

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

*WORKING TOGETHER  
TO BUILD STRONG  
COMMUNITIES*



**THE OTTAWA  
COALITION OF  
COMMUNITY HOUSES**

# 2018: THE NUMBERS



**15**  
COMMUNITY  
HOUSES



**PEOPLE REACHED**  
**17,415** Unique individuals  
**378,982** Total encounters



**FOOD BANK USAGE**  
**4,710** Total households  
**13,441** Unique individuals



**VOLUNTEERS**  
**935** Volunteers  
**48,121** Volunteer hours

## HOW WELL DID WE DO?

**97%**

Of residents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the activities and services provided by Community Houses

**94%**

Of residents reported that participating at the Community House was beneficial

**92%**

Of residents reported participating in a Community House activity or program made them feel more connected to their community

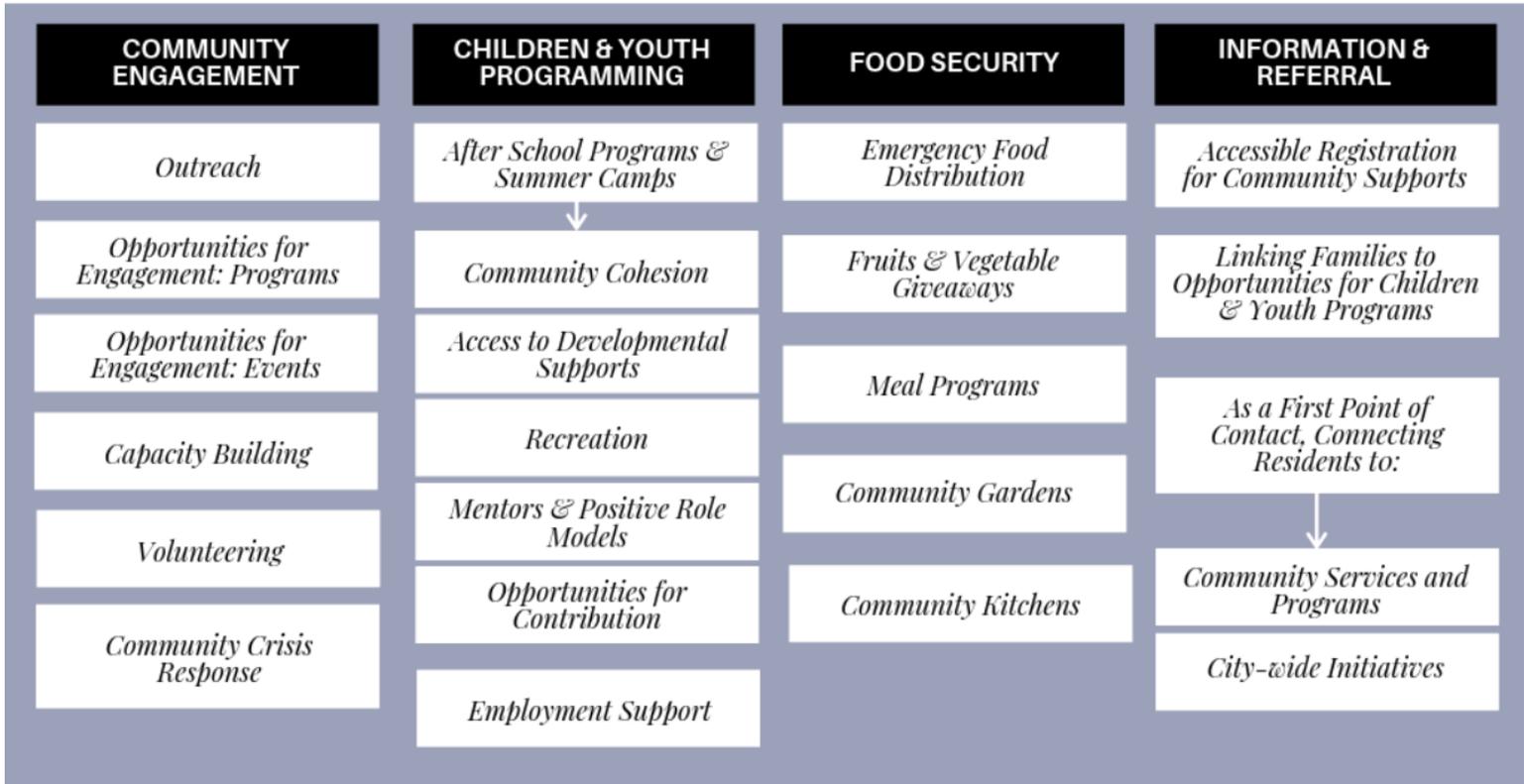
# What are Community Houses?

