

Bringing It Home



2022 Annual Report



About The 519

We are Canada's most prominent 2SLGBTQ+ community centre and multi-service agency.

Located in the heart of Toronto's 2SLGBTQ+ village, since 1976, The 519 has responded to the needs of our diverse communities — including newcomers, youth, seniors, trans communities and others. We fiercely defend the rights of 2SLGBTQ+ people through advocacy, education, and direct services.

The 519 is both a registered charity and a City of Toronto agency. We make a real difference in people's lives, while working to promote justice, inclusion, equity and respect.

We believe that home is found in community. As a community centre, The 519 strives to be a home built by and for 2SLGBTQ+ people in Toronto and beyond.

Land Acknowledgment

The 519 is located in Tkaronto (now known as Toronto), which in Mohawk means "where there are trees standing in the water." Today, Tkaronto is covered under Treaty 13 and the Williams Treaties. It is the traditional territories of many First Peoples, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnaabe, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. Tkaronto is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples - including 2 Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQ+ communities.

This territory is governed by the 'the Dish with One Spoon' wampum, a Treaty made between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas, and Haudenosaunee, where nations entered into an agreement to protect the land and responsibly care for its resources in harmony. As settlers, newcomers, refugees, and Indigenous peoples, we have all been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect. We recognize our responsibilities as Treaty people to engage in a meaningful, continuous process of truth and reconciliation.

This city was built on stolen land and stolen African Black labour and resources. One cannot be remembered without the other.

From Our Leadership

For 2SLGBTQ+ communities, the word **home** can bring up complicated feelings. Home should be a place where we can be our authentic selves, somewhere we find solace and comfort, strength and solidarity. Where we laugh, play, grieve and grow. Yet for many of us, it is a place that we fled, whether it be due to unsupportive families or oppressive regimes. Home is something that many have had to intentionally rebuild, without blueprints. That so many 2SLGBTQ+ people still find themselves without a place to call home is among the most urgent crises facing our communities.

Coming out of the height of the pandemic, 2022 was a year of tremendous growth and momentum at The 519. In November, in collaboration with Homes First Society and the City of Toronto, we opened Toronto's first transitional shelter for 2SLGBTQ+ adults, with a focus on LGBTQ+ refugees, trans women, and gender diverse people. This small but historic step built on decades of community-based research and advocacy that highlighted the persistent harassment and discrimination that 2SLGBTQ+ people face within the shelter system. This groundbreaking project deepens our commitment towards ensuring safe and affirming homes for all 2SLGBTQ+ people.

The new shelter project is guided by how we strive to create a feeling of home for everyone who comes to The 519. For us, that means

never losing sight of the role that joy plays in our work. The joy that is found over a hot meal on a cold day, in the smile of a Trans ID clinic client seeing their identity reflected on their ID for the first time, or in families bonding in our EarlyON centre transcends individual moments. It is fuel for our collective resiliency and resistance in a moment where we see an unprecedented increase in anti-queer and anti-trans rhetoric, both at home and abroad. It is this joy that our communities create together that is being targeted. By holding on to this joy and using it as the foundation of our community's solidarity, we will resist these attacks and come out stronger, prouder and louder than ever before. Because that's what an Army of Lovers does.

Over the past year, we have been committed to developing The 519's strength and capacity to meet the needs of 2SLGBTQ+ and local communities. We have made unprecedented investments in developing the skills of our staff, with an emphasis on deepening our understanding of our role in confronting anti-Black racism and reconciliation. From MPox vaccines to new programs for newcomers and refugees, to securing investments in our youth advocacy and access to justice programming, we continue to expand and evolve our programs and services to create moments that feel like home for our communities.

There are countless people who, in ways big and small, have helped bring that feeling of home to our centre. We are humbled by the dedication of the entire The 519 staff team. The ways in which they create spaces for our communities to grow, support people in their darkest moments, encourage and sustain each other is truly exceptional. To be able to welcome back so many more volunteers over the past year has been a remarkable testament to the ways in which our communities take care of each other. With the support of our donors and funders, we have built a stronger, more resilient organization that is working with community in new and dynamic ways. With the leadership of our Board of Management, we have a strong foundation on which to build more opportunities for 2SLGBTQ+ people to feel at home.

As we reflect on this year, we are proud of the work we have achieved together with your support. We are inspired by the communities we serve. And we are excited for what comes next.



A handwritten signature in black ink.

MAURA LAWLESS
(she/her)
Executive Director



A handwritten signature in black ink.

PAUL JONATHAN SAGUIL
(he/him)
Chair of the Board

Annual Highlights

Food Security

224,025

meals distributed to communities

2,191 

frozen meal program participants

Health Services

16,099 

harm reduction and safer sex kits distributed

5,267

outreach contacts with people who use drugs

2,626 

MPox vaccines administered

Photo: Volunteers supporting an event through meal service.



Tax Clinic

\$4M+

in tax refunds to Tax Clinic clients

1,857

Tax Clinic clients

Legal Initiatives

894

clients served through The 519's Legal programs

Other Programs

17,862 **105**

visits to our EarlyON family, child, and youth programs

program sessions for older adults

2,281 **541**

Newcomer and refugee clients served

visits to the Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC) program

11,200 💡

Education & Training workshop attendees

Financial Support

\$45,000

distributed via the Pay it No Mind Fund to racialized 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary community members in need



Photo: Celebrating LGBTQ+ Newcomer and Refugee Pride 2022.

