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YOUR COMMUNITY CENTRE ABOUT THE 519



The 519 is committed to the health, happiness, and full participation of 2SLGBTQ+ communities. A City of Toronto agency and Canada's largest 2SLGBTQ+ organization, we strive to make a real difference in people's lives, while working to advance equity, justice, and community strength. Built by and for 2SLGBTQ+ people, we respond to the needs of our diverse communities in Toronto and beyond. Through direct services and space provision, we build stronger communities. Our programs and community engagement create spaces for people for belonging. Through advocacy and capacity building, we work towards a world that is a more just and equitable place for all.

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.

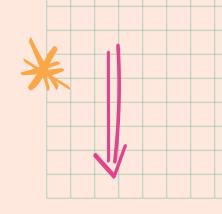
These nations continue to experience ongoing colonization and displacement- where land acknowledgements are offered in place of land itself. This territory is part of 'the Dish with One Spoon' wampum, a Treaty made between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas, and Haudenosaunee, where nations entered into an

agreement to protect the land and responsibly care for its resources in harmony together.

As settlers, newcomers, refugees, and Indigenous peoples, we have all been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect. We are also mindful of broken treaties that persist across Turtle Island today and recognize our responsibilities as Treaty people to engage in a meaningful, continuous process of truth and reconciliation with all our relations.

By being on this land, we are all responsible for upholding its treaties. Treaty agreements were made to last as long as "the sun shines, the grass grows, and rivers flow."

LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP



As we reflect on the past year at The 519, we do so with profound gratitude, humility, pride, and resolve. In a world marked by growing uncertainty and upheaval, our commitment to the dignity, safety, and liberation of 2SLGBTQ+ communities remains steadfast. The theme of this year's report—**Build, Belong, Become**—is not only a reflection of our work but a declaration of our collective values. It is a story of what we stand for, how we act, and where we're going together in community.

2024 brought us no shortage of challenges. Across Canada and beyond, we witnessed intensified attacks on queer and trans rights, regressive shifts in public policy, increased barriers for LGBTQ+ refugees, and an exacerbating cost of living crisis that makes it harder for so many just to get by. These pressures, combined with the deepening lack of affordable housing and the accelerating impacts of climate change, make it clear that the well-being of our communities is under threat on many fronts.

And yet, through all of this, our communities showed up. And so did we.

In 2024, we welcomed thousands of people into our space and programs. We were there at moments of crisis and moments of celebration. Every shared meal, workshop, support group and party strengthened the fabric of community that is so vital to our collective resilience.

We also continued to build the internal capacity we need to sustain this work over the long term. From launching new data systems and investing in technology and infrastructure, we focused this year on sharpening our ability to listen, adapt, measure, advocate, and act. Our commitment to justice, anti-racism, and reconciliation remained central not just in what we deliver but in how we operate. That includes growing our team's capacity through training, fostering stronger partnerships, and ensuring good governance at every level of the organization.

As we look ahead to 2026, the 50th anniversary of The 519, we're not just celebrating a legacy but setting a course for our future. For half a century, The 519 has been the place where 2SLGBTQ+ communities build power, show up for each other, and drive change. That experience gives us a strong foundation. But it's what we do next that matters most.

Our focus in the years ahead is clear: we will deepen our impact through stronger advocacy and policy engagement, evolve our programs to continue to be responsive to community needs, and invest in organizational sustainability so we can meet the momentand whatever comes next—with strength and purpose.

Whether through expanding access to services, opportunities for direct support, or making space for joy, resistance and liberation, we are committed to building communities that don't just survive tough times, but together come out stronger.

This work is only possible because of you: our community members, volunteers, staff, donors, and partners. You are the heart of The 519 and what makes it a place for belonging, a force for change. **Together, we continue to build, belong, and become.**

With gratitude and pride,



Turgum

Tom Spence He/Him, Chair



Mel

Maura Lawless
She/Her, Executive Director

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

VOLUNTEERS

17,747

hours volunteered by 772 volunteers

COMMUNITY

480,000

visits to The 519

63

community-led groups call The 519 home

FROZEN MEALS

2,656

participants

OLDER ADULTS

32%

increase in unique participants

NEW TO CANADA

12,436

clients

LEGAL CLINICS

1,266

clients

EDUCATION

9,576

participants in Education & Training workshops

DROP INS

8,339

total drop-in visits

32%

increase in older adult participants





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The 519 has been part of my life for years. I know I'll always run into a friend or find something new to do."

- Richard, Older Adult Participant

BUILD

To build is to strengthen, to make something lasting. When we support a child we build happier, more resilient families. When we build spaces where people feel seen, supported, and able to thrive, we build community. When we build with our neighbours, connections deepen, and friends turn into chosen family.



OUR PROGRAMS

- Adopting as a 2SLGBTQ+ Parent
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Art Making for Black Wellbeing
- Back to School Bash
- Binder and Bra Drive
- Catering by The 519
- City Hall 101 with Progress Toronto
- Clothing Swap with The Good Swap TO
- Healthcare Consent Rights Workshop
- COVID-19 and Flu Vaccine Clinic
- Crystal Meth Anonymous
- Debtors Anonymous
- Donation Drive for LGBTQ+ Refugees
- Economic Resilience Project (ERP)
- Emergency Preparedness
- English as a Second Language (ESL) Classes
- Gender Affirming Care Legal Support Clinic
- Hassle Free Clinic
- Health Justice Hub
- Intersessions Music Production Workshop
- Introduction to Sexual & Reproductive Health
- Love in Action Intake Support Day for LGBTQ+ Refugees
- March for LGBTQ+ Refugee Rights

- Community-led
- Event
- ProgramTraining
- Mpox Vax Clinic
- Narcotics Anonymous
- OA Promises Meeting
- Paid ID Clinic
- QTPOC Kung Fu with Sze Yang Ade Lam
- Ready Set Pride Harm Reduction Workshop
- Sasha Hashi Bursary
- Self-Defense Workshops
- Sexual Compusive Anonymous (SCA)
- SMART Recovery
- Speaking at a Government Committee
- Street Eats
- StreetARToronto Paint With Pride
- Supporting Someone with an Eating Disorder
- The 519 Annual Gala
- The 519 Legal Clinic
- The 519 Mock Hearing Program
- The Kyle Scanlon Memorial Fund
- Toronto Queer Market
- Trans ID Guided Self-Help Program
- Trans Youth Newcomers Info Session with OCASI
- Volunteer Appreciation Event
- Will Munro Fund
- Workshop Wednesdays



BUILD COMMUNITY

At The 519, we are committed to building up our communities in empowering and meaningful ways. Whether someone is updating their gender marker on their ID or learning self-defense to feel safer on the street, we want every person who comes through our doors to feel appreciated and able to take on whatever comes next.

For generations, 2SLGBTQ+ people have had to show up for one another in the face of systems that were not designed with us in mind. Shared solidarity isn't just part of our history. It's at the heart of our work today, and continues to guide how we build the future we want with our communities.

We see this in action every day, starting in our lobby. Launched in 2024, The 519's **Community Wellbeing Team (CWBT)** is committed to building inclusion and support. As the first point of contact for those entering The 519, the team connects people to vital services, offering guidance and building relationships through community development and engagement. With low-barrier programs, harm reduction outreach, and crisis prevention, CWBT also supports people experiencing homelessness, substance use challenges, and mental health crises. Paired with our **Meal Programs**, which served **64,819 meals** in 2024, we strive to make sure that everyone who enters our program feels well taken care of.

Our operations team hosted and supported **63 community-led groups**, including **7 new ones in 2024**, helping meet the diverse and evolving needs of our communities. From choirs to addictions support groups, advocacy organizations to still life drawing, we're proud that so many organizations call The 519 home. Additionally, we provided **6,175 information referrals** to other services either offered in-house or by partner organizations.

120

organizations booked space in 2024



66

"We selected The 519 as the home base for Tempo's rehearsal space because it is such an important part of our community. It provides space for organizations like ours who don't have a lot of financial resources to pay for expensive rehearsal space."

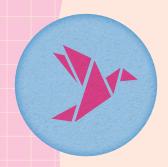
- Howie Dayton, Co-Founder of Tempo, Toronto's 2SLGBTQ+ Tenor-Bass Choir



MPACT STORY

ONE AMONG US

Their memorial page starts with a quote, "Death is not the end of life, but oblivion is." The group, called **One Among Us**, serves East-Asian trans communities. Discrimination against trans people causes many to face higher levels of violence and difficulties with mental health than their cisgender counterparts. One Among Us started as a page to memorialize East-Asian trans community members who have passed on.



When director and co-founder Yvette Wu moved to Toronto from China in 2022 to do her PhD, she expanded the group's webpage into an online support group, filled with illustrated avatars representing members.

"Many of us live on the internet because we don't know other trans people, or people we share common interests with in real life," Yvette says. "Someone who is just beginning to transition might find it easier to identify with animated images. It's not about anonymity. These online identities can feel more safe and like your true self."

Yvette found The 519 in her search for local organizations with affirming resources. As she also found more East-Asian trans friends in Toronto, she decided to create an in-person component of One Among Us. One of the newest community-led groups to call The 519 home, it started with an evening of musical expression to observe the Trans Day of Remembrance (TDoR) and has since become a monthly support group.

Group members enjoy activities like crafts, calligraphy, and socializing. They share resources to help each other get coverage for gender-affirming care or find supportive doctors. "We try to keep our connections online as well because we don't want to exclude those who don't have an in-person presence, although some have started online then moved to Toronto once they knew they'd have a welcoming community here!" Yvette says.



