



18th Annual Walk the Walk for The Compass

Summer is almost done, and our Compass Core Walk Team has been hard at work on our 18th Annual Walk The Walk For The Compass Food Bank & Outreach Centre. The best part of our annual fundraiser is you, your family, and friends. It's the community that will gather on the morning of Saturday, September 21st to walk, run or bicycle together to raise money for our neighbours experiencing food insecurity and homelessness. Last year's event raised the most money ever - \$164,000 that was used to purchase healthy and nutritious food. With humble hearts, we thank you.

This year our lead Event Sponsor is Southdown Dental located in Clarkson. We have returning sponsors, too, such as HF Sinclair, Khatambakhsh Real Estate Team, Tile Solutions, AtlasCare Heating, Cooling, Plumbing and Electrical, Anuja Pereira – Seamless Rightsizing, and Alpha Marketing International. 'Twas The Bite Before Christmas asked to join our list of sponsors and we heartily agreed.

There are still TWO sponsorships available if you know of a business that may be interested, and the cost of sponsorship is small.

We're looking forward to bringing this wonderful community together again to walk together, enjoy our free BBQ and ice cream truck, play games, listen to awesome music, and take part in our fantastic Kids Zone. We'll have an online auction that will run from September 17 - 19th, so successful bidders can pick their prizes up at The Walk.

Our fundraising goal this year is \$140,000 and registration is open. You can choose between beautiful tree-lined routes that are either 1km, 6km or 10km. If you're not available on the day of the event, that's okay – you can participate virtually any other day before September 21st. Register here: www.thecompass.ca/walk. A welcome kit with t-shirt is included and there's no fee to register. And while you register, remember everything is more fun with friends and family involved – why not create a team?



18th Annual Walk The Walk for The Compass Food Bank

September 21st, 2024

Start Time 8:30 am

Location: Church of St. Mark - Lutheran
130 Mineola Road East, Mississauga



Scan QR
Code to
Register



Fighting Hunger One Step at a Time!

The Compass Food Bank

427 Lakeshore Rd East,
Mississauga ON L5G 1H8
905-274-9309
info@thecompass.ca

Food Bank Hours

Monday 9:30 am – 7 pm
Wednesday 9:30 am – 5 pm
Friday 9:30 am – 5 pm



A Special Thank You to our Summer Team!

Every year The Compass gets funding through Canada Summer Jobs to bring on some extra summer help. We are always so excited to welcome our youth hires every summer, and so sad to see them depart at the end of August. It's a great learning experience for them, and so important to The Compass to help us run programs like our weekly BBQ, Back to School, the Walk and more. Summers are a time of many holidays, so it's such a help to have the extra support May - August.

Sarah Bruce - Volunteer Management & Food Bank Operations Assistant

What did you enjoy about your role? I enjoyed working with everyone in the office; it is a warm and welcoming environment. Another thing I enjoyed was learning about all of the volunteer positions, how they operate and integrate to make The Compass as efficient as possible. Additionally, I loved taking on new projects and learning new skills along the way, such as developing Health and Safety procedures, creating a TV display for the community room, updating training documents for volunteers, and taking on the Back-to-School project for clients!

What was a new learning for you in your role? It is hard to just pick one! I think the biggest things that stood out for me this summer were using spreadsheets to organize information, using some components of project management to complete my tasks, and utilizing training documents to gain a better understanding of what is involved in documentation management.



Jeffrey Chen - Warehouse Assistant

What did you enjoy about your role? The people. Although, I can't deny that The Compass facilities are outstanding, I can't help but think of the adage "It's the people that make the place." Back in the warehouse and the market, I have had the pleasure of working with some of the most genuine and generous people. I have also had the pleasure of working with a variety of new faces who chip in whatever time they can offer, to give The Compass the support it needs to keep healthy and afloat.

What did you learn?

I think what I learned the most from this job is direct and indirect leadership. The Compass boasts volunteers with a huge range of experiences. Some have been unwavering and loyal volunteers for years, and others are fresh and just discovering all the ways they can contribute to The Compass. For long-standing volunteers, I learned how to trust them to do what they do best and simply be there to provide them with all the support. For those who were new, I learned how to provide the guidance they needed to contribute to what can be a daunting set of daily processes, but also empower them to share their knowledge with each other.



Christina Taptelis - Fundraising and Communication Assistant

What did you enjoy about your role?

What I have enjoyed most about working at The Compass is watching myself grow and building connections with the clients. Over the last four months, I have developed confidence in my interpersonal and communication skills by attending fundraising events, interacting with donors of the community, and working with fellow staff. These experiences have helped me grow professionally as an individual. Additionally, I have thoroughly enjoyed building relationships with clients. Coming into work every day and being able to put a smile on their face has been a highlight of my summer.

What was a new learning for you in your role?

A new learning I am taking away from my role is the process of fundraising. With my supervisor, I learned how fundraising works and got to be part of the planning for our Annual Walk the Walk for The Compass. Specifically, I managed the silent auction and am proud to say I have gathered almost \$9,000 worth of items!



Katie Perfect - Interim Kitchen Coordinator

What did you enjoy about your role?

Something I enjoyed about this kitchen role is the fact that I am able to interact with and meet new people everyday. Everyone I have encountered is so unique and welcoming. For example, sometimes I'll come into work having a bad day, but when I start serving food and hear clients thanking me, they truly make my day so much better.

What did you learn in this role?

A new learning for me in my summer role was becoming more organized. Slowly but surely, I started to pick up from my mistakes and use them as an opportunity to grow my knowledge. It's not about the mistakes you make, it's about how you use them to grow!



Sydney Sharp - Client Services Assistant

What did you enjoy about your role?

I enjoyed assisting with the planning and execution of the Back-to-School program!

What did you learn in this role?

I gained a much better understanding of harm reduction practices, and how to foster a safe and respectful environment for all.



Thanks to our wonderful Summer Team - best wishes for the future!

Volunteer Spotlight - Lynn Kozak

I recently had the privilege of chatting with Lynn Kozak, who volunteers as a Greeter at The Compass. She works three times per week and would work more frequently if it wasn't for her beloved old dog who requires, as she puts it, "a 24-hour human."

Lynn started working with The Compass in the dark days of COVID, after her previous volunteer post at Westedge was shut down due to the pandemic. She wanted to help out and decided to head over to The Compass - the rest is history!

The Greeter role is one of the newest, and was born out of necessity during COVID, when doors had to remain closed, people had to distance themselves, and interactions with clients had to take place on the sidewalk.

Since that time, Lynn has thoroughly enjoyed her volunteer role, welcoming old and new clients as they enter the premises. She is pleased to develop relationships where she knows people by name, has conversations with them, jokes around, and offers a compassionate ear when people have problems or health issues. It takes time but it is worth the effort.

Lynn notes that when new clients show up, they are often quite nervous and she is mindful of the big step the client takes to reach the point of acknowledging that they need help. She makes them feel welcome, and if there is a language barrier, Lynn will try her best to find someone else who speaks the same language. She helps them get oriented and on their path to acquiring some much-needed food.

I asked Lynn about the most special and heartwarming moments she has experienced as a Greeter. She said she especially enjoys seeing the change in someone from the moments when they first arrive at The Compass, filled with fear and trepidation, to the time when they leave, so comfortable and reassured after being surrounded by support from the whole team.

Lynn also revels in those wonderful success stories when clients finally get a house, or get a job and start moving towards a brighter future. She acknowledges that for some, getting their first home after being unhoused can be a scary and overwhelming experience - but it is so wonderful to know that The Compass can help clients with a wide range of challenges they are facing.

Lynn recounted several occasions in which clients were visiting The Compass for the last time - they have finally secured housing, a job and enough support to move on without any help. Success can be measured in so many ways and everyone is truly on their own journey.

Most heartwarming for Lynn is seeing the babies, toddlers and children who are receiving nourishing, good food (protein, produce, eggs and milk) and are flourishing, thriving and growing. They are the most vulnerable in our community because they do not have a voice. But with the help of The Compass, they can get nutrition and a chance to grow up with a full belly.

Talking to Lynn was emotional - I was close to tears at times feeling the enormity of her compassion and hearing the stories she was sharing with me. The Compass is blessed to have such a kind and empathetic person welcoming the tired, hungry and vulnerable souls who walk through the doors.



Regeneration Outreach ID Clinic

Our friends in Brampton, Regeneration Outreach, offer an ID Clinic that is especially valuable to their clients and to ours at The Compass. Regeneration comes to The Compass twice a month to offer a very important service to empower our clients.