Events

70+ **45,000** 🎵

events in Barbara Hall Park

Green Space Festival attendees

Volunteerism

622 🖐️🖐️

volunteers donated their time

13,247

volunteer hours contributed

Photo: Pythia performing during Starry Night at Green Space Festival 2022.





Making a Home

OPENING TORONTO'S FIRST DEDICATED SHELTER FOR 2SLGBTQ+ ADULTS

Everyone needs a home – but 2SLGBTQ+ communities face unique barriers in accessing safe and affirming housing. For many years, The 519 has been involved with housing support work by providing housing navigation services to 2 Spirit, queer, and trans youth. With skyrocketing housing costs and long-standing issues of discrimination within the shelter sector, the need for more affordable housing and inclusive shelter space remains an urgent issue.

In 2022, The 519's work on housing took a big leap: we launched a new major project culminating in the announcement of Toronto's first dedicated shelter for 2SLGBTQ+ adults. In collaboration with the City of Toronto and Homes First Society, the shelter supports LGBTQ+ refugees, with a focus on trans, non-binary, and gender-diverse newcomers. With Homes First Society acting as the shelter operator, we are proud to coordinate shelter intake and referrals, provide on-site programming and supports, and to work closely with Homes First Society on developing new shelter policies and procedures.

Located in the city's west end, the shelter opened in November, and provides beds for up to 20 LGBTQ+ residents. Moving to Canada to seek asylum can be a deeply challenging experience, and many refugees need emergency shelter support. But when queer and trans newcomers access mainstream settlement services, they don't always receive the level of inclusion and respect they deserve.

The opening of historic site builds on 20 years of 2SLGBTQ+ community leader advocacy, and months of consultations with services providers and over 100 community members with lived experiences of homelessness. Through these consultations, we heard of deep and ongoing systemic issues of discrimination and harassment within the shelter system. In response, the launch of this site is paired with a new capacity building project that will engage current shelter system providers and their staff teams with training, guidance, and support to build safer spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ people across the housing sector broadly.

It is critical to have spaces where 2SLGBTQ+ people can feel respected and supported in who they are. The shelter has the potential to allow residents to start their life in Canada on a vastly different note. Opening this space is one small step towards creating more equitable and accessible shelter spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ communities. As Toronto faces an escalating homelessness crisis, many more shelter, transitional, and affordable housing units are desperately needed.



“

As one of the leading non-profit housing and shelter providers in our city, we are very proud to collaborate with The 519 to open Toronto’s very first shelter for LGBTQ+ refugees and newcomers facing homelessness, with a priority focus on trans, non-binary and gender diverse people. This new program offers support services and shelter to many who have never been able to safely access it before.”

– Patricia Mueller, CEO, Homes First Society

“

LGBTQ+ refugees and newcomers seeking safer lives here in Toronto encounter structural racism, transphobia and homophobia in almost all areas of life, not least throughout the immigration system. Many LGBTQ+ refugees find themselves navigating complex systems and confusing new realities alone, with limited resources, without family, community, or culturally relevant supports. We hope this new space will provide a welcoming place to land for some of our community’s least resourced, where we can find strength and joy and begin to rebuild together. The first of its kind, and hopefully just the beginning.”

– Martha Singh Jennings,
Director, Housing Advocacy and Support Services



Photo: Queer of Sheba's performance at LGBTQ+ Newcomers and Refugee Pride 2022.

Housing Impact

WHO WE SUPPORTED

This year, there were 29+ new clients referred to the shelter and 17 became residents.

WHO WE COLLABORATED AND CONSULTED WITH

We had 18 partners and 121 community members engage in our consultation process for our new shelter, and worked closely with the City of Toronto and our project collaborator, Homes First Society.

WHAT WE DID TOGETHER

From intake protocols to welcome packages, we worked closely with Homes First Society on developing new models of support. We also ran programs for shelter residents, ranging from orientation sessions and field trips, movie nights and personal style consultations geared towards gender-diverse residents.



Above: Celebrating LGBTQ+ Newcomer and Refugee Pride 2022

Left: Mimi performing at LGBTQ+ Newcomer and Refugee Pride 2022.



Photo: Community members at Toronto's Trans March 2022.

HOME IS BUILT TOGETHER

Volunteering at The 519

Our volunteers play an important role in welcoming community members to The 519 and making community members feel at home. We are fortunate to be supported by over 600 volunteers who are vital to everything we do.



AT A GLANCE

With hundreds of volunteers across our programs, we've collected more statistics than we can fit on this page. We've rounded up some highlights from program volunteers this year:

622
volunteers gave a
whopping **13,144**
hours volunteering

439
new volunteers joined
The 519 this year

34
volunteers
supported the food
program with **2,877**
hours donated

64
volunteers
donated **431** hours
to our EarlyON
programming

22
orientations sessions
were provided to
volunteers

194
Green Space
Festival volunteers
donated **2,247**
hours

30
volunteers donated
1,831 hours to our
Tax Clinic



Above: Volunteers supporting The 519 EarlyON 2SLGBTQ+ Family Pride event 2022.