"I've made friends here.

Many of us hide among
people, but when you find
others who share your
experiences you can build a
community that helps each
other. It's been so helpful."

- Yvette Wu, One Among Us Participant



BUILD SUPPORT



Two Spirit, queer, and trans people have long demonstrated what it means to show up for each other. From people attending a community meeting about a new condo development that will alter the state of the neighbourhood, to seniors getting together for their weekly card game, to someone picking up harm reduction supplies, people show up from all over the world at The 519 for many different reasons. We often meet people during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. Their needs range from physical well-being and social connection, to support in navigating the complexity of government bureaucracy.

Through our **Health Justice Programs** – which combine access to essential medical care with social opportunities, skill building workshops, and access to legal advice – we provided primary care to over **325 people**, while also creating spaces for people to come together and talk about issues in their local communities – from Dungeons & Dragons to art programs as means to enhance health and create spaces for discussion. We've been able to achieve and expand this work through resourceful collaborations with over **15 partners** across the city.

We continue to respond to Toronto's ongoing housing crisis by supporting people in finding and keeping safe, stable housing. **Pacewood**, a shelter that, in partnership with Homes First Society, serves LGBTQ+ adults who are in Canada through refugee pathways, provided shelter for **39 people** in 2024. Beyond housing, we worked with residents to build opportunities for connection, joy, and self-determination through **59 workshops and program sessions** for residents, including day trips, employment readiness sessions, and a Pride BBQ.

Toronto's housing crisis touches the lives of so many in our community. Our broader housing team supported **33 people** transitioning out of homelessness to remain housed. Acting as trusted coaches and advocates, we helped clients understand their rights and responsibilities, assisted them with accessing furniture, food, and health care, managing their bills, and resolving issues with their landlords.

When LGBTQ+ refugees arrive in Canada seeking safety and a fresh start, they often face complex systems and unfamiliar challenges. At The 519, we ensure they don't have to navigate that journey by themselves. Our **New to Canada** team provides compassionate, comprehensive support through every step of the settlement process, helping people not only find safety but begin to build a new life with dignity and hope. In 2024, we supported over **12,500 newcomers**, underscoring the urgent and growing need for responsive, affirming services.

We also relaunched **Breakthrough**, a program designed for and by refugee claimants, where people connect, heal, and find joy while on their settlement journey. Through activities like pumpkin carving, beach days, and **Newcomers' Got Talent**, participants were reminded that they deserve more than survival: they deserve to thrive.

40,229

visits to Among Friends

456

vaccinations provided





"My time at Pacewood has given me the fresh start I needed. Getting support to get housing has been life changing. But I've also loved getting to know Toronto through trips to the AGO, the cherry blossoms at High Park, and other great places."

- Pacewood resident

THE 519 LEGAL CLINIC

At The 519, building means taking daily steps to support people in every aspect of their lives – physically, mentally, emotionally, economically, and through legal tools. It means making sure people have nutritious food, knowledge to overcome obstacles, and tools to reclaim their agency.

When Leila came to The 519, they weren't just looking for help with legal paperwork; they were looking for someone who could help them navigate a system that felt overwhelming. Like many 2 Spirit, queer, and trans people, Leila didn't have family they could turn to for guidance. They were dealing with multiple barriers: outdated ID, legal hurdles, and the weight of facing these challenges alone.

That's where **The 519's Legal Clinic** makes all the difference. In 2024, our **Access to Justice** programming supported **2,517 people** through public legal education and offering summary guidance and support on issues like housing, human rights complaints, family law, and wills and estates. Our **Trans ID Clinic** was a key resource for **153 people**, helping them update their legal identification to reflect their gender, helping them move through the world with greater safety and dignity.

Our **Immigration and Settlement Legal Clinic** supported **197 newcomers**, guiding them through an often overwhelming process and ensuring they can start their new lives with clarity and support.

In 2024, we expanded our services with the launch of our **Case Support Program**, an intensive, one-on-one case management and system navigation for **44 community members** involved in criminal and family law matters. Whether it's understanding court procedures, advocating for rights, or simply knowing what questions to ask, we're here to help. Additionally, our Legal Clinic helped **184 clients** navigate housing issues.

Beyond legal support, we also offered resources for personal safety and empowerment: **222 people** participated in monthly **Self-Defense** workshops, and **64 participants** joined **BIPOC Kung-Fu**, designed specifically for their experiences.

For Leila and others, our legal clinics provide more than advice – they provide the confidence and security to move forward in life. At The 519, we're committed to ensuring no one has to face these challenges alone.



