

Spring 2021 Newsletter and Ongoings at SPSS

St. Paul's Social Services



by [Megan Boon](#) on March 30th

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” **Hebrews 10:24-25**

St. Paul's Social Services



This issue of our newsletter is dedicated to all the volunteers and staff of St. Paul's Social Services who have adapted and persevered beautifully during these challenging times. Our staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to ensure that St. Paul's Social Services remains a supportive beacon of hope for those facing poverty and hunger. Despite the ever-looming pandemic, our team has continued to uplift the city of London by lending a helping hand to those in need.

Fozzie's Fast Facts



Fozzie is a lovely little rescue dog and our SPSS Mascot! He is a ball of joy and fluff and helps us to keep morale high! Many thanks to this playful pup for office visits and making our time here at St. Paul's that much more enjoyable 😊

1. Did you know that St. Paul's Social Services initiated the **"Thousand Mask Challenge"** to obtain reusable cloth masks for our clients. We are already past the 650 mask mark! We certainly can't "mask" our happiness about our success!
2. Our 2020 "Christmas Share" had 95 intakes: this permitted a total of 175 people to have a better Christmas this year.
3. Volunteering may not be the first thing people think of when feeling down or lonely; but studies show that volunteering can have great benefits for a person's mental health.
 - Volunteering with people can ward off loneliness, depression and anger.



Bonus Word Nerd Fact! ...



According to Guinness World Records, "set" has the largest number of meanings of any word in the English language ("English Words With," n.d)

Big Changes at SPSS



With the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic came drastic changes to our service delivery and work with clients. Along with the help from our Health Inspector and the Board, we devised a Covid-friendly plan to continue our food distribution in a manner that keeps in line with Covid protocols. We were able to rapidly adapt and set up a new socially distanced hamper handout strategy. Having obtained hundreds of new reusable shopping bags from Mission Services, we switched to pre-packaged hampers for singles and emergency supply boxes for families. Volunteers hand out hampers and bags of fresh produce and bread from the East Door ramp after having collected client information. Other strategies include client social distancing as well as volunteers working on alternate days in order to avoid excessive contact. Despite the big changes for St. Paul's Social Services, staff and volunteers have kept their spirits high in their pursuit to alleviate hunger amongst Londoners.





Our Curbside Christmas 2020



Top left image: Donations from Mount Zion United Church

Hear from Our Volunteers

Covid-19 has had a large impact on the lives of everyone and for many of us stress levels are at an all-time high. Although self-isolating and social distancing are crucial to stop the spread of the virus, it can also be extremely isolating and lonely. This is why it's now more important than ever to find ways to foster our mental wellness. Here at St. Paul's Social Services many of our staff and volunteers improve their mental health through giving back to the community. Let's explore what else they have to say about their experiences with mental wellness during the pandemic.



What Have you been doing to maintain health and wellness during the Pandemic?

- “Staying cooped up inside all day can definitely be difficult so I try to stay active by going on walks, working out or even having impromptu dance parties with my family”
- Megan Boon
- “I go into nature. I love to take walks with my dog by the water and be outside as much as I can for some fresh air” - Barb
- “I DJ and like to get lost in my music” - Kevin
- “I’ve been eating healthier and really just taking time to focus on my health. This helps me to keep my mind off Covid for a little while”- Heather
- “I like to get outside and even mow the lawn”- Tim
- “I try to exercise every day and I have naps during the day if I’m feeling tired. I also visit with my friends, socially distanced of course!” - Carmen
- “I read a lot, do sudokus, crosswords and play cribbage” - Barry

Articles of Interest

Copy and paste the links to access these riveting reads!