Left: Volunteers supporting the Spring Fling Festival.

MEET A DEDICATED VOLUNTEER AND THE 519 'SUPERFAN'

Babatunde Babalola

Originally from Nigeria, Babatunde faced a deep depression when coming to Canada alone under traumatic circumstances. When he visited a doctor for help, Babatunde was encouraged to volunteer at The 519 as a way to connect with people in Toronto. Last year, he started volunteering with The 519's EarlyON program – and the rest is history.

"When I came to The 519 as a volunteer, it started to feel like home very quickly. I am from Nigeria, and the situation that brought me to Canada was very difficult. It led me to believe that I would never find such a diverse, inclusive, and connected community of people," said Babatunde. "At The 519, there is complete respect for everyone. Volunteering here has been life changing."

Babatunde speaks highly of his experience volunteering at The 519 saying, "When I arrive at The 519, I don't even feel like I'm volunteering, I feel like I'm at home."

Babatunde is a familiar face in the EarlyON program, which supports kids from birth up to age six and their loving caregivers. The program is a supportive space for families of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and configurations. "I am grateful that I come to The 519 every Saturday and help such incredible families. We help kids, and by helping kids we make an impact on society as a whole," Babatunde added while speaking of The 519's impact with children and youth programming.



Photo: Babatunde volunteering at Youth Working Group's art showcase.

"Coming to The 519 makes my day," added Babatunde. "I'm a fan of The 519, I'm a superfan – I've caught the bug," said Babatunde.

When asked how Babatunde feels about volunteering with a 2SLGBTQ+ organization he responds, "It's a privilege to be with The 519. I think of how much trauma and healing I've gone through to get where I am today, and how I'm more alive and more myself. Volunteering with The 519 has helped me see the value in community, and in myself. You need to experience it to understand."

“

"Volunteers like Babatunde make our work possible. His enthusiasm and kindness are impossible to miss, and the support he provides staff, program participants, and parents is so important to our work."

**– Niña Cabaguio, Coordinator,
2SLGBTQ+ EarlyON Mobile Program**

WELCOMING PEOPLE HOME

New to Canada Programming

Welcoming people to their new home in Canada is a profound experience that happens every day at The 519. Over the last year, with borders reopening and turmoil across the globe, we saw unparalleled growth in our **New to Canada** programming, with over 2200 refugee claimants and newcomers accessing support.

Meeting this surging need meant developing new models of support, including a drop-in program that provides immediate individual support, referrals, and orientation to The 519 for new program participants. In just three months, 350 participants came to our new drop-in sessions. Through our longstanding **Among Friends** refugee support group program, we helped orient New to Canada program participants to their new home, offering settlement and wayfinding advice, know your rights workshops, resume and skill building opportunities, and much more.

Our New to Canada programming is deeply informed by the lived experiences of migration of our New to Canada and broader staff team, and by continuous feedback and guidance from program participants. This can be seen in how our community-specific programs, such as **Black Youth Gathering**, **Henna Hangs**, and **Queer Muslim Community Circle** work to create connections between and within diasporic communities through programs focused on personal wellbeing. Our **Happy Trails** program sought to bring newcomers into Canada's great outdoors, facilitating nature walks throughout the GTA, while **Fuel** continued to create accessible opportunities in sport for LGBTQ+ newcomers.

“

Joining New to Canada programming was the beginning of my turnaround in Canada. It was the end of all the stress and struggle.”

- Gloria, program participant

1028

refugee claimants served

1243

newcomers accessed supports

118

settlement related workshops

3339

visits to Among Friends

86

Black Youth Gathering attendees

120

Henna Hangs attendees

Photo: Gloria at the Volunteer Appreciation party 2022.



HOME IS WHERE WE GROW

Child and Youth Programming



When parents in our family, child and youth programs tell us that their parents would bring them to our **EarlyON** in decades past, it makes us proud to be a home for so many. Our family, child and youth programming expanded this year, adding new opportunities, age groups, and specialty programming.

Our work with families, children and youth is guided by the values of our communities and our commitment to supporting a curious, playful, and intentional learning environment for children and families, guided by pillars of confronting Anti-Black racism and Truth and Reconciliation.

Our EarlyON Centre is the foundation of our family, child and youth programs. We continued to bring our breadth of knowledge and expertise around affirming programming through 200 visits to EarlyONs across Toronto by our **Glitterbug 2SLGBTQ+ Mobile Program**. Through **Every Baby Counts**, a community-led group for parents and caregivers of children ages 0-12 months, we provided support around healthy infant development. We were thrilled to also welcome families back throughout the year for our seasonal family parties.

12,593

visits by **494**
families to our
EarlyON Centre

3046

families participated in
Glitterbug visits

25

youth participated in the
Youth Working Group project

72

infants and their caregivers
participated in Every Baby Counts

Our **Kids and Youth Action and Arts Space** programs have grown from monthly to weekly programming, engaging over 300 children and youth online and in-person through social justice, movement, and arts-based programming. Our youth work has been bolstered by our **Youth Working Group Project**, which has partnered with emerging BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ artists to work with 25 youth between 14 and 18 years old to explore various art mediums to create a project that explores experiences of cyberbullying in relation to racism, discrimination, violence, strength, and resilience.

