



# TEAL HEART AWARDS

## The Crouch Teal Heart Leadership Award



Rebecca D' Souza

Recipients of the Crouch Teal Heart Leadership Award demonstrate a level of volunteerism, commitment, and leadership over and above the call of duty. These leaders set an example and inspire others to get involved in improving their community. Each year, deserving adults and youth who demonstrate leadership qualities in our community are selected to receive the Teal Heart Leadership Award.

Congratulations to our 2024 recipient, Rebecca D'Souza.

Rebecca D'Souza joined the Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre (NRC) Board of Directors in 2018 at the age of 25, bringing a vibrant and youthful spirit to the Board. Over the past seven (7) years, her passion and dedication have made a lasting impact.

As she grew in her role, Rebecca went on to serve as Secretary and then progressed to Chair for the past three (3) years. During this time, she led the organization through numerous challenges and periods of change, always remaining steadfast in her commitment to advancing equity for the residents of Hamilton Road and surrounding areas.

As her three-year term as Chair concludes at this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM), Rebecca will transition into the role of Past Chair. In this capacity, she will continue to provide invaluable support and inspiration to the incoming Chair and the entire Board of Directors.

# TEAL HEART AWARDS

## The Crouch Teal Heart Award

The Crouch Teal Heart Award honors volunteers and community members or organizations who support the neighbourhood through their service and connection to Crouch. These individuals demonstrate compassion, dedication, and a generous spirit, often stepping up to meet community needs - sometimes behind the scene - to make a positive impact.



Ajor Broadhurst



Sasha Scott

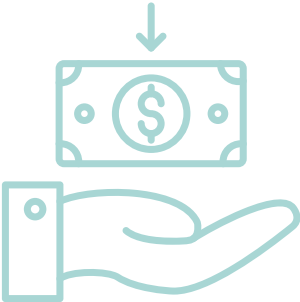


Kewal Singh



Rebecca  
Weatherstone

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

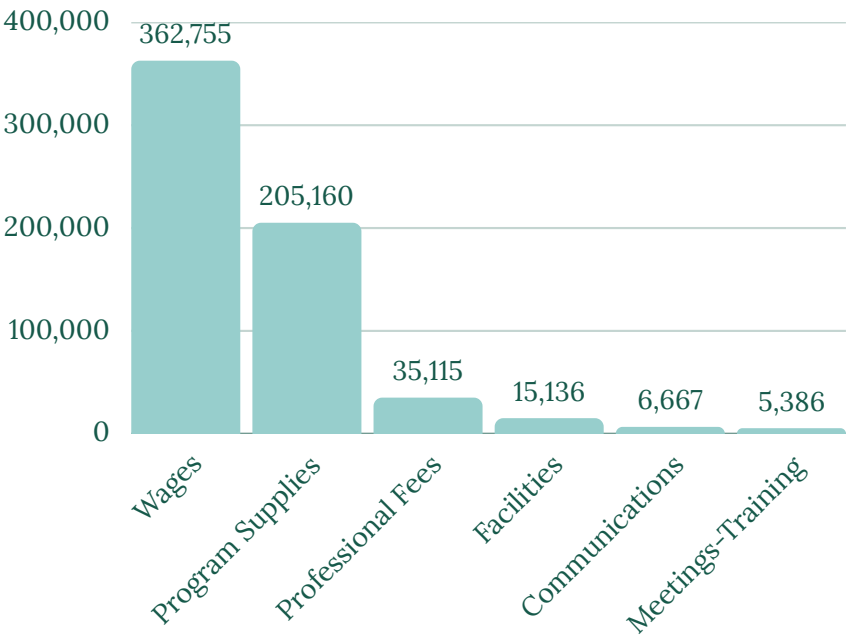


Year-end December 31, 2024  
For audited financial statements, please visit [www.crouchnrc.org](http://www.crouchnrc.org)

## REVENUE BY SOURCE

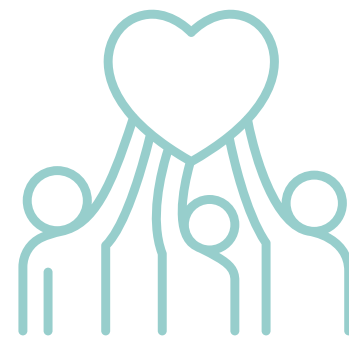


## EXPENSE BY CATEGORY





# OUR SUPPORTERS - 2024



**Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre was honoured by the generous support of the following funders and partners in 2024:**

