



SCARBOROUGH
CENTRE FOR
HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES

Healthy & Whole

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PLANTING FOR OTHERS DURING THE PANDEMIC: HOW ONE BUSINESS IS THINKING BEYOND PROFITS, USING SKILLS & PASSION TO HELP OTHERS

By Abirah Chandraraj
Social Media Intern

If you have ever driven by Comfort Night Mattress and Furniture on Lawrence Ave. near Kennedy, you may have noticed a plethora of plants in front of their display windows. The plants that you see are part of a mission set by a couple, Mel and Steve, to plant 400 butternut squashes that will be donated to SCHC's Food Bank and to inspire others to do the same.

Steve and Mel were cutting the grass one day and Steve was thinking, "we have to be able to do something better with this land than just cut the grass". There was wasted land in the area and that was when the couple became motivated to start their own garden. Steve's wife, Mel, spent 4-5 hours every day cultivating this garden. It took a lot of work initially but to see where it is now and what it will be like for the next 4-5 years is truly inspiring. The couple is happy knowing that everything it produces is for others.

Steve expressed that as far as food goes, if others took the land that was available in Scarborough to create small gardens like theirs, there would be enough food to feed all of Toronto.



MEL IN HER BOUNTIFUL SQUASH GARDEN

The story of this garden is eye-opening, especially since the pandemic has brought more attention to the fact that many Scarborough residents face food insecurity on a daily basis. That is why SCHC launches the Food Fight every year. Even though that campaign is "officially" over, you can still learn more about how to get involved and support the food bank by, [visiting our food fight page here](#).

Read Mel and Steve's full story by clicking [here](#).

Message from the CEO

August 2021

As summer begins to wind down, I know for our team at SCHC it has been a busy and productive time. The return of our in person services has been heartwarming for our clients and for our staff, all have missed those important connections and the stories of the impact of returning to programming is a great motivator for us all.

Our vaccination clinic has been very busy, surpassing the 20,000 person mark and receiving the honour of the Scarborough Southwest Good Neighbours Award from MPP Doly Begum. However our vaccination efforts are not done yet, we remain open at the Hub and also have a mobile strategy to ensure that everyone who wants the vaccine has access to it. If you are interested in learning more about the COVID-19 Vaccine please go to:

<https://www.schcontario.ca/covid-19support.html>

Coming into the fall we are excited to have our staff and clients safely return to our locations. In doing so we are also innovating. Learning from the success and challenges of the pandemic and developing new service delivery models based on the feedback and needs of our community. We are being proactive in combatting the impacts of the pandemic, including mental health, social isolation and preventative screening. Of course we always want to be informed in our direction by our community. If you have feedback you would like to share please visit our website at <https://www.schcontario.ca/>, complete our survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MKC5SF2> or call 416-847-4095 to share your experiences, thoughts and ideas. Help us be better at meeting your needs!



CEO JEANIE ARGIROPOULOUS

ABOUT US

Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC) is one of the most established and comprehensive community health organizations in the province. The organization owes its beginnings in 1977 to thirteen community agencies, a core group of community leaders and countless volunteers who identified emerging health and social needs within Scarborough. We work with over 450 volunteers and 200 staff to offer 38 distinct and integrated services across 11 sites. In order to remain a client-centred, integrated, engaged and proactive organization, we have continued to work closely with our community members and foster partnerships that address pressing needs, setting new standards of excellence in community health.

MISSION STATEMENT

SCHC is dedicated to meeting the diverse, holistic health needs of the communities of Scarborough by addressing the physical, mental, social, financial and environmental aspects of their health. Through the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the delivery of a comprehensive range of culturally competent health and social services, we cultivate vital and connected communities.

VISION STATEMENT

To be recognized by our clients, communities and partners as leaders in championing holistic health and wellness for the diverse populations of Scarborough.

WE'RE ON SOCIAL MEDIA



KASHMIRA'S VACCINATION SUCCESS STORY

By Abirah Chandraraj
Social Media Intern

There are many Scarborough residents who have not yet been vaccinated. That is why we have Vaccine Engagement Ambassadors to promote vaccinations and help remove barriers for people of Scarborough to get vaccinated.

Kashmira is a Vaccine Engagement Ambassador working with The Housing Help Centre, a partner working with SCHC in the Vaccine Engagement Project. Kashmira's role is to engage with different communities to help get Scarborough vaccinated. She makes residents in the community aware of information such as vaccines and their effects, how to get vaccinated, how and where to book vaccine appointments, where to get vaccinated, and also helps with booking appointments.

From her experience, many people were exposed to misinformation which often influenced their vaccination decisions. One of the biggest challenges were communicating and reaching non-vaccinated people, especially individuals who already had COVID. She mentioned that they would disagree to get vaccinated because they believed they were immune to the virus after contracting COVID once which was not true.



This job means a lot to Kashmira because she feels valuable to individuals. Her motivation is that if she can protect one person's life, it means a lot because she lost someone in her life and she does not want others to lose loved ones.