1. Hunger Report 2020: The Impact of Covid-19 on Foodbank Use in Ontario

<https://feedontario.ca/hunger-report-2020/>

The Hunger Report provides extensive facts and statistics regarding the increased use of foodbanks and hunger-relief agencies during the year 2020. The report goes on to discuss the barriers to resource allocation which “include a surge in demand for emergency food support, supply chain issues and delays, and having to reorganize operations in real-time to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers, and visitors on-site” (2020). Despite these changes, as expressed in the report, many food banks have become very innovative, resourceful and resilient in their new-found approaches to providing services. In addition to the challenges facing food banks, there are also various new problems facing Ontarians as “hundreds of thousands of people are now without the means to acquire sufficient income for their basic needs, like rent, hydro, transportation, and food” (cite report). The Pandemic has made it increasingly difficult for vulnerable populations to acquire the basic necessities to get by and to survive. Overall, this article does a wonderful job of painting a picture of the effects of Covid-19 on those living in poverty.

Article Facts:

- Between March and June (2020), first-time food bank users increased by 26.5%-3,282,514 visits were made to food banks in Ontario in 2019-20 (Hunger Report, 2020)
- The Salvation Army in Owen Sound reported seeing over 400 people in the first nine days of the pandemic, a number that is closer to the number of people the agency would typically serve in an entire month (Hunger Report, 2020).

.....

2. Covid-19 Disproportionately Affects Those Living in Poverty. And This Impacts us All

<https://healthydebate.ca/2020/03/topic/covid-19-low-income-poverty/>



This article by Tebasum Darrani illustrates the ways in which the effects of poverty have become amplified by the onset of the virus. The article provides data about how those living with lower incomes are more susceptible to catching the virus as “low income is associated with higher rates of chronic health conditions, including diabetes and heart disease, factors that increase susceptibility to COVID-19” (Darrani, 2020). Many of the things that we take for granted such as internet access, paid sick leave and being able to feed our families are not as

easy to come by for those living in poverty. In sum, this article provides a lot of useful information on the reasons that poverty is a collective issue that has been worsened by Covid-19 and it sheds light on the downfalls of our welfare system in relation to the virus.

3. St. Paul's Social Services Food Bank Adapts to Covid-19

<https://dionhuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/web-June2020.pdf>

This article within the Huron Church News depicts the many changes that SPSS underwent during the shift into Covid times. Author Sarah Chase does a wonderful job of illustrating the ways in which St. Paul's Social Services took on the challenges of social distancing and has been a resilient force working towards combating poverty in London (2020).

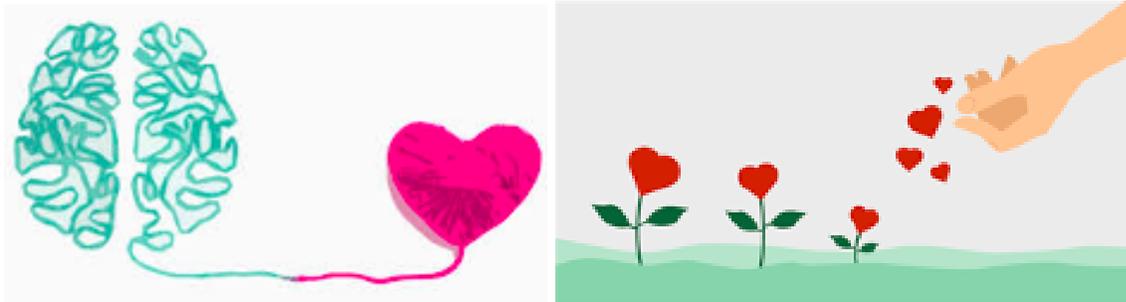


4. 10 Ways Giving Back Can Benefit Your Mental and Physical Help

<https://www.insider.com/how-giving-back-can-benefit-you-2018-11>

Article Highlights

This article, written by Lauren Shumacker provides readers with an extensive list of the various health benefits of giving back to your community. The author backs up her claims using respected sources and statistics from well-educated individuals.



Reasons to give back include...

1. You can feel an immediate surge in happiness
2. Giving to others can boost your overall life satisfaction.
3. In some cases, volunteering can help decrease depressive symptoms over time.
4. Providing support may lower your blood pressure.
5. Giving might lower your stress levels.
6. Giving back to others might help you live longer.
7. Volunteering your time may improve your heart health.
8. It can boost your quality of life.
9. Giving back may help prevent cognitive issues down the road.
10. Volunteering might also help you to maintain your functional health as you age.