## What do Community Houses do?



Community Houses are social service organizations located directly within 15 social housing neighbourhoods in Ottawa, offering barrier-free community-based programs and supports for individuals and families – especially those who experience more vulnerability due to poverty, crime and unequal access to resources. These locations have grown to be fixtures in the communities they support, helping thousands of families along the way through a broad range of programs, events, and connections. Community Houses are seen as the first point of contact for marginalized individuals, putting them in a unique position to be a pivotal resource to affect positive change in Ottawa. Community Houses are highly connected and are a hub to connect residents to each other and to services they identify as important. Community Houses provide 4 core functions to their communities. These include:

- **Community Engagement**
- **Children and Youth Programming**
- **Food Security**
- **Information and Referral**



# THE OTTAWA COALITION OF COMMUNITY HOUSES



The Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses was created in 1998 to facilitate a network to exchange information and provide mutual support among Community House Coordinators and Executive Directors.

**There are 15 Community Houses within the Coalition:** Banff Avenue (1), Blair Court (2), Britannia Woods (3), Caldwell Avenue (4), Carson's (5), Confederation Court (6), Debra Dynes (7), Foster Farm (8), Lowertown (9), Michele Heights (10), Morrison Garden (11), Pinecrest Terrace (12), Rochester Heights (13), Russell Heights (14), and Winthrop Court (15).



The goal of the Coalition is to work collaboratively to build strong communities and improve the quality of life of individuals, children, youth, and families living in social housing neighbourhoods.

Community Houses are:

- A first point of contact
- Place-based services
- Community-driven
- Barrier-free programming

## OCCH Structure

The Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses (OCCH) has 15 Community Houses making up the membership. An elected Leadership Team consists of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and two additional members.

The OCCH has two paid staffing positions; a Coalition Coordinator and a Community House Support Worker. These valuable positions help the OCCH achieve its mandate.

## OCCH Leadership Team

The Leadership Team is driven by OCCH's Vision and Mission and works to support the work of the OCCH by focusing on increasing the capacity of Community Houses by:

- Increasing Resources
- Building on Key Partnerships
- Increasing the Community House Profile
- Common Evaluation

## Mandate/Responsibilities:

- Lead the OCCH 3 year Strategic Plan process
- Create an annual work plan
- Develop strategies to address OCCH priorities
- Ensure equitable representation and opportunities for all Community Houses
- Ensure OCCH representation on community tables and committees

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



The location and service delivery model lend to the ability to engage a very vulnerable target population. The Community House approach to building the capacity of vulnerable individuals is to engage them where they are at and at a level they are comfortable with. Clients are living in poverty, many are in crisis and may be experiencing challenges associated with mental health or medical conditions. Our ability to engage is not limited to those who have already emerged as community leaders, but also those who face multiple challenges and require additional support.

Community Engagement Initiatives create and maintain relationships with community residents, supporting their growth and sense of belonging to their community and linking them to opportunities outside of their immediate neighbourhood.

***"...it is about  
being involved in  
the community  
and giving back."***

## Spotlight on: Volunteering

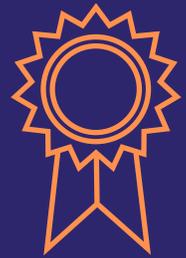


Volunteers and Staff at Debra Dynes Family House

Without the hard work and dedication of volunteers it would be impossible for the Community Houses to have the impact that they do. In 2018, Community Houses collectively had over 900 volunteers working on various programs from food programs to educational programs and workshops to community outreach and special events. All of these volunteers come with diverse backgrounds, experiences and reasons for volunteering, but one underlying commonality is the fact that they all care about the organization they are devoting their time, energy and skills to. For them it is about being involved in the community and giving back.