Her job has become part of her everyday life. Whenever or whoever she meets, she asks, "Did you take vaccine?", and when they responded no, she would ask why and helped them get vaccinated. One success story led to another, and she is happy to get many individuals vaccinated in hopes of being one step closer to a normal life.

If you're a Scarborough resident looking to book your vaccine, call or text 416-580-6741 or visit schcontario.ca/covid-19support.

Stay tuned to read more about Kashmira's experiences and success stories on our [SCHC Blog](#).

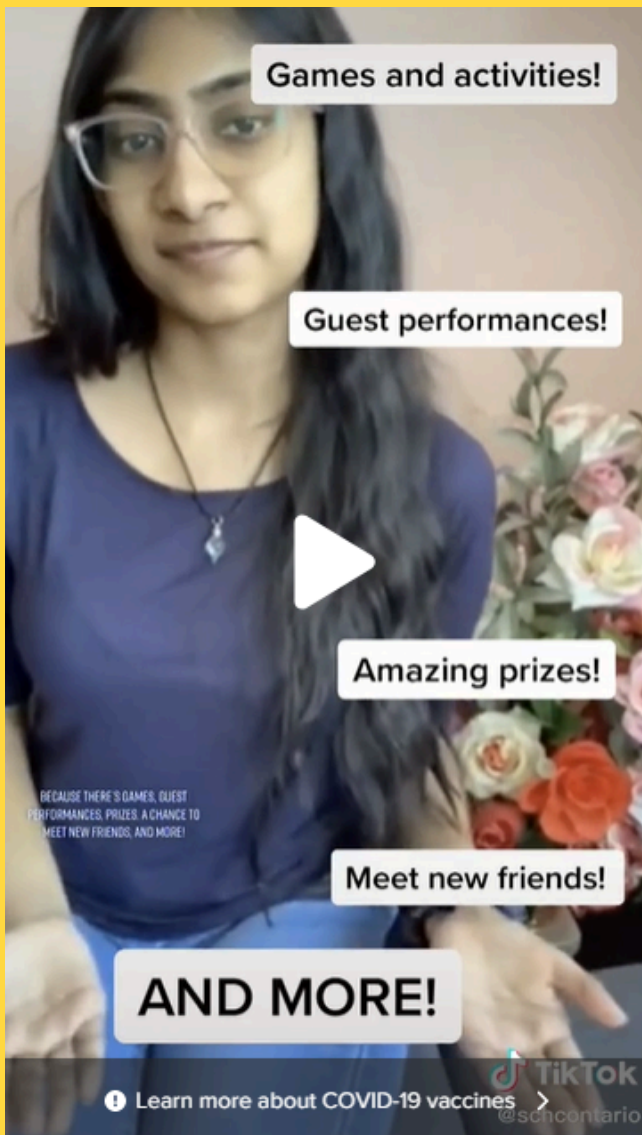


SCHC IS NOW ON TIKTOK!

By Walter Alfred
Marketing and Communications Intern

SCHC has taken its public outreach to new heights, and we are happy to announce that SCHC is now on TikTok! For those who may be unaware, TikTok is a social media platform where you can create short bite-sized videos that can range from 15 to 60 seconds in length, which cater to all demographics but is particularly popular among the youth in our Scarborough community.

Even though SCHC's official TikTok account may still be in its infancy, with only 5 videos posted we have already amassed over 3000 views. These videos have been exceptionally helpful in drawing attention to our youth events, such as our Youth Covid Game Night.



YOUTH COVID GAME NIGHT PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

This event was created to raise awareness about the virus and to 'demystify' any misconception's youth had about the Covid Vaccine through a fun virtual platform with games and prizes.

Overall, TikTok has positioned itself as the social media platform of this generation and is anticipated to continue to grow exponentially. We here at SCHC plan to continue our focus and investment into this pivotal platform, ensuring that our community outreach is a continued success, and we can reach all members in our Scarborough community through the channels they use!

To see more and to catch all of our upcoming videos, follow us on TikTok at [schcontario](https://www.tiktok.com/@schcontario)!

YOUTH COVID GAME NIGHT RESULTS VIDEO



IN-HOME HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE VOLUNTEERS

By Susan Endicott
Palliative Community Outreach
Volunteer Coordinator

Do you remember where you were when you heard about the pandemic? Do you remember where you were when SARS hit Scarborough? Moments that most of us will never forget. Bonnie Anderson, Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities volunteer and former palliative care nurse remember SARS well!

She landed on the front page of the Toronto Star newspaper during SARS as a nurse wearing full personal protective equipment. Now she has landed herself in our SCHC newsletter representing our Hospice Palliative Volunteer In-home program as a dedicated volunteer. Bonnie is a retired nurse who joined our volunteer team just before the pandemic.

She remembers her first visit with her client and husband. They clicked within a few minutes of meeting each other. Her client may not always remember her name but she does remember how Bonnie makes her feel. Bonnie said after her visit that she left the client's home and felt like she was walking on a cloud. She felt she had found her true calling.