“

The 519 has been a second home for my kids. They are eager to get healthy snacks. The staff should be commended for preparing the food every single day. My children were able to learn communication skills, social activities, speech, about other cultures and counting in other languages. I would like to thank again the staff and volunteers, keep up the good work.”

– Biniam Tewelde, parent

Photo: Participants from
2SLGBTQ+ Youth Pride 2022.

Sharing What's Essential

AT THE 519 AND AT HOME



Food Security

It's often said that the kitchen is the heart of the home. We feel no different at The 519, with our **Food Security Programming** continuing to grow through 2022 to meet escalating food insecurity within 2SLGBTQ+ communities and our local neighbourhood.

Food is a human right, but it continues to be inaccessible to many 2SLGBTQ+ and marginalized people as a result of rising costs of living and discrimination. At The 519, we believe that no one should experience food insecurity and no one should live in poverty. While these issues remain, we will continue to support our community with food services and advocate to break the systems that keep people in poverty.

We know that food is so much more than fuel. It's a vehicle for connection, community, and culture. This year, we did a **Countries of the World** project, where our team cooked dishes from over 75 countries, ensuring that those accessing our meals feel seen, represented, and affirmed.

“

"I love this meal program because as a struggling low-income senior with a disability, this has helped me a lot in my life. I really appreciate your help!"

- Jim, Food Program Participant

93,780

meals served through our programs, Sunday meal service and Frozen Meals programs

130,245

meals provided to partners across Toronto through our partnership with Second Harvest

\$3.6M+

amount of food waste diverted

287

families benefitted from the Frozen Meals program

2,191

frozen meal program participants

269,861 kgs

of greenhouse gases prevented

“

I love your program. I saw how it benefitted many, myself included. The staff was absolutely superb, welcoming, and friendly. I loved that I never felt judged. I was unemployed while I accessed the program as a new immigrant to Canada. The program was a blessing to me."

– Catherine, Food Program Participant

Front Desk and Essential Services

We continued to provide essential support to community members through front desk referrals and our **Friendly Check-in Program** (including check-ins for BIPOC trans folks by our Trans People of Colour Project peers). Through our stellar front desk team, we distributed thousands of pieces of clothing, harm reduction kits, and safer sex supplies over the past year, and made thousands of referrals to internal programs and external partners.

At last, 2022 saw a return of many of our **community-led groups**, with 49 groups beginning or returning to regular space use. Along with community meetings, Kiki Balls, conferences and holiday parties, nothing makes us feel more like we're at home than a building filled with our communities.



Photo: Families gather around the table at the Winter Wonderland family holiday celebration.

HOME FOR EVERYONE

Trans-Specific Programming

Home is where we can be our fullest selves. At the core of our trans programming is a profound belief that 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary people deserve spaces to celebrate joy and the full richness of life, to grow in oneself and support one another, and to participate in the development and growth of programs and services for 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary people at The 519 and beyond.

The **Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC)** continued to grow its reach, with 541 program visits. Pairing access to food and social events with meaningful sexual health promotion and personal development workshops for participants, TPOC is a unique space for racialized trans people that continues to grow. The weekly program space would not be possible without the community leadership brought by the incredible peer team who bring their lived experience to supporting participants with roots from around the world.

Our **Trans Youth Mentorship Program** works with 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary youth to grow their professional and educational skills. As this program has evolved, we have learned how central social connection and a vision for the future are to creating a strong foundation for 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary youth. This year, we focussed on envisioning what a shared trans future can and must look like, drawing inspiration from the work of trans elders and how they changed the landscape of human rights for trans people.

Trans Day of Remembrance acts as a solemn reminder of the far too many lives lost to transphobia, racism, and poverty every year. Our communities continue to mourn for the dead and fight for the living during a time of reactionary backlash towards the progress 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary people have made towards the equity they deserve. This year, we outgrew our ballroom and hosted our remembrance service in Barbara Hall Park. We gathered as community and reflected on how we must continue to fuel our burning fire for change, justice, safety, and equity.

The 519 remains committed to working with 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary people through direct financial support. Our **Pay it No Mind Fund** is an emergency funding program designed to put financial supports in the hands of racialized 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary people as quickly as possible through a low-barrier referral process. Working with community partners, we provided direct financial support to community members to help meet their primary needs including affording bills, basic necessities, medical expenses, and food.

The **Kyle Scanlon Memorial Fund** continued to support projects in Ontario that support the improved quality of life for trans communities, by supporting **Diversity Cornwall** in expanding gender-affirming support in Cornwall and surrounding rural areas, and supporting **Trans Wellness Ontario's** counselling program in the Windsor-Essex area.

We were also honoured to launch the **Sasha Hashi Bursary Fund** at Toronto Metropolitan University in memory of our former colleague Sasha Hashi, which provides financial support to BIPOC 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary students.



Photo: Trans March 2022.