The ID clinic can help people gain access to the following vital documents:

- Health Cards
- Ontario ID Cards
- Social Insurance Numbers

NOTE: They are not able to assist with passports. Think about how hard life would be without vital documents to help you navigate society, government, employment, and health services. People can lose their ID as a result of long-term homelessness, theft, disaster, evictions and other



difficult situations. If you want to find somewhere to live, a job or even a bank account, you require some form of identification. This vital clinic helps people regain access to many programs and opportunities from which they are excluded.

The ID Clinic takes place twice a month on Thursdays from 10:00AM to 12:30PM.

Check out Regen's logo - it looks like helping hands, and that is exactly what this ID Clinic offers!

Back-to-School Backpack Project a Huge Success!

With the end of summer approaching, we welcome Autumn weather and the children returning to school. While this is an exciting time of year (perhaps more so for parents), it can be quite costly to buy back-to-school supplies for each child, especially when running a multi-child household.

To help alleviate some of this financial strain for our Compass families, we run our yearly back-to-school program, where clients with school-aged children can sign up to receive some back-to-school supplies, including but not limited to backpacks.

Backpack contents can vary depending on the grade that the child is going into, but some of the items are: lunch bags, water bottles, calculators, markers and pencils!

We had 475 children registered for this program, and we collected 475 backpacks - all of these kids will be well-prepared for this 2024-2025 school year! What a heartwarming way to support the beloved children in our community.

A special thank you to everyone involved, including Compass staff, volunteers, students, donors and partners. Some of those donors include PointClickCare, Kiwanis, and SE Health.



Canadian Disability Benefit

The Advocacy Committee of the Compass Food Bank asks for your support with a letter writing campaign advocating for a fully funded Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) that would be a turning point in addressing the hunger and poverty people with disabilities often face. We are using the letter below - with permission from Neil Hetherington - as the model:

An important step was taken in the program's development through the allocation of \$6.1 billion to the CDB, to rollout over six years, in the 2024 Federal Budget announcement. Eligibility for this program has been set to Canadians with a valid Disability Tax Credit Certificate.

While this commitment signals that elected officials have heard your calls to action, further commitment is needed. **It is critical that additional funding be allocated to the benefit and that eligibility requirements are inclusive beyond recipients of the Disability Tax Credit. With the funding and program details committed in the budget, individual recipients would only receive approximately \$200 per month. This is inadequate and we must ensure this benefit can make a meaningful difference in helping people with disabilities live above the poverty line.**

One-in-seven people who access food banks nationally rely on provincial disability income supports. In many provinces, that means living more than \$800 below the poverty line each month.

Daily Bread Food Bank and Food Banks across the country are committed to continuing to advocate for a Canada Disability Benefit that will help address this. We hope you'll join us and over 40 organizations as we call on government to provide meaningful support to people with disabilities. This means bringing recipients to above the poverty line and operating from a broad and inclusive definition of disability to ensure that those who need support can effectively access it.

Please use this information to send a letter to your MP, the Minister of Finance, Minister of Diversity, Inclusion, and Persons with Disabilities, the Prime Minister and Leaders of the opposition today, urging them to take these next steps in the CDB development!

Thank you for your ongoing support and advocacy.

In partnership,

Neil Hetherington, CEO

Daily Bread Food Bank

Margaret Ramsay

Board Member of The Compass Food Bank

The Compass Launches a New Website

Did you know that The Compass has been working on a new website since May and it is going to be amazing for all who use it!

The Compass soft-launched the new website on August 13th and already users are thrilled! This is our very first professionally developed website, and we are delighted with the work of Candybox Marketing, along with our staff and the volunteers who made it all happen. While the previous website served us well for some time, users can now enjoy a more interactive and easier-to-navigate platform.

The Compass website is used by clients to order food, donors who want to learn more about supporting The Compass, and by our volunteers who can sign up for shifts and learn more about volunteer opportunities. Along with professional photos of our lovely volunteers and staff, it has added delightful visual appeal and is extremely user-friendly.

For example, a client can visit our website, and just by clicking the 'Need Support' tab at the top of the screen, they will immediately be linked to registering and ordering food as a new client, find information on when they can access hot meals at The Compass kitchen, and information about our outreach programs. With just a click, clients can view the range of services offered through The Compass and when each is available, and can also find services offered by partner agencies.