"My ID change for my gender marker was complicated, as I didn't grow up in Canada. I couldn't imagine getting to this point without the help of the Trans ID Clinic."

volunteers provided 2,484 hours of legal support

- Leila, Trans ID Clinic Participant

BUILD RESILIENCE



Our communities show incredible resilience in the face of adversity. With a little bit of help, they can meet even the toughest challenges. Our **Pay It No Mind Fund** is focused on addressing priority needs within racialized 2 Spirit, trans, and non-binary communities, with recipients typically using the fund to pay for essentials like rent, mental health support, food, and clothing. Last year the fund directly supported **62 people** in meeting their basic needs.

Through the **Kyle Scanlon Fund**, we supported three important initiatives benefitting trans communities: the Gender-Affirming Healthcare Legal Initiative, the Gender Affirming Project (The GAP) addressing barriers in trans folks' access to gender-affirming apparel, and Trans Wellness Ontario. Similarly, the **Will Munro Fund** provided financial assistance to **35 2SLGBTQ+ Ontarians living with cancer**, and the **Sasha Hashi Bursary**, through Toronto Metropolitan University was awarded to two students, continuing our commitment to uplifting future BIPOC leaders in our communities.

LOVEWINS

66

"It's hard to put into words just how important it is to have a meal with people of shared experience. A lot of times, our members come with empty stomachs and a lot of weight on their shoulders. Clients have shared that they come to the group not just because of food insecurity, but also for a feeling of connection."

- Member of Trans-Femme Peer Group, Kyle Scanlon Fund recipient



BELONG

Belonging is a fundamental part of the human experience. When we belong, we feel seen, valued, and connected. When people have the resources to focus on things other than survival, belonging becomes truly possible.

Program

Training

OUR PROGRAMS

- 2 Spirit Healing Drumming
- 2SLGBTQ+ Comedy
 Workshop with Sam Sferrazza
- 2SLGBTQ+ Family Pride
- 2SLGBTQ+ Youth Pride
- 2SQTBIPOC Book Club
- Annual Sports Day
- AIDS Memorial Consultation
- Any Other Way: The Jackie Shane Story Screening
- Backside to the Drawing Board
- Be Gay Roll Dice
- Bi+ Women of Toronto
- Books & Brunch withSalah Bachir
- CANFAR Record Breaking Ribbon Making
- Community Yoga
- Counterpoint Community Orchestra
- D&D Night with Friends of Ruby
- Dignity Toronto Dignite
- Diwali CommunityCelebration
- Drag Makeup with Makayla Couture
- Drag Me to the Movies
- Drop-in Pride BBQ
- EarlyON Halloween Parade
- Every Baby Counts
- F.L.O.W. Drop in
- Frontrunners Toronto

- FTM, Transmasc, Non-Binary Support Group
- Gay Fathers of Toronto
- Gratitude Round Up
- Green Space Festival
- Halloween Hullabaloo for 2SLGBTQ+ Families
- Hands On ASL
- Holiday Ornament Making
- Holigay Sip and Shop with Toronto Queer Market
- House of Anna Wintour
- House of Louboutin
- House of Mulan
- House of Old Navy
- House of Poseida
- House of Versace
- Justice Ball: Kiki
- Kids Action and Arts Space
- Kiki House of Imperium
- Kiki Ballroom House of Constantine
- Kwentong Bayan Collective
- Latina Group Hola
- Latino Canadian Cultural Association
- LGBTQ+ International Students Day
- LGBTQ+ Refugee Pride
- LGBTQ2S Line Dancers
- Local Social
- Love = Family for2SLGBTQ+ Families
- Meet Your Neighbours Brunch

Mindful Crochet

Community-led

Event

- Mindfulness Meditation with Shelley Simester
- Multiculture & Folk Arts
 Association of Canada
- New to Canada Holiday
 Celebration
- Nowruz Celebration
- One Among Us
- Ontario Chinese Seniors
- Out and Out Club
- Polyamorous Living in Toronto
- Pride BBQ at Pacewood
- Pride Parade Newcomer Youth
- Prime Timers
- Prixm Housewerk
- QTBIPOC Body Movement Workshop
- QTBIPOC Weaving Workshop
- Queer Brazilian Townhall
- Queer-o-Ween
- Racialized Trans Collective
- Rainbow Ballroom Toronto
- Regent Park Community Yoga
- Selfies with Fashion Santa
- Singing Out
- Solar Eclipse of the Heart
- Spill the Tea!
- Strong Towns Toronto
- Tai Chi Wednesdays
- The Black Collective screening of 'Visible'

- Trans Day of Remembrance (TDoR)
- TDoR Public Art Making Session
- Teddy Bear Picnic
- Teen Drop-in with Gardiner
 Museum
- Tempo Chorus
- The Humanist Association of Toronto (HAT)
- The Marginalized Majority Collective
- Toronto Aces & Aros
- Toronto AIDS Candlelight Vigil
- Toronto Bi+ Network
- Toronto Gay/Bi Men Line Dancers
- Toronto Go Club
- Toronto Gratitude
- Trans People of Colour Project
- Trans Pride
- Trans Youth Mentorship Program
- Trans Youth Socials
- Triangle Squares
- Vinyl Record Swap
- What Songs Did They Sing?
- Winter Wonderful with EarlyON
- Winter Wonderland
- Youth Action Arts Space
- Zumba Wednesdays

BELONG WITH FRIENDS

No one understands the feeling of not fitting in better than 2SLGBTQ+ people, which is why we've always been drawn to building chosen family with those who understand us. The affirmation that comes from connecting in shared spaces is powerful. Through community programs like Programming for LGBTQ+ Brazilians and the Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC), participants find that sense of belonging. In 2024, 104 people joined our Brazilian Town Hall to celebrate shared culture, food, and stories. 295 people took part in TPOC, a peer-led group where racialized trans folks gather to eat, connect, and learn. In both spaces – and so many others – community members found room to simply be themselves, no explanation required.

In a time when 2 Spirit, trans, non-binary, and gender-diverse youth face increasing political and legal attacks, The 519 continues to offer spaces for connection through our **Trans Youth Mentorship Program (TYMP)**. The program helps youth build confidence and belonging while addressing the economic barriers many trans people face. It offers job readiness support, food, social connection, and referrals to vital services. In 2024, TYMP had **387 visits**, each one a step toward safety, empowerment, and possibility.

We've always believed in the value of peer spaces grounded in shared experience and solidarity. The 519 facilitates a number of groups and drop-ins that reflect this commitment. Our **S&M Support Group**, focused on self-determined wellness in relation to substance use and mental health, saw **609 visits** in 2024. **Meal Trans**, launched in 1998 as our first program for and by trans people, continues to be a vital, affirming space where lower-income, street-active, homeless, and sex-working trans and gender-diverse people can gather, share a meal, and build connection. In 2024, the program saw **1,353 visits**.

Some who access The 519 face overlapping challenges like homelessness, mental health concerns, and substance use issues. In 1977, The 519 passed a landmark resolution recognizing the rights of unhoused neighbours to access the centre – an inclusive principle that still guides us today. Our long-running **Sunday Drop-In** program saw nearly **3,000 visits** in 2024, where people accessed hot meals, programming, service referrals, and community. Our **Morning Coffee Program** had **643 visits**, providing breakfast, harm reduction education, and access to nursing care. These programs are just a few of the ways we show up for those most affected by the housing and drug poisoning crises.



REMEMBERING JAKE

Early this year, we lost Jake English, a beloved, long-time volunteer who gave so much of himself to 2SLGBTQ+ communities and to The 519. In honour of his life and impact, we sat down with his loved ones, Peter and Jack, to reflect on the legacy he leaves behind.

Peter Lomax moved from Victoria to Toronto in 1997, thinking he was coming east to die. Living with HIV, and having already lost his partner and many friends, Peter believed his time was running out. But that journey brought him something unexpected: a second chance at love, life, and connection.

Jake English, also living with HIV, had met Peter the year before. The two quickly formed a deep bond, and Jake invited Peter to move in with him in Toronto. "Our relationship was built on care," Peter recalls. "Jake welcomed me with open arms and took care of me."

In Toronto, things shifted. Jake introduced Peter to his doctor, dentist, and to The 519. There, Peter found tai chi, community, and access to the support he couldn't find back home. "In Victoria, I had to fight for every service. Here, I could live with dignity."

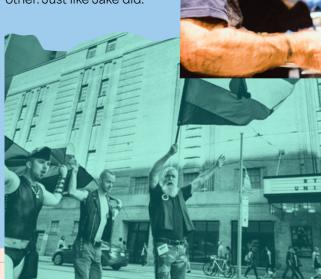
Jake's own relationship with The 519 ran deep. He began as a Centre Host, offering a warm welcome to everyone who walked through the doors. Over the years, he volunteered with Meal Trans, our Frozen Meals and Food Security Programs, and became a familiar face throughout the building – especially to those picking up meals, even after closing time. He never sought recognition for his efforts. "I only recently found out Jake had been delivering frozen meals to a neighbour who uses a wheelchair for years," Peter shared. "He never told anyone. That was just who he was."

Outside of The 519, Jake was also well-known and celebrated in the local and international leather community. Jake became the first bootblack to ever hold a bar-level title, Mr. Spearhead Bootblack 2010, and went on to win the Bootblack Toronto title in 2011. Jake selected The 519 as the charity of choice for the year, and continued to actively fundraise and volunteer with The 519.

Later in life, Jake fell in love again – with Jack Pearce, a close friend to both him and Peter. "He showed up on my doorstep with a half-wilted rose," Jack laughs. "This big, leather-clad guy, full of heart. We spent over 10 years together."

Jake lived in service to others. He remembered people's names and looked out for those otherwise overlooked. "The 519 was his favourite place," Peter says. "Sure, he rolled his eyes about things sometimes – but this was his home. And you folks tolerated him too!" he adds with a wink.

Jake saw people for who they were, and in doing so, made space for others to belong. His love for The 519 and our communities lives on – in memories, in laughter, and in the quiet ways we continue to care for each other. Just like Jake did.





VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

\$4.5 M in returns saved by 1,268 Tax Clinic clients

In 2024, **772 volunteers** of all ages and backgrounds contributed over 17,747 hours to support 2SLGBTQ+ communities and neighbours in the Village. Of those, 534 were new to The 519 or their roles. Our Tax Clinic remains a vital service, powered by 24 volunteers who gave over 1,620 hours of their time,

Volunteers also supported our **EarlyON** and food programming. Over 50 volunteers prepped and froze meals for 2,097 hours, while 14 volunteers contributed 796 hours to EarlyON and Glitterbug. The Green Space Festival was powered by 361 volunteers, helping raise funds that support our work year-round.

Our volunteers are at the heart of all we do. They are truly champions and partners helping us bolster the impact of our everyday work. Thank you!



BELONG IN SPACES

Having fun is an essential part of belonging. We're working to create spaces where 2SLGBTQ+ communities can connect through joy and creativity, and learn a thing or two while they're at it. For the first time, we held a Justice Ball celebrating Toronto's ballroom scene while raising awareness about key community issues. This included being able to provide micro grants to various participating houses.

Keeping the fun going, we hosted many vibrant events like Drag Make-up Classes with Canada's Drag Race star Makayla Couture, a Stand-up Comedy workshops with local comic Sam Sferrazza, and electronic music production lessons with Intersessions, a space for women and gender non-conforming artists run by dance music star Chippy Nonstop. Over 100 attendees joined us to learn, laugh, and celebrate.

This year, we began new projects centering the stories of our community members, building a sense of belonging through sharing the moments and memories that make us who we are. Each Other's Magnitude, is a series of arts-based storytelling workshops spanning poetry, body movement, film screenings, and intergenerational storytelling sessions

focused on creating space for BIPOC 2SLGBTQ+ people to come together and explore their stories. We also launched the consultation process for our AIDS Memorial Storytelling Project, which is working with the loved ones of individuals memorialized on Toronto's AIDS Memorial to tell the stories behind their names.

Sports play a significant role in many people's lives, but 2SLGBTQ+ people have faced increasing discrimination in sports, with our right to participate often questioned. That's why our annual **Sports Day** – a collaboration with Hart House – is so important. Last year, nearly 300 people from all our programs came together to enjoy a day of friendly competition. Our Yoga and Tai Chi classes saw 300 and 86 visits respectively, offering community members a space to unwind and reconnect. We believe that 2SLGBTQ+ people belong on the field, the ice, in the locker room, and everywhere else.

attendees at the annual **AIDS Candlelight Vigil**

Sports Day Participants

BELONG WITH (CHOSEN) FAMILY

Many 2SLGBTQ+ people face challenging childhoods marked by shame and exposure to harmful beliefs about their identities. Our **EarlyON** and **Child and Youth programs** actively work to break this cycle by offering affirming early childhood education, music, story time, and moments of belonging for 2SLGBTQ+ families and their allies. Last year, our EarlyON center saw **6,855 visits** from **243 unique families**. These programs help children grow up learning that they belong, that love makes a family, and that kindness benefits everyone.

Our Kids Action and Arts Space (KAAS) and Youth Action and Arts Space (YAAS) programs provide vital support for 2 Spirit, queer, and trans youth. Youth are facing unprecedented attacks online and in politics, and many also experience bullying at school. KAAS and YAAS offer invaluable support, helping youth with their mental health and sense of self. In 2024, KAAS had 262 visits, while YAAS saw 399. As always, we kicked off the school year with our annual Back to School Bash, where almost 500 kids and families got school supplies, back-to-school haircuts, and more.

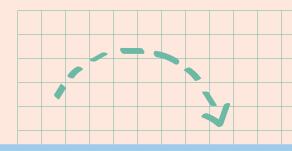
Parenting can be tough, and new parents often feel isolated, especially with a young infant. Our **Every Baby Counts** program provides a support group for caregivers of infants up to 12 months old. Participants discuss infant development, family resources, and inclusive parenting, while also building connections with others in similar situations. Last year, Every Baby Counts saw **275 visits** over **42 sessions**, offering both support and a space for connection.

Older adults, especially those in 2SLGBTQ+ communities, also need spaces where they can feel a sense of belonging. As we age, many in our community find ourselves in situations where we have to navigate care from unaffirming caregivers and institutions. Our **Older Adults Program** offers a vital lifeline, providing educational, recreational, and social programs to ensure 2SLGBTQ+ seniors continue to thrive in supportive, affirming spaces. Last year, the program had **4,019 visits** and welcomed **191 new participants**.