Our volunteers were sure happy to read this article and we know that you'll find it quite interesting as well!

(Shumacker, 2018)

.....



St. Paul's Super Search!



T	A	E	I	Z	Z	O	F	L	L	E	R	G	S
T	D	W	T	H	T	L	A	E	H	E	N	P	H
P	L	E	H	I	O	T	O	T	R	T	E	N	A
T	O	N	A	T	L	L	R	A	L	A	T	S	R
L	E	T	S	O	Y	V	C	L	I	T	G	L	E
E	T	Y	N	Z	E	O	I	E	M	O	I	U	V
T	O	D	N	N	T	L	T	R	P	O	V	A	U
P	O	G	S	P	A	U	E	A	A	F	E	P	N
N	E	N	R	D	N	N	E	E	C	L	C	T	O
A	A	S	H	O	O	T	N	F	T	S	S	S	L
T	P	A	D	A	D	E	N	E	V	F	S	O	L
P	P	D	P	O	V	E	R	T	Y	G	O	P	H
O	E	H	W	I	T	R	E	V	A	N	H	E	H
W	E	L	L	N	E	S	S	A	S	K	S	A	M

- STPAULS
- CARE
- IMPACT
- DONATE
- HEALTH
- ADAPT
- POVERTY
- SHARE
- LONDON
- MASKS
- FOZZIE
- GIVE
- VOLUNTEER
- WELLNESS
- HELP



Know Your Resources

If you or anyone you know are struggling with any mental health issues please contact the following organizations to receive support.

Reach Out Crisis Line

- This is a confidential 24/7 service that provides information and support for those living with mental health or addictions in Elgin, Oxford, Middlesex and London. - Please call 519-433-2023 or 1-866-933-2023, or webchat at www.reachout247.ca

WAYS Mental Health Support

- This agency engages with at-risk children, youth and families through counselling, learning, skill development and advocate achieving healthy, independent lives, and positive self-esteem.

- Their 24 hour crisis line can be called at 519-433-0334. For more information please call 519-432-2209.

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)

- CMHA aims to promote good mental health, prevent further illness, offer treatment, support recovery and provide mental health education in the communities of London, Middlesex, Exeter and Goderich.

- For more information please contact their support team at 519-438-1167

- For any referral forms please go to their website at cmhamiddlesex.ca



How Can I Help St. Paul's Social Services?

There are so many ways to help!

- Donate non-perishables: here at St. Paul's Social Services we are always accepting donations of canned goods, toiletries and more.
- You can make a tax-deductible personal financial contribution on a monthly or on a one-time basis
- We offer simple, convenient pre-authorized payments
- Donate online through "Canada Helps"



Call this number for more information- **519-434-8979** or **Follow us on Facebook at St. Paul's Social Services**

Kindly make your cheque payable to: St. Paul's Social Services

Mail to:

St. Paul's Social Services

472 Richmond St. London, ON N6A 3E6

Cheques may also be left with Reception- Enter via the parking lot door off Queen's Avenue

Many thanks to all for your generosity!

Finally, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your families during these uncertain times and we hope to be able to see you soon!



References

- Chase, S. (2020, June). St. Paul's Social Services food bank adapts to COVID-19. *Huron Church News*, 5. <https://diohuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/web-June2020.pdf>
- Durrani, T. (2020, March 21). COVID-19 disproportionately affects those living in poverty. *And this impacts us all*. Healthy Debate. Retrieved from <https://healthydebate.ca/2020/03/topic/covid-19-low-income-poverty/>
- English word with the most meanings. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/english-word-with-the-most-meanings#:~:text=The word with the most,60,000 words, or 326,000 characters.>
- Hunger Report 2020. (2020, November 30). Retrieved from <https://feedontario.ca/hunger-report-2020/>
- Schumacker, L. (2018, November 16). 10 ways giving back can benefit your mental and physical health. Retrieved from <https://www.insider.com/how-giving-back-can-benefit-you-2018-11>



[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



HeartWorks Inc.
115, SomeCity, PA, 55344