Bonnie says this is "one of the most rewarding volunteers roles I have ever had" Bonnie also said, "I like to treat my clients as VIPs and I feel it's an honour to be able to come into their lives at this time." She added "Working in a client's home keeps it simple because you are there for the client and it's their home and rules." This is what makes this volunteer role so special.



Bonnie is just one of our amazing volunteers at SCHC and she wants prospective volunteers to know she feels appreciated and supported as part of our hospice palliative team.

Did you know that 60% of Canadians would prefer to die in the comfort of their home? To assist people and their caregiver/family achieve this, hospice volunteers can help!

<https://healthydebate.ca/2019/06/to-pic/dying-at-home/>

Different volunteers bring different gifts and talents to our team and we need more! You are not required to have a medical background. Time, dedication, care and compassion are what we look for in volunteers, to provide support to our clients living with a life-limiting illness. We provide extensive Hospice Palliative Care Ontario training and provide all required Personal Protective Equipment. We have weekend volunteer training in September, October and November and we'd love to have you join us.

Please feel free to reach out to:
Susan Endicott by email at sendicott@schcontario.ca or
call 647-525-1016 for more details.

Being homebound during the pandemic was difficult. The Tamil Caregiver Wellness Program gave her hope.

By Abirah Chandraraj – Social Media Intern

Janet is a client at SCHC's Tamil Caregiver Wellness Program. She joined her mother, Usha, in various sessions where she had the opportunity to attend classes such as yoga, breathing exercises, drawing, computer classes, and more.

The pandemic played a key role in having Janet register her mother for this program. Since everything was shifted to a virtual setting, it was easy for her to work from home while also being able to help her mom set up the laptop to join the classes from home.

Janet is thankful she came across this program as it made her mother feel hopeful. Her mother would look forward to attending these sessions. Coming from a foreign country, Janet's mother did not have a social circle or connectivity in Canada, but these sessions made her happy and feel socially connected with others.



USHA AND JANET

Usha has been a homemaker throughout her life. She had not done much for herself. By attending these classes, not only did it help her physically and mentally, but it also helped her gain confidence that she can do something for herself too. She feels motivated to try new things. For Janet to be able to see these small changes in her mother's life, it has made her really proud of her.

She would definitely encourage any Tamil-speaking seniors to join and attend these programs as they were practical, informative, and educational sessions for seniors. If you are a Tamil-speaking friend or family member caring for a loved one, you can learn more about [SCHC's Tamil Caregiver Wellness Program here](#).

To read the full story, click [here](#).

Ambassadors Instrumental in Increasing Vaccine Rates

By Hana Bourgi - Project Manager, South Scarborough Vaccine Ambassador Collaborative

Over 10 community agency partners are banding together to bring vaccines to neighbourhoods with barriers to access. Ambassadors speak the languages, understand concerns and can answer questions on the spot. Please email vaxsouthscarb@schcontario.ca or call (416) 736-9372 and ask to speak with an ambassador in your language.

Languages spoken by
the SCHC ambassadors:

- English
- French
- Bengali
- Tamil
- Hindi
- Punjab
- Farsi
- Dari
- Arabic
- Tagalog
- Armenian
- Spanish
- Cantonese
- Mandarin

VACCINE ENGAGEMENT TEAM AT TEESDALE BUILDINGS IN OAKRIDGE



AMBASSADORS
AT THE BOOTH
TO RESPOND
TO RESIDENTS'
QUESTIONS
AROUND
VACCINE

AMBASSADORS READY TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS RELATED TO
COVID-19 VACCINES AND TO DISTRIBUTE HAND SANITIZERS

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416-642-9445 EXT 4015**



Happy to be Back!

By Hinduja Raj Mannar
EarlyON Parent and Client Advisor



The last I attended an in-person program with my daughter at the centre was in March 2020. Since then, we have been house bound, moving only within a 200m radius in a quest to stay physically active and mentally fit.

For us, returning to in-person programs at the EarlyON Centre can be compared to captive animals being freed into their natural wild space. We have missed being at the Centre so much.

My child is so eager to meet teachers again, play with old friends and make new ones. I feel great meeting and socializing with other parents. As a family we feel so positive and relieved.

We are also looking forward to regular indoor programs to begin. The newly renovated space looks so bright and welcoming. Renewed play spaces stocked up with new toys and books is going to make the comeback experience even more enjoyable. We can't wait to be back, just like good old times.

Adult Day Centre is also back!

By Haley McTaggart
Recreation Counselor and Virtual Program Developer

The Adult Day Centre is BACK! In early June, the Adult Day Centre welcomed a small group clients back for in person services. After many months using virtual services, families were eager to have their loved ones to return to our program. Though things look different from before, our clients are thrilled to be back (as is our team!). The Adult Day Centre offers services to adults 55 years of age and older who are frail, have been diagnosed with a Neurological Disorder (like Dementia), living with a disability and/or are social isolated living in the community. We offer clients a variety of therapeutic and recreational programs to partake in, such as falls prevention, sing-alongs, art making, cooking programs and special events. We are so excited to be back and able to offer these amazing programs to our clients.

Go to: <https://www.schcontario.ca/schc-adult-day-centre.html> for more information.