# 2018 Community Champions

*We thank you for your dedication and  
service to your communities!*



|                            |           |  |
|----------------------------|-----------|--|
| <b>Zoha Abed</b>           | 7 years   | <i>Blair Court Community House</i>         |
| <b>Maryam Amir</b>         | 2 years   | <i>Morrison Gardens Community House</i>    |
| <b>Carissa Davis</b>       | 6 years   | <i>Morrison Gardens Community House</i>    |
| <b>Chantal Demers</b>      | 10 years  | <i>Britannia Woods Community House</i>     |
| <b>Gord Dicker</b>         | 10 years  | <i>Morrison Gardens Community House</i>    |
| <b>Shawna Drouin</b>       | 5+ years  | <i>Michele Heights Community House</i>     |
| <b>Moustafa Elborey</b>    | 2 years   | <i>Pinecrest Terrace Community House</i>   |
| <b>Glenn Ferguson</b>      | 20 years  | <i>Morrison Gardens Community House</i>    |
| <b>Shelton Gande</b>       | 8 years   | <i>Debra Dynes Family House</i>            |
| <b>Donna Gray</b>          | 8 years   | <i>Rochester Heights Community House</i>   |
| <b>Nicole Greggain</b>     | 15 years  | <i>Winthrop Court Community House</i>      |
| <b>Crystal Hayes Dion</b>  | 25 years  | <i>Banff Avenue Community House</i>        |
| <b>Kadijo Hussein</b>      | 7 years   | <i>Pinecrest Terrace Community House</i>   |
| <b>Sue Ings</b>            | 20+ years | <i>Pinecrest Terrace Community House</i>   |
| <b>Michel Joannis</b>      | 4 years   | <i>Lowertown Community House</i>           |
| <b>Havzeta Kadric</b>      | 10+ years | <i>Lowertown Community House</i>           |
| <b>Hazel Mainville</b>     | 6 years   | <i>Debra Dynes Family House</i>            |
| <b>Lucie Merard</b>        | 1 year    | <i>Pinecrest Terrace Community House</i>   |
| <b>Sahar Mirzayee</b>      | 18 years  | <i>Banff Avenue Community House</i>        |
| <b>Israel Panda</b>        | 10+ years | <i>Debra Dynes Family House</i>            |
| <b>Cristina Penaloza</b>   | 3 years   | <i>Debra Dynes Community House</i>         |
| <b>Lood's Mary Phineus</b> | 12 years  | <i>Russell Height Community House</i>      |
| <b>Lisa Quesnel</b>        | 8 years   | <i>Blair Court Community House</i>         |
| <b>Kimberly Sabourin</b>   | 1 year    | <i>Britannia Woods Community House</i>     |
| <b>Estelle Seguin</b>      | 23 years  | <i>Lowertown Community House</i>           |
| <b>Amel Shghaghi</b>       | 2 years   | <i>Morrison Gardens Community House</i>    |
| <b>Sarah Smith</b>         | 2 years   | <i>Morrison Gardens community House</i>    |
| <b>Michael Strickland</b>  | 28 years  | <i>Foster Farm Family House</i>            |
| <b>Khadra Suffi</b>        | 17 years  | <i>Britannia Woods Community House</i>     |
| <b>Laurielle Uwase</b>     | 5 years   | <i>Debra Dynes Family House</i>            |
| <b>Celine Valare</b>       | 6 years   | <i>Pinecrest Terrace Community House</i>   |
| <b>Mirlande Valere</b>     | 18 years  | <i>Pinecrest Terrace Community House</i>   |
| <b>Anita Wade</b>          | 5+ years  | <i>Michele Height Community House</i>      |
| <b>Fatima Wane</b>         | 6 years   | <i>Confederation Court Community House</i> |

# CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMMING



Opportunities for children and youth are about ensuring a bright and healthy future for those living in social housing neighbourhoods. Located directly in the communities, Community Houses provide a safe and friendly environment where children and youth can learn, grow, make friends, develop new skills, work, volunteer, and stay active and healthy. They provide social recreational programming, academic support, critical hours/after-school programming, summer camps, March break activities, various workshops, and work and volunteer opportunities.



Participants from the After School and KYC Programs at Russell Heights Community House

## After School Programs

Community House After School programs are provided base funding from United Way Ottawa to offer safe and supportive programming for children aged 6-12 years directly in their neighbourhoods. Programs vary between Community Houses, based on the availability of funding and the needs of the community. The Community House After School programs strive to:

- Improve attitudes towards school and learning
- Skill development (leadership, communication, goal setting, social and emotional skills)
- Homework completion
- Increase sense of belonging to community

## Keeping Youth Connected

Keeping Youth Connected is a place-based program for adolescents that takes place during critical hours when youth are out of school. In 2018, KYC was provided funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The program is hosted across all 15 Community Houses and provides social recreation, skills development (Leadership and Life Skills), academic support, and outings (sporting events, Escape rooms, museums, etc.).

The program has four main objectives:

1. Increase the number of adolescents who face barriers to participation to become/remain connected to their community.
2. Increase emotional and social skills of youth who participate.
3. Increase leadership skills of participants.
4. Create stronger adult relationships.

# Children & Youth Partnerships



The Coalition of Community Houses has partnered with various organizations to enhance the After School and Keeping Youth Connected programs. The objective of these partnerships is to provide children and youth with opportunities they may not otherwise have access to, and to encourage self discovery and development by exploring different topics.

## Spotlight on: MAKEiT Club

MAKEiT Club aligns with the values of Community House after school programming in the belief that every child should have equal access to opportunities. The objective is giving children the opportunity to explore in the areas of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) to increase interest and confidence and develop skills that will lead to post secondary education and careers in STEAM related fields.



MAKEiT Club at Foster Farm Family House

### Partnerships in 2018:

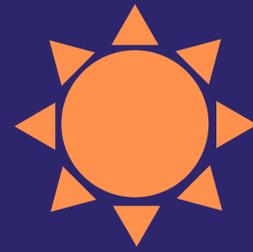
- MAKEiT Club
- World Folk Music Ottawa
- Kids Up Front Ottawa

STEM fields have grown over 10% in the past 10 years and it is estimated that Canada will struggle to fill approximately 216,000 technology-related positions by 2021. STEM careers also have a higher than average salary, with a computer developer starting with an annual salary of \$94,000. By promoting interest, confidence and developing skills in this area, MAKEiT club aims to give children the tools they need to break out of poverty.

MAKEiT Club offers weekly STEAM workshops to children attending the After School program in the 15 Community Houses across Ottawa. In 2018, the workshops focused on computer science and technology. Over one hundred children participating in the program weekly had an opportunity to work on projects such as:

- Block coding projects using platforms like Scratch and Minecraft code connect
- Creating their own games on Scratch
- Robotics using My Little Robot Friends and Wonder Dash robot
- Virtual Reality
- Graphic Design

# SUMMER CAMP



Community Houses offer day camps to children living in their neighbourhoods. The camps range from half day to full day and offer children a variety of activities to keep them active and engaged while school is out.

Regular activities include:

- STEAM workshops
- Music workshops
- Swimming in public pools
- Movie days
- Trivia days
- Trips to museums
- Sports
- Games
- Crafts
- Healthy snacks and lunches

## Spotlight on:

### Britannia Woods Day Camp

Britannia Woods Community House, located in Ottawa's west end provides community-led, holistic programs to residents living in the community. One of Britannia Wood's annual programs is a Day Camp that runs for 6 weeks each summer. The camp aims to bridge the gap between structured recreational and athletic activities over the summer vacation and those who would otherwise not have access. Their policy is welcome registration, meaning any child who wishes to participate is guaranteed a spot. With more than 60 kids attending camp over the summer, this program is essential in continuing the mental, emotional and physical development of children and youth in the community over the summer months.



Campers and Staff at Britannia Woods Day Camp  
Summer 2018

There are a variety of activities offered on a weekly basis including STEAM workshops through MAKEiT Club, tennis, art, and dance programs through the City of Ottawa, weekly swimming trips, organized sports and gym activities, guest speakers, nature walks to Britannia park, weekly Friday field trips and a summer end talent show. The variety of activities are all beneficial in building confidence, new skills and interests. In addition to the recreational benefits, camp gives children and youth a chance to connect with their friends in a safe environment while strengthening community ties. Children and youth are happy to attend, many campers are proud to take on leadership roles as they evolve into counsellors in training and full time staff as the years go on.