Some of the best community support is found when we come together to champion belonging through shared activism. Events like our annual **Trans Day of Remembrance** allow us to grieve loss together. They're also spaces where people express themselves through art, poetry, music, and more that speaks to both their pain and joy. Last year **370 people** attended our TDoR commemoration.

983

families received free groceries



66

"When my non-binary child joined the KAAS program, they were just 9 years old. This was right after COVID-19, and we had spent the previous couple of years in isolation. They were craving connection, fun, and a chance to be part of something. The KAAS program gave them all that and so much more."

- Nicole M, parent of a KAAS participant



"The 519 has given me a new sense of community in this chapter of my life. The programming is interesting, helpful, and fun, whether we are at The 519, with a guest speaker, or on an excursion. The 519 continues to be a source of hope and happiness for me, whatever else may be going on. Thank you for being there, with humour and compassion."

- A.B., Older Adults Program participant



BECOME

2SLGBTQ+ people have always imagined, and demanded, a world where we can live fully, safely, and with dignity. But in this moment of rising hate, that vision is under threat.

Now more than ever, we must urgently create spaces where our communities are affirmed and protected.

These spaces aren't a luxury, they're a lifeline. When people are safe and valued, they don't just survive. They give back, organize, and take on the broader injustices facing our communities.



OUR PROGRAMS

- Annual General Meeting
- Annual Strawberry Ceremony for MMIWG2S
- Becoming a 2SLGBTQ+ Foster Parent
- Church Wellesley BIA
- Clean Toronto Together
- Community One Foundation
- Education and Training Fall Speaker Speaker
- Education and Training Pride Speaker Series
- Extra Credit: The fight for 2SLGBTQ+ dignity in Canadian schools
- Fostering 2SLGBTQ+ Environments at Work and Home
- Grassy Narrows River Run

- Community-led
- Event
- Training
- International Day of Older Persons
- International Harm Reduction Day
- International Overdose Awareness Day
- Leading & Learning With Pride: New Horizons for Rainbow Seniors Resource Launch
- Moss Park Spring Community Information Fair
- Neighbourhood Development Consultations
- Parental Leave for 2SLGBTQ+ Staff
- Prisoner's Justice Day
- Queer Resilience and Climate Justice
- Queer Ontario
- Save Safe Consumption Sites Protest
- Senior Pride Network Toronto
- TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon

BECOME STRONGER

As anti-2SLGBTQ+ rhetoric gains ground in political discourse and public policy, The 519 continues to be on the frontlines, shutting down hate with solidarity and organized resistance. From bans on pride flags in schools to the devastating rollback of 2SLGBTQ+ rights in the United States, we are witnessing a coordinated effort to erase 2 Spirit, queer, and trans lives – and we refuse to let that happen on our watch.

That spirit was at the heart of **Love in Action**, an extraordinary day early in 2024 when The 519 paused all regular programming to process **over 1,000 refugee support applications** in a single day. The need is urgent and growing. That's why we also organized the **LGBTQ+ Refugee Rights March**, where community members came together to demand more from governments to protect those fleeing persecution. Over 65 countries still criminalize LGBTQ+ identities, and Canada has a duty to keep vulnerable people safe from hate.

As systemic failures continue to affect our communities, The 519's Community Wellbeing Team responded by supporting powerful demonstrations throughout the year. On Prisoner's Justice Day, 100 people gathered to call attention to inhumane conditions in the criminal justice system. For Overdose Awareness Day, 200 people rallied in Barbara Hall Park as speakers shared stories of survival and strength amid a worsening opioid toxicity crisis. We also hosted a candlelight vigil with Maggie's Toronto, where participants came together to honour the International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers.

WE'RE HERE WE'RE QUEER

3,500 attendees at The 519-led March for LGBTQ+ Refugees



BECOME BETTER



Education remains one of our most powerful tools for change. For over a decade, The 519's Education and Training team has helped organizations build lasting inclusion for 2 Spirit, queer, and trans people in workplaces, classrooms, and communities. "We've seen a real commitment to making inclusion a regular, ongoing part of organizational culture," says Ash McGhee "That shift has galvanized people to take this learning into their teams and leadership."

In 2024, the team saw a 37% increase in participation from 2023. Our Pride Speaker Series offered quick, impactful learning on topics like trans inclusion in sports, queer Arab identities, and training for professional communicators, reaching 4,405 participants - a 50% increase from the previous year. Our Housing Support Services team trained 784 professionals through 69 sessions and over 5,880 hours of education to strengthen inclusion across the housing sector.