\$45,000

distributed to **100** people
through the Pay it No
Mind Fund

400+

Trans Day of Remembrance
attendees

2,196

referrals made by TPOC

48

TPOC friendly phone
check-in participants

“

Before transitioning to today, The 519 has been there every step of the way. I never thought I'd be this healthy, or even live past a certain age."

– Kirina, The Trans Youth Mentorship Program (TYMP) participant and staff member



Photo: Jingle Dress Dancer Indiana Cada performing at Trans Day of Remembrance (TDoR) 2022.

FIGHTING FOR OUR HOME

Advocacy

The struggle for a place to call home where we can be their authentic selves is a touchstone of the 2SLGBTQ+ experience. The 519 works tirelessly to build safer, inclusive, and fair spaces - be it at work, in institutions, at home, or in the media.



The 519's Media Reference Guide launched in May 2022 with a panel discussion on authentic storytelling in the media featuring featuring Yasmeen Persad, Coordinator of the Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC) and Rachel Giese of The Globe and Mail, setting the stage for an open-hearted discussion about representation in the media and how journalists can strengthen relationships through inclusive, respectful reporting.

As Canada's most comprehensive guide on how to tell stories about and with 2SLGBTQ+ communities, the media guide is available online as an opportunity to learn to report and write in a way that's more accurate, inclusive, and fair. It includes guidance on how to use affirming language, practical reporting tips, and questions to prompt professional and personal reflection.

Media and communicators have a responsibility to the people whose stories they're sharing. We hope this guide can be a starting point for journalists, communicators, and anyone else who wants to learn more about treating trans and gender-diverse folks with the respect and dignity.

In big and small ways, justice and the importance of solidarity for social change are woven throughout our daily work. In 2022, we saw justice brought for Julie Berman, a trans community leader who was tragically murdered in 2019.

We attended the trial to honour Julie, bear witness with our communities, and to monitor for transphobia and gender stereotyping in the court proceedings. During the trial, we successfully advocated for the utilization of gender-neutral language in the presentation of DNA evidence and came to better understand the systems failures evident in the circumstances leading to Julie's death.

We were brought together in grief and solidarity with communities across North America mourning the Club Q nightclub shooting in late November. Together with Pride Toronto, we hosted a community vigil in response and memorial of the tragedy in Colorado Springs.

Throughout the year, we advocated for our communities around issues of harm reduction and safe drug supply, affordable housing, for the rights of LGBTQ+ refugees and those living with HIV/AIDS, to all levels of government, through joining partner organizations in protests, and through public statements and calls to action. As the year progressed. We actively condemned the growing anti-trans rhetoric and public attacks on our communities and drag artists, and are committed to defending their safety.

As our communities always have, we join in strength and fury with one another as there is no equity without solidarity.



Photo: 2022 AIDS Vigil.

HOME, WHERE THERE'S JOY

Park Programming

Barbara Hall Park is everyone's park. Located next to The 519, it holds a meaningful role for our communities as it hosts Toronto's AIDS Memorial and a Trans Memorial. The park is not just a space for community to gather. It is also a space where many, especially 2SLGBTQ+ people experiencing homelessness, feel at home. This year, we worked with community organizations, local businesses, and neighbours to create moments of connection and joy throughout the year for everyone who uses Barbara Hall Park.

Our programming ranged from Arts in the Park to Zumba classes, and added up to more park-based programming than we have ever offered before.



Photo: Spring Fling in Barbara Hall Park.

70+

events in Barbara Hall Park

20+

local businesses and organizations supported these events

3000+

participants

COMMUNITY VOICES:

“

You don't know how much I needed this, I'm going through a hard time and this Zumba class completely brightened my day!"

- Zumba class participant

“

Thank you for hosting this event. I'm able to pay my bills this month because of it."

- Community vendor at our Yard Sale

HOME IS A RIGHT

Access to Justice Programming

Part of feeling at home includes having the knowledge and tools to feel empowered to advocate for oneself. Through the support of our volunteer lawyers and funders, our **Access to Justice Programming** does this and more for our communities every day.

Too often, 2SLGBTQ+ people interact with a justice system that lacks a nuanced understanding of their lived experience. **The 519 Legal Clinic** has continued to evolve to address these barriers through increasing and improving community access to justice and legal education.

In 2022, the Access to Justice team focussed intently on developing new systems and processes to meet growing community need, while continuing to forge new partnerships and identify new focus areas including affidavit and notary support. Through new funding, we expanded our programming for Black, Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ communities who call Toronto's Downtown East home through partnership development and increased case coordination and support. We continued to develop public legal education opportunities while also providing court support and monitoring.

“

"I was having trouble understanding where to start in the process of changing my name and gender markers legally. Accessing the Trans ID Clinic was such a relief! The folks there really helped guide me and provided all the support and resources to submit the various paperwork needed. Thank you all, this service really helped."

- Trans ID Clinic Client

LEGAL SERVICES ACCESSED:

24

Public Legal Education Sessions

345

people with legal needs trained

731

clients received legal advice

115

clients supported through legal processes

22

training events to build awareness of law, democracy and rights

350

participants in training sessions

49

notary clients saved **\$2,270** total in fees

47

Trans ID Clinic clients saved **\$2,600** total in fees



Photo: Today, The 519 Legal Clinic is supported by staff and 50+ lawyers providing pro bono support.