This website emphasizes what we already know: The Compass is more than just a food bank! Great job Melinda, Sheryl, Andrew, and Letty, for all your hard work.

Wait no longer and have a look! Click here to check it out at www.TheCompass.ca

Winter Support Program

The Winter Support Program at The Compass is dedicated to assisting clients experiencing chronic homelessness. Through the generosity of our donors, we provide essential winter items, including:

- coats
- boots
- snow pants
- undergarments
- sleeping bags
- tarps
- backpacks
- mittens or gloves
- hats and balaclavas

Last year, we successfully implemented an order form system to better serve our clients experiencing homelessness, ensuring they received the specific items they needed. For the 2023/2024 winter season, we distributed these critical supplies to 60 clients and anticipate reaching 70 clients this year.

We will begin distributing the order forms in early October, with item distribution commencing as soon as weather conditions necessitate.

Note that we accept financial donations for the program, but can't accept clothes due to our lack of space.



Volunteer Survey Results - Synopsis

In March 2024, The Compass surveyed its volunteers to determine how best to improve training, communication and the overall volunteer experience. Almost 200 volunteers answered our survey!

Training

- In all roles at The Compass, at least 70% of volunteers feel extremely or very well trained for their roles.
- Most of our volunteers assist in the Market, where 86% said they feel very well trained.
- 88% of volunteers feel processes are consistent with their training.

These numbers are strong, but we will continue to work to improve training **with Shopping and Bin Collector Training launching this month.**

Communication

- 93% of volunteers feel that the communication they receive from The Compass is useful.
- Almost 60% prefer receiving general email updates and 23% said they like to receive both general updates as well as emails specific to their roles.

As part of our continual improvement **we've launched this newsletter!**

Volunteer Experience

- We asked how safe our employees feel when at The Compass and we were happy to hear that 95% of volunteers feel safe
- Over 90% of volunteers feel very well supported by The Compass staff
- Our volunteers feel that helping at The Compass is its own reward, with most volunteers saying that they don't need any recognition or that a simple thank you is all that's needed.

- Most importantly, almost 80% of volunteers are very satisfied or extremely satisfied with their volunteering experience at The Compass!

Best of all were the comments we read: volunteers love making connections with clients and with their fellow volunteers. They love seeing the difference they make to the lives of others, and say that is its own reward. One volunteer summed it up like this: "There's something special about the vibe at The Compass; everyone's in it together and it's fun and super rewarding. It's laughing with the team, getting to know the people we help and celebrating the wins. It's all about those moments of connection."

The Compass would not exist without its volunteers. We are profoundly grateful for your support and dedication in helping those in need and in bringing our community closer together. As noted in the *Impact Report*, our 400 active volunteers donated 45,534 hours of their time to The Compass in 2023 - that's the equivalent of 25 full time positions!

The Compass was founded as a volunteer-centric organization, and we remain true to that vision.



Client Services

Have you ever wondered what the Client Services role at The Compass entails? I know I did before I inquired and joined the team. A Client Services staff member or volunteer meets with all first-time clients and performs an intake with them. We talk about the services available and collect some information with the client. We explain what The Compass can offer and how one can order food through our website, by phone, in person, or by filling out an NFA (no fixed address) form. We also have written instructions in different languages that we provide to clients when needed.

Aside from meeting with first-time guests to The Compass, Client Services volunteers meet with clients every six months for updates to see if circumstances have changed (i.e. change of address, change in income, family size), and at clients' request. Sometimes clients come in with a question or just need a listening ear. Often these conversations can turn into referrals to one of our partner agencies or another resource provider. Currently, we have 10 agencies that rotate throughout the building regularly, assisting The Compass with providing support and resources to the clients in our shared community. Information shared is confidential and only shared on an as-needed basis.

The Client Services Team is led by Tracey Harms (Manager) and Jaclyn McMullen (Client Services Coordinator).



Upcoming Events at The Compass

- The Women's Group, every Wednesday from 6-8 pm
- The Men's Group, every Tuesday, from 6:30-8:30 pm
- Film & Fellowship, starting this fall on Saturday nights from 5:30-8:30 pm



Feeding Hope Editorial Team:
Jo-Ann McQuillan - Editor/Writer
Linda Blakely - Writer/Proofreading
Wendy Vujacic - Graphic Designer/Layout
Michelle Barbosa - Writer