# FOOD SECURITY



Community Houses strive to make food accessible to individuals and families in need. The 2018 Ottawa Hunger Report states that 53,600 people living in Ottawa are food insecure. Community Houses served 13,441 of those people in 2018. The Coalition of Community Houses represent 12 of the 114 member agencies of the Ottawa Food Bank. In addition to food banks, Community Houses are addressing food security through breakfast/lunch programs, after school snack programs and fruit and veggie give-aways. Community gardens and collective kitchens address food security and community engagement by providing access to food, and also engaging residents in conversations around food and nutrition while sharing time, recipes and meals together.

## Spotlight on: Morrison Gardens Community House & Food Security

### Community Fridge

Morrison Gardens received a commercial fridge from the Good Food network to make healthy food more accessible to the community. The philosophy behind the Community Fridge is that healthy food will be available to those who need it when they need it, not only during food bank hours. Keeping the fridge full is a community effort, with adults in the community coming together once a week to prepare food for the fridge while sharing recipes and a meal together. The Community Fridge is not only helping feed the community it is also helping to build community through this time shared together.

## Green Team Kids

Green Team Kids is an initiative in partnership with Bridgehead Coffee shops to introduce kids to ideas about healthy food and entrepreneurship. The program teaches kids about how to access, grow and prepare healthy food as well as the fundamentals to building and running their own business. In 2018, the group of kids participating in the program successfully forged a partnership with Bridgehead to sell them the lettuce they produced on their grow tower and ran a pop up restaurant serving healthy meals to members of their community and visitors from partner organizations.



# INFORMATION & REFERRAL



Community Houses are located in and are part of the communities they serve. They are often the first point of contact for many people who are new to Canada or have little understanding of societal systems such as the medical system, legal system or education system. This makes information and referral an important core function of Community Houses. As a result of their location and relationships with clients, often reaching many members of the family through the various food programs, adult programs and child and youth programs, Community Houses build relationships of trust which encourages many people to turn to them in times of crisis to seek help and direction. Without these agencies in the community that are a part of the community, many people facing crisis would be left lost and overwhelmed when trying to navigate difficult situations.

## Spotlight on: Referral Services at Debra Dynes Family House

Debra Dynes Family House has been part of the Debra Dynes community for 25 years. Over those 25 years, the local agency has made thousands of connections to residents of diverse backgrounds and ages. Over that time the Family House has also formed many valuable partnerships to help clients in areas such as access to medical, social and community services, legal clinics and tax clinics, access to bus tickets and transportation, job searching and resumes, help with acquiring school supplies and Christmas presents for their children and the list keeps growing as new needs emerge.

*"Debra Dynes Family House has an open door policy, meaning that anyone who comes through the door seeking help will receive it..."*



Debra Dynes Family House has an open door policy, meaning that anyone who comes through the door seeking help will receive it, no matter where they live or what the situation. They are constantly evolving to meet the needs of the people they serve, the staff recognize that referrals will look different for everyone and work together with the client until a solution is found. Examples span from helping a client navigate the legal system and secure legal counsel when leaving an abusive relationship, to helping a family understand the education system for a child with a learning disability, to coordinating much needed medical attention for the young children of a single mother new to Canada who was extremely isolated without access to resources.

# OCCH Turns 20!



## Celebrating 20 years of Community and Collaboration

This year the Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses celebrated 20 years of providing frontline services and bringing communities together. On the evening of November 28th at Foster Farm Community Centre, OCCH hosted an event to celebrate this milestone and to recognize all of the volunteers, staff and partners who make this important work possible.



We recognized over 30 volunteers individually and celebrated with food, music, a photo booth and special guests such as Mayor Jim Watson, City Councillor Teresa Kavanagh and Adrian Harewood from CBC who broadcasted live on the local 6 o'clock news from the event. During the evening OCCH was honored to receive a plaque recognizing 20 years of service from the City of Ottawa presented by Mayor Jim Watson.

## Community Builder of the Year Award

On May 31, 2018 The Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses was awarded the United Way Community Builder of the Year award. This award recognized the importance of Community Houses in making Ottawa a better place, through collaboration and dedication to the communities they serve.



# Our Partners



Thank you to our Partners and Contributors



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