HOME SHOULD BE SAFE

Anti-Violence Initiatives



Photo: Facilitator Chris James leading a self-defense workshop.

Being home and being safe should go hand in hand. Our **Anti-Violence Initiatives (AVI)** work closely with survivors of violence to heal, grieve, and find collective strength. As both standalone programming and services embedded throughout our suite of programs, our AVI work takes a holistic approach that provides counselling, case management, capacity building, and group programming supports.

Our AVI work has also played a pivotal role informing and supporting our new shelter project while also working closely with our Access to Justice department. Through new programs, such as workshops focussing on connecting with the body for racialized survivors of sexual trauma workshops and grief healing groups, and ongoing individual supports, our AVI program is central to bringing safety home for our communities.

“

My daughter and I just attended the self-defence class and wanted to say how amazing Chris is as an instructor. As a trans person, my daughter felt like she has some basic skills to help her feel safe. Thanks so much for making this training possible."

– Self-Defence Workshop Participant

221

clients accessed AVI programs

45

volunteers supported our AVI programs

15

workshops and healing groups

CREATING HOME TOGETHER

Drop-In Programs

As some of our longest-serving programs, our Drop-in Programs seek to provide more than just resources and support to community members experiencing deep marginalization and social isolation. We work with participants to create spaces where they can connect with each other, have experiences that might otherwise be out of reach, and develop lasting bonds that continue outside of our programs.

Drop-ins are often community member's first introduction to our programs. As they begin to feel more at home, our staff works to connect them to other internal services that meet their needs or programs that suit their interests.

Meal Trans

Meal Trans is an affirming drop-in program for 2 Spirit people, trans, and non-binary folks. For more than 20 years, we have welcomed community members who are low-income, street-active, experiencing homelessness, and/or engaged in sex work to Meal Trans, where our community members share a hot meal, catch up with each other, and join in low-barrier programming.

In 2022, we celebrated pride with a trans prom and created a Meal Trans yearbook. We worked closely with our Trans People of Colour Project and Breaking The Ice team to provide integrated program support and referrals, and held 45 program sessions with 925 attendees.



Photo: Celebrating at 2SLGBTQ+ Older Adults pride celebration 2022.

2SLGBTBQ+ Older Adults Programming

Our **2SLGBTQ+ Older Adults Program** provides opportunities for community members over the age of 50 to engage with other community members and get resources for support. We were thrilled to expand from one online program at the beginning of 2022 to four weekly programs by mid-year.

Our older adults pride party, hosted by comedian Elvira Kurt, was a program reunion for many participants who had been mostly attending virtually since 2020. We kept that momentum going throughout the year, developing a new program with the Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre to improve technology skills for older adults. We also worked closely with our partners at the City of Toronto Long Term Care Division to co-develop, along with 2SLGBTQ+ older adults, a comprehensive training resource for long-term care workers and management. With program sessions filled with laughter, learning, and field trips around the city, our Older Adults drop-in programs continue to grow and evolve alongside our communities.



1612

visits to older adult programming

925

Visits to Meal Trans

979

visits to Sunday Drop-In

Sunday Drop-In

The **Sunday Drop-In** offers a safe and welcoming space for 2SLGBTQ+ people of all ages who may be experiencing poverty or are under-housed. Each week we offer a range of services and community-driven programming. 2SLGBTQ+ specific resources and referrals are made available to drop-in participants.

In 2022, we held 46 Sunday Drop-In workshops and sessions with 979 participants. We've seen a significant increase in attendance since reopening post-pandemic, from fewer than 10 to nearly 40 people attending regularly.

We have supported community members' skills-building by providing them opportunities to develop and lead workshops, including an improvisation workshop and a dance and movement workshop. This year, we focussed on adding outings and field trips to Sunday Drop-In, including visits to the ROM, Riverdale Farm, and hosting a swim day at Christie Pits Pool, while still providing services that meet folks' immediate needs such as haircuts, ODSP advocacy, skills workshops, and on-site counselling referrals.



Photo: Some of our 2SLGBTQ+ Older Adults program participants have been joining our celebrations for 20+ years.

EXPANDING HOME

Breaking the Ice



Photo: Letters to Meth, a zine created in collaboration with community by the BTI team.

Breaking The Ice (BTI) is a community engagement and outreach program focussed on supporting people who use crystal meth in the Church-Wellesley Village and the broader Downtown East. BTI engages peer leaders with lived experience and engages peers in trainign and capacity building to meaningfully engage 2SLGBTQ+ people who use drugs. These team supports folks via street outreach, through enhanced supports in existing drop-ins, and by running monthly breakout programming tailored to support people in drug using communities.

Growing out of our harm reduction outreach work, we partnered with the Inner City Family Health Team to provide satellite support services with a health promoter from their team at The 519. The partnership has been incredibly positive, bringing additional supports to many of our programs.