AQUEDUCT FOUNDATION  
BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB LONDON  
CANADA REVENUE AGENCY - COMMUNITY  
VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX PROGRAM  
CANADA SUMMER JOBS -EMPLOYMENT  
AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CANADA  
CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION-  
THAMES VALLEY ADDICTIONS SERVICES  
CANADIAN TIRE JUMP START  
CHILD AND YOUTH NETWORK/ AGE  
FRIENDLY LONDON  
CITY OF LONDON  
LONDON DIAPER BANK  
DIGITAL CREATIVE ARTS CENTRE  
DOLLARAMA  
EGERTON BAPTIST CHURCH  
ENBRIDGE GAS  
FANSHAW COLLEGE  
FIRST STUDENT BUS SERVICE (ST. THOMAS)  
FOREST CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH  
FRESHCO (ADELAIDE AND HURON)  
FRIENDS OF THE LONDON CIVIC GARDEN  
COMPLEX  
GIANT TIGER (SPRINGBANK DRIVE)  
GRAHAM FAMILY ECO-PARK  
GRAND THEATRE  
HAMILTON ROAD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
HAMILTON ROAD COMMUNITY  
ASSOCIATION

HAMILTON ROAD SENIORS AND  
COMMUNITY CENTRE  
IMPACT CHURCH  
LEE JONES COACHING AND CONSULTING  
LIBRO CREDIT UNION  
LONDON ARTS COUNCIL  
LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
LONDON CHANGEMAKERS  
LONDON FOOD BANK  
LONDON FOOD COALITION  
LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES LONDON  
MIDDLESEX LONDON HEALTH UNIT- HARVEST  
BUCKS  
MIGGSIE FUND, LAWSON FOUNDATION  
MINISTRY OF SPORT  
NO EMPTY BOWLS - HUMANE SOCIETY  
ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION -  
RESILIENT COMMUNITIES FUND  
SIFTON FAMILY FOUNDATION  
SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH  
TD BANK GROUP - COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT  
THE BETTER BIN COMPANY  
TOYS FOR TOTS  
TRY RECYCLING  
UNITED WAY ELGIN-MIDDLESEX  
URBAN ROOTS LONDON  
URBAN LEAGUE OF LONDON  
WESTMINSTER COLLEGE FOUNDATION

TO OUR INDIVIDUAL AND CORPORATE DONORS,  
THANK YOU FOR BEING SPECTACULAR NEIGHBOURS!



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Carolyn Charters

**PAST CHAIR**

Jeff Duncan

**TREASURER**

Maksym Bodnar

**SECRETARY**

Rebecca Weatherstone

**DIRECTORS**

Susan Dunn

Ainsley Graham

Paul Kitson

Sasha Scott

Rachel Weisdorf

Angi Woodcock  
(Executive Director)





# LOOKING AHEAD

## Looking Ahead to 2025

As we step into 2025, we recognize that the funding landscape for not-for-profits continues to be challenging. Navigating these realities requires not only resilience but also creativity, adaptability, and a deep commitment to collaboration.

We are fortunate to have secured new funding from TD Canada Group – Ready Commitment Grant, which will allow us to enhance and rebuild several cornerstone programs at Crouch, including our Wellness Tables: Women's Art Group, Cards & Games, and our much-loved Hot Meal Bonds & Bites program. This investment is a testament to the value of these programs in building community connection, reducing isolation, and supporting overall well-being.

Looking ahead, we will continue to strengthen and grow new partnerships and community relationships, actively seeking ways to collaborate with like-minded organizations. By working together, we can maximize the impact of every dollar and ensure essential services remain accessible to our neighbourhood, particularly as we welcome our new neighbours from the ever-expanding SOHO Vision development over the next few years.

We remain diligent in exploring and seeking out grant opportunities to sustain our existing programs and to bring new initiatives to life. We are excited to share that the Westminster College Foundation will fund two dedicated Inclusion Workers for our Summer Splash Day Camp. These staff will provide critical one-on-one and small group support, enabling children who require additional assistance to fully participate and thrive in our camp experience—ensuring our programs remain inclusive and welcoming for all.

At the heart of our vision for 2025 is the continued development of our human resource team, investing in both our staff and our growing volunteer base to better meet the increasing needs of our residents. Together, we are building a team ready to rise to the challenges ahead and committed to delivering the programs and support that our community counts on.

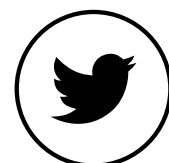
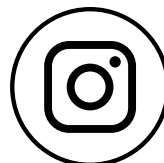
In addition, we will begin the process of developing our new 2026-2028 Strategic Plan. This will be a community-driven roadmap that will help us set priorities, strengthen our mission, and position Crouch to thrive in the years ahead.

We move forward with optimism, determination, and the firm belief that we are stronger together.



# CROUCH NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOURCE CENTRE

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[www.crouchnrc.org](http://www.crouchnrc.org)



**CROUCH**  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
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