We also reached beyond adult learners. Our EarlyON team brought 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion to children's programming through the Glitterbug initiative, which visited 25 EarlyON centres across Toronto, engaging 2,693 participants. For many 2SLGBTQ+ adults, this kind of affirming presence would have made all the difference growing up. Now, we're making sure the next generation gets the support we needed.

In an era shaped by a housing crisis, we also helped renters understand their rights through our Housing Rights and Tenant Organizing workshops, which reached 65 participants. Empowering neighbours with this knowledge helps protect housing security and prevents displacement.

As the global climate crisis intensifies, The 519 launched new work exploring the compounding impacts of climate change. 2SLGBTQ+ people are more likely to navigate poverty, health issues, and systemic exclusion. Climate emergencies and disasters only deepen these challenges. Our report, Framing Queer Resilience and Climate Justice marked the beginning of broader conversations with partners and experts across North America. We're working toward a future where 2SLGBTQ+ people not only survive disruption, but we're actively considered in emergency planning.

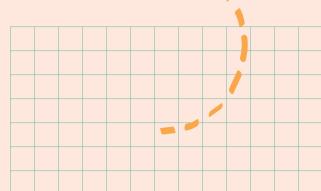
people participanted people participanted in 258 Education and training workshops



"This training should be mandatory across the social services sector. The world would be a better place if we all learned a thing or two."

- Participant, Housing Sector







PROGRAM SPOTLICHT

NEW TO CANADA

Being in a space that's fully queer was totally new to me," says Danika, a volunteer and former participant of our New to Canada program. "Back home I knew people here and there who were queer, but it would have been a secret."

Danika came to Canada from Barbados in January 2023 and sought the services of The 519 to help with her refugee status claim. She's since found work and thankfully her process with her immigration lawyers has been smooth.

"We took part in Walk with Pride last year, which was my first time walking in the Pride Parade," she says. "I had such a beautiful time. The vibes are immaculate, I usually drum back home at Carnival, and Pride gave me that same uplifting feeling."

In 2024 Danika volunteered at Green Space Festival's Starry Night. "Back home I wasn't active in the community because it wasn't safe, but now I feel more comfortable where I am, and confident with who I am," Danika says. "I should be able to put that energy back out there."

"My partner and I decided that every year we are going to volunteer at The 519, even just for a day or two," Danika says. "They've been so helpful. It feels like community, and that's important to me now."

This is the cycle of growth: Build people up to get through tough things like settlement, housing issues, or school bullying, and they find belonging. They then turn around and nurture those around them, who can become the loving community they're meant to be. Build, belong, become.

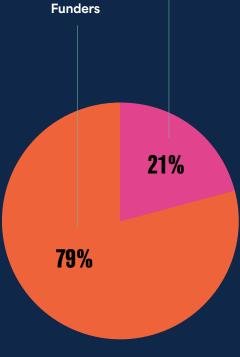


PHILANTHROPY

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Philanthropy powers our everyday work. It's your support that enables us to expand our programs and work with more community members. It allows us to offer vital services, feed hungry people, create safe spaces, and advocate for a more inclusive world. Through your generous support, we are able to continually respond to the evolving needs of 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

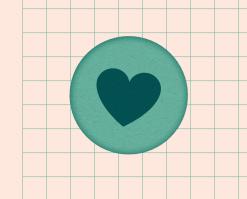
Our Green Space Festival is a joyful Pride celebration, bringing people together to connect with each other, with 55,000 attendees in 2024. We are eternally grateful to our honourary patron Salah J. Bachir, C.M., O.ONT., for hosting our Annual Gala, a key fundraising event that fuels our mission to support and uplift our communities.



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None of this work would be possible without the generosity of our supporters. We're grateful to the individuals, organizations, and partners who help power our work in 2024, and made our mission a reality.

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	City of Toronto	Grants	1,341,380	1,231,046
	United Way		532,472	463,910
	Government of Cana	ada	990,867	1,174,527
	Others		615,550	774,007
	Province of Ontario		479,088	80,000
	Total Grants Revenu	е	6,462,643	5,968,432
Donations			2,071,522	1,883,475
Fundraising			2,469,814	2,004,918
Catering			71,528	22,111
Education & Training			261,423	247,191
Rental fees			43,790	43,285
Other revenue			86,108	13,206
Interest			120,613	103,147
Amortization of deferred capital contributions			13,314	13,313
TOTAL REVENUE:			11,600,755	10,298,078
EXPENSES				
Salaries and wages			5,238,738	4,527,259
Employee benefits			1,385,546	1,203,877
Purchase of services			3,254,862	2,932,697
Materials, supplies, and service	es		1,520,569	1,471,418
Amortization of capital assets			25,395	28,977
TOTAL EXPENSES:			11,425,110 _°	10,164,228 ₃
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NET REVENUE OVER E	XPENSES		\$ 175,645	\$ 133,850

2024

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