This partnership also connected The 519 to an exciting Downtown East Service Team pilot project. This project has brought the addition of case management supports, dedicated harm reduction outreach, participant engagement, and the continuation of the Sherbourne Health Bus as a regular stop that mirrors the drop-in time. Partners have included: Fred Victor, The Works, Sherbourne Health, and LOFT community services. As one of three pilot sites, the project is working with an evaluation team from St. Michael's Hospital to demonstrate the model's impact and support future refinements and investments in this innovative way to bring additional, comprehensive supports to drop-in participants.

4,069

referrals made by the outreach team

5,267

contacts with people who use drugs

1,040

hours of outreach

101

drop-in sessions held with dedicated peer support with 2SLGBTQ+ people who use drugs

Photo: As part of their capacity building initiative, the BTI also conducted training with The 519 staff on harm reduction philosophies and responses, the use of naloxone kits, and more.





Photo: The Vaccine Ambassador team at a vaccination event.



CREATING HEALTHY HOMES

Community Vaccine Engagement

559

COVID-19 vaccines administered

2,626

MPOX vaccines administered

142

flu vaccines administered

8

external pop-up clinics

56

weekly clinics and 16 engagement events

1,150

hours of outreach by vaccine ambassadors

The 519 continued to lead the City of Toronto's Downtown East Vaccine Engagement consortium, working with partners across our neighbourhoods to increase access to COVID-19 vaccines and primary healthcare supports. This work evolved as the year went on with the emergence of MPOX, which disproportionately impacted queer and trans people. Building on our systems and processes for COVID-19, we were able to quickly pivot and to work closely with Toronto Public Health and our partners to get MPOX vaccines to those who need them most.

From hundreds of people getting their MPOX shots at The 519, to clinic days at Toronto Sri Maha Ganpathy Temple, and even a barbeque at Toronto Island for Black Francophone families new to Canada, our vaccine engagement teams worked tirelessly to keep our communities safe and well. Through the dedicated efforts of our vaccine ambassadors and community partners, we have built a strong model for public health engagement that we look forward to continuing to evolve to meet emerging needs over the coming years.



HOME IS WHERE WE LEARN

Education & Training

Our **Education & Training** team provides organizations with the insights, tools, and understanding they need to create environments that are 2SLGBTQ+ inclusive, respectful, and welcoming. As a fee-for-service program, our education and training department increases the capacity of other organizations while generating funds and resources for The 519's programs and services.

This year, we were thrilled to launch our **Pride Speaker Series** during the busy month of June. Through 52 workshops facilitated by Education & Training staff and subject matter experts across The 519, we led passion-driven talks to engage clients in learning more about 2SLGBTQ+ communities. The initiative provided an opportunity for large employers to invite their entire employee base to log into our talks and engage with inspiring 2SLGBTQ+ learning and calls to action for greater community advocacy.

11,200+

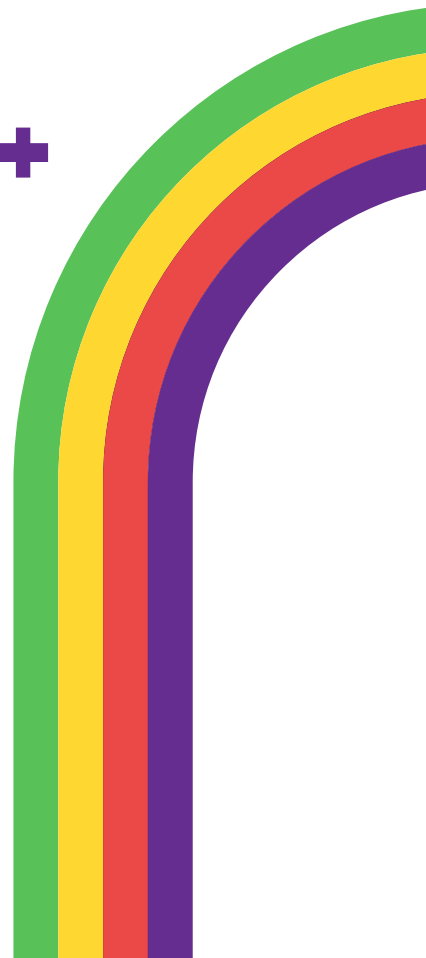
people trained

262

workshops

100+

private and public
sector organizations



BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

Anti-Racism, Equity & Capacity Building



In 2022, we worked to increase our internal capacity and commitment to anti-racism and equity with a focus on combating anti-Black racism. We recognize that anti-racism and equity work is a life-long journey and we commit to centering the voices of Black, Indigenous, racialized and equity-deserving staff and community members.

Through numerous all-day staff workshops and trainings, we centred anti-racism and equity strategies as an anchor of our internal capacity building across the organization, including sessions on Indigenous and 2 Spirit cultural awareness, gender across languages and cultures, harm reduction, confronting ageism, and confronting anti-Black racism. Notably, our Black Collective hosted an incredibly well-received Black Queer Joy panel, our teams hosted a Job Fair for Black community members, and we continued our partnership with the Circle of Cedar Singers who brought 2 Spirit Healing Drumming to Barbara Hall Park from the Spring through until the Fall.

Trans Engagement Strategy (TES)

Our Trans Engagement Strategy (TES), a collective of cross-organizational working groups led by trans and non-binary staff, continued its work guiding our program and service provision focussed on 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary communities. Continuing to build the capacity of all staff to be inclusive and empowering of gender diverse experiences in their work was a key priority of TES, along with building skills related to affirming communication and deepening The 519's understanding of trans-specific resources and organizations across Canada. TES played a leading role in supporting the Trans Day of Remembrance and Trans Day of Visibility.

The Black Collective

The 519 Black Collective was created by Black staff members of The 519 with the mission to confront and advocate against anti-Black racism, as well as to promote equity for all Black people. Meeting monthly, the collective continues to engage Black staff across the organization, grow its membership, while developing and implementing collective workplan.

The Collective stewarded a relationship with the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) unit at the City of Toronto resulting in the development of a unique curriculum for two full days of all-staff training and capacity building.

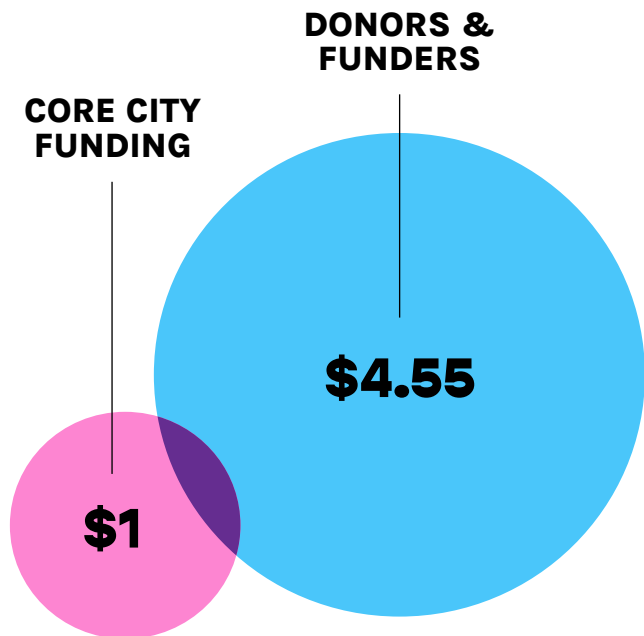
As part of Black History Month, the Collective launched their new logo, designed by Jameel Nehmbard, better known as Legacy. A member of the Collective, Legacy has also been actively involved in Toronto's ballroom community for over 10 years.

Inspired by joy in community, the Black Collective hosted a Black Queer Joy Community Panel which was very successful and featured activists and leaders Tanitiã Munroe, Aina-Nia Ayo'dele, Irvin Washington, Ian McKnight, and Tatiana B. Ferguson. This critical work serves as a reminder that home is where we can be our most authentic self.

Photo: Top row are the Black Queer Joy panellists. Bottom row are members of The 519 Black Collective.



Philanthropy & Financials



For every **\$1** in core City funding, The 519 raised **\$4.55** to support our programs and services in 2022. The support of our donors, funders, partners, and event attendees is vital to the work we do each and every day. Without your generous support, we would be unable to provide the programs and services that help make the world feel a little bit more like home to 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

After an extended break, we were thrilled to bring the Green Space Festival back in 2022. We missed partying for a cause with our communities, and with 40,000+ attendees, local drag legends and international drag and DJ superstars, it felt great to be back, and better than ever. Through the support of our sponsors and attendees, Green Space Festival raised a record amount in support of The 519.



Photo: Performers shoot confetti cannons at Green Space Festival.

Our Donors

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to all the individuals, organizations, and community groups who supported our work in 2022. Their thoughtful donations and involvement, including through our direct appeals and special events such as the Green Space Festival, made a major difference in the lives of the hundreds of people who rely on The 519 every day to provide services and support. This donor list reflects donations received from January 1 to December 31, 2022.

The 519 makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of our donor list. For any inquiries, please email Giving@The519.org

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Financial Summary

Please note that the Financial Summary is unaudited. Audited Financials will be available on our website.

REVENUE			2022	2021
Grants	City of Toronto	Core	1,914,234	\$1,588,148
	City of Toronto	Grants	1,524,820	606,734
	United Way		414,855	378,285
	Government of Canada		1,234,406	941,663
	Others		389,795	150,000
	Province of Ontario		126,250	126,876
			5,604,360	3,867,283
Donations		1,335,120	1,249,062	
Fundraising		1,429,118	623,209	
Café		59,442	-	
Education & Training		232,839	235,252	
Rental fees		3,533	4,285	
Other revenue		2,928	7,674	
Interest		28,147	15,347	
Amortization of deferred capital contributions		13,313	9,805	
TOTAL REVENUE			8,708,801	6,684,151
EXPENSES				
Salaries and wages		3,934,760	3,378,367	
Employee benefits		990,200	871,512	
Purchase of services		2,261,304	1,177,202	
Materials, supplies, and services		1,460,463	551,487	
Amortization of capital assets		28,978	29,842	
TOTAL EXPENSES			8,675,705	6,008,410
NET REVENUE OVER EXPENSES			\$33,096	\$675,741

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The 519 is Canada's most prominent 2SLGBTQ+ community centre and service provider. We are committed to the health, happiness, and full participation of our communities in Toronto, and beyond. Join us in our work!

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The 519 is an agency of the City of Toronto.

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