

citykidz | annual report





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Letter from our Executive Director and Chair of the Board of Directors

After a full year of living and working within the parameters of a pandemic, we at CityKidz greeted 2021 with a bold sense of purpose and a burgeoning feeling of hope.

Over the previous year, we had witnessed first-hand the financial and emotional strain the pandemic had put on our children, youth and their families. We saw that vulnerable children needed love and support more than ever. So we found silver linings and focused our energies on everything we could do to meet the material, emotional and spiritual needs of our community.

With the lessons and opportunities of 2020 firmly in our minds, we set out with big dreams and a firm understanding of the adaptability and grace we would need to meaningfully serve our children, youth, and families.

Our focus last year was on being present in the community, meeting children and caregivers where they were, responding to their needs, and offering personalized support however possible.

We continued our pandemic response program, the CityKidz Cares Project, including Enhanced Home Visits, online mentorship and interactive digital content. Seeing an opportunity to do more for our families, we also launched a new initiative of delivering monthly Family Meal Kits.

We don't know all the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for the CityKidz community, but we know that, with people like you at our side, we will face them all with hope in our hearts.

Thank you for all your kindness in 2021! We look forward to rebuilding our programs and emerging stronger than ever so that we can continue to transform lives with you in 2022!



REV. TODD BENDER
Founder & Executive director



CATHY O'DONNELL
Chair of Board of Directors

2021 Highlights



7,662 Toys
were distributed
to Hamilton children
at Christmas



1,021
registered CityKidz
participants



Birthday Gifts
were delivered to more
than 900 children



83 Youth
attended pizza
parties



Lunches
were distributed to over
800 children during
Enhanced Home Visits



More Than 800
children received ongoing
Home Visits



Over 600
families received a
monthly Family Meal
Kit between July and
December



We Hosted
18 virtual Roadmaps
to Dreams sessions



247 New
children registered for
our programs



208
registered CityYouth
participants



202 Care Kits
were delivered to
Hamilton families



26 Youth
received an Education
Fund Award



190 Youth Packs
filled with treats and snacks
were sent out to our teen
participants



144
registered KinderKidz
participants



44 Youth
graduated from
our CityYouth and
Roadmaps to Dreams
programs

2021 Community Impact

In our pursuit of child and youth well-being, CityKidz has created a unique program model that supports positive transformation in the lives of our children, youth and their families. Our program model is a progressive journey to see children rise above their circumstances and to pursue and achieve their dreams.



Throughout the pandemic, we have focused largely on the Love and Acceptance objective through our CityKidz Cares and CityKidz Connects programs.

CityKidz Connects builds relationships with children, youth and their families.

CityKidz Cares offers immediate crisis intervention, advocacy support, and connections to community resources to assist parents and caregivers in providing a nurturing home.

These two programs are at the foundation of the CityKidz Program Model and are offered to all children, youth and their families within the CityKidz community.

In 2021, we surveyed 102 families with children registered in CityKidz programs. This survey was intended to help us better understand the caregivers and neighbourhoods we serve and gain insights into how we can better support our community. These were some of our findings and how we are working to address the issues facing our participants:

Only 38% of families reported that the homes in their neighbourhoods were secure, safe and affordable. Over 60% of respondents believed that their neighbourhood was a safe place for children to play ‘some of the time’ or ‘rarely!’

How we’re helping:

- CityKidz provides a free, safe, fun and supportive environment for children and youth to learn and grow.
- Our program model is focused on ensuring that children and youth experience a life that is safe, secure and filled with love and acceptance.
- Family Meal Kits and Care Kits help to offset food costs for families, thereby easing the financial burden facing struggling families.

Parents reported that they believe many children and youth living in their neighbourhoods do not have access to adequate nutrition to support healthy living.

How we’re helping:

- CityKidz delivers Family Meal Kits, lunches, snacks and Care Kits to our families, many of whom have expressed that they are struggling with food security.
- Over 600 families received monthly Family Meal Kits from July to December.
- Lunches were delivered to more than 800 children during Enhanced Home Visits.
- 202 Care Kits were delivered to families that were experiencing heightened adversity.

93% of participants reported that CityKidz has **had a positive impact on their family.**

How we're helping:

- CityKidz activities provide a healthy outlet for kids to have fun.
- CityKidz helps create a healthy stress release for households.
- CityKidz provides support for families and connection with a caring community.
- Connection Visits provide an opportunity for children and families to build safe relationships with CityKidz staff and volunteers.

“*My daughter loves the CityYouth program and topics that CityKidz shares with the youth regarding mental health.*

I (mom) like to listen in on the meetings and learn. CityKidz connects with my children in ways that my husband and I cannot.”



Story of Hope: Marilia Fonseca



“Overall my life would be so much different if I didn’t go to CityKidz,” says 20-year-old Marilia.

The words ‘super’ comes up a lot in her descriptions of her time at CityKidz. The bus, the theatres, the volunteers: super cool, super fun, and super nice respectively.

“Everything was just so much fun that I didn’t even

mind waking up at 8:00 in the morning on a Saturday,” she says.

In addition to all the fun that came with each CityKidz Saturday, Marilia credits the program with helping her develop her sense of both herself and the world.

“It really helped me develop my own opinions and perspective on who I should be and how I should treat others,” says Marilia, explaining her appreciation for the unique opportunity to explore new ideas on her own terms.

This budding curiosity and independent thinking wasn’t just important to Marilia, but to her parents as well. Her father, Vitor, saw CityKidz as an opportunity to give his children **“a broader perspective of the world.”**

“She has to see with her own eyes what’s right, what’s wrong,” Vitor explains. **“If I tell her, she’s just gonna follow my instructions. I’m just the guide. She is the person that makes the decision. That’s the way it should be.”**

And that’s the way it is with Marilia. She’s self-assured and humble, competent and curious. She’s smart, but never arrogant. She’s always looking to expand her horizons and isn’t shy to ask questions or question her opinions.

With this growth mindset, joining CityKidz youth mentorship program was a natural transition when Marilia turned 12.

“I’d been doing CityKidz for basically my whole childhood,” she says. **“So I was like, I might as well grow with it; see what else I can learn and how it can help me transition to being a teenager.”**

Living so close to CityKidz, Marilia’s mom would drive her and her brother, Aldo, to CityYouth each Wednesday evening. They would arrive about half an hour before the buses dropped off their peers and Marilia would use that time to do homework and talk to mentors. She also made friends from all over the city.

“I always looked forward to Wednesday nights,” says Marilia. **“I remember always**

feeling safe and knowing that there would always be someone to listen to me if I had some kind of problem.”

Whether she was working through **“typical mean girls stuff”** at school or the general anxieties of growing up, Marilia says, **“CityYouth showed me that it would be OK.”**

While CityYouth helped to build Marilia’s self-confidence, at Roadmaps to Dreams she developed the practical skills – like interviewing and resume writing – she needed to take the next steps towards independence.

“I found all that stuff really helpful,” says Marilia. **“Especially because I put it into practice to get the job I have now. I always admire the program because I wish I’d had that in high school. I don’t feel like careers [class] really covered it.”**

Thinking back on her mentorship experience at CityKidz and how it has impacted her life, she hones in on the encouragement, support and respect from the staff and volunteers.

“Every single adult I’ve met at CityKidz has helped solidify my relationship with adults and people of authority. They showed me that there are positive role models other than your parents,” says Marilia. **“I could feel that everyone wanted you to succeed.”**

And in terms of making her big dreams a reality, succeed she has.

Marilia first told us about her dream of studying biology and chemistry to one day become a high school teacher.

Now, just a few short years later, Marilia is in her second year of a biochemistry degree at McMaster University (and a CityKidz Education Fund scholarship recipient). However, her career ambitions have changed, as they so often do when exposed to new ideas, experiences and opportunities.

A first-year project on antibiotic resistance piqued her problem-solving brain and set her on a new career path.

“Something in me was like, I want to fix that; I want to work on that,” explains Marilia.

Following that spark of curiosity, Marilia started working at a pharmacy. Seeing her colleagues in action confirmed her desire to become a pharmacist.

“Hopefully in five years I’ll be done pharmacy school and I’ll be a pharmacist working in a lab or a hospital. That’s the professional dream,” says Marilia.

“My personal dream is to be able to give my parents what they’ve given me. I want to be able to take care of them and show them how much I appreciate them.”

Her parents, for their part, just want Marilia to be happy. They’re proud of her for exactly who she is and have full confidence that she will achieve whatever she sets her kind, curious and clever mind to. And if you asked any of the mentors, volunteers or staff who have walked alongside Marilia throughout her decade attending CityKidz programs, they’d surely agree.

Weston Family Scholars

Bringing Big Dreams to Life through Higher Education

The Education Fund, made possible by the generous support of the Weston Family Foundation, is our way of supporting CityYouth and Roadmaps to Dreams graduates who pursue post-secondary education. This scholarship provides yearly financial support to help offset the costs associated with their continuing education.

The pandemic posed many new and significant academic and financial barriers to youth hoping to pursue post-secondary education. Nevertheless, last year we were able to award one new post-secondary education scholarship.



SARAH LUNGUANA
Business Administration and Marketing
Mohawk College

Additionally, 26 previous scholarship recipients continued their college and university journey. There were also plenty of high school students on the path towards higher learning in 2021. In honour of their ambitions and hard work, we presented a small financial award to seven of our high school students to encourage them in pursuit of their dreams.

Crystal Carter

Madison Krulicki

Coral Routledge

Matthew Dawson

Harji Narula

Ben Roy

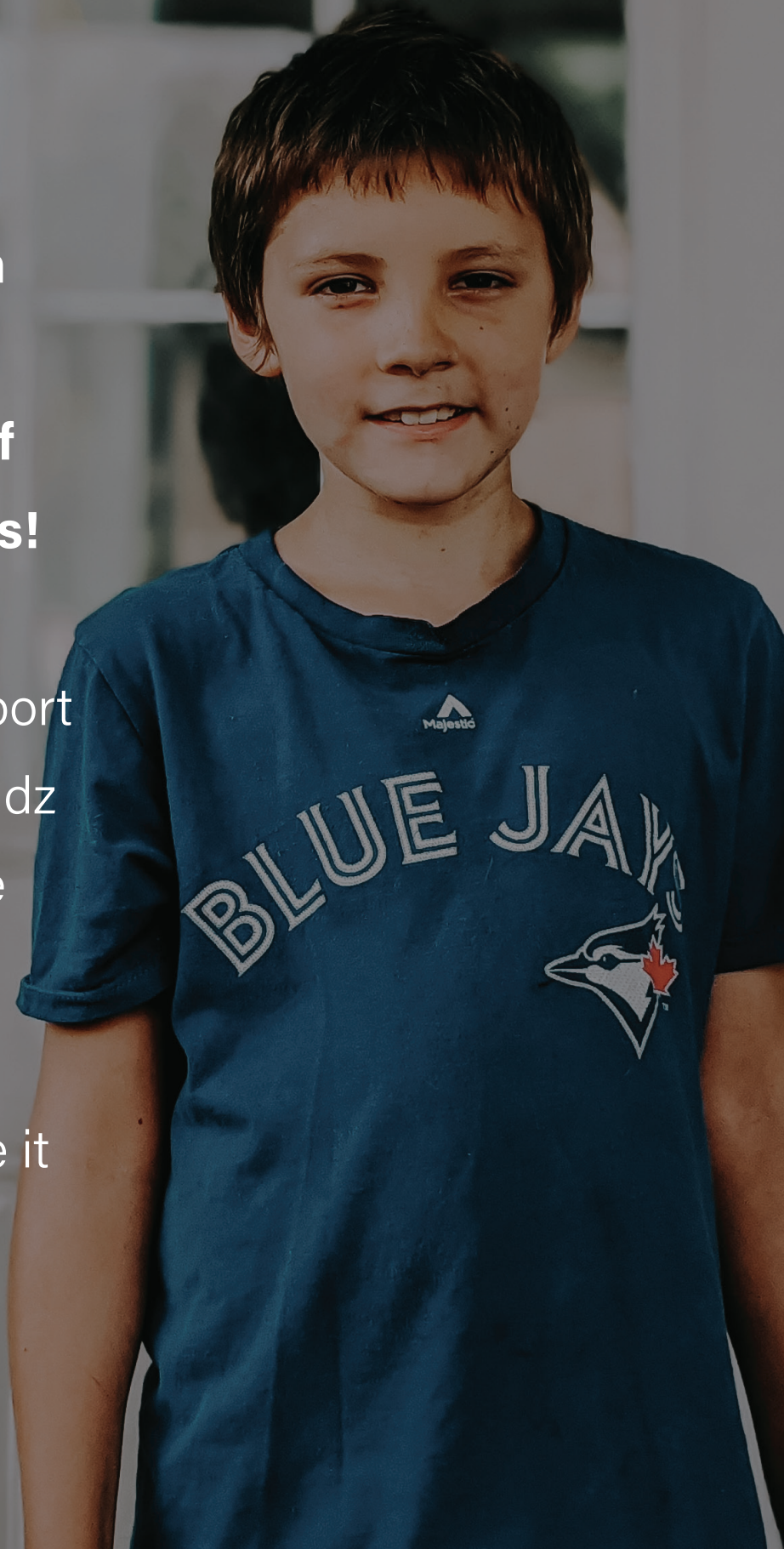
Theo Kiadii



Thank You Partners

Thank you so much for the ongoing, inspiring support of our faithful partners!

Their dedicated support helped ensure CityKidz children received the material, emotional and spiritual support they needed to make it through another difficult year.



2021 | ANNUAL REPORT

2021 Supporters and Corporate Partners

| Premier Supporter



| Platinum Corporate Partner



| Diamond Corporate Partners



| Gold Corporate Partners



BRANTHAVEN

| Bronze Corporate Partners



ALOETTE®
Share the Beauty

| Special Thanks



Foundations and Grants

Thank you so much to the generous foundations and grants who believe in the incredible potential of our amazing CityKidz children and youth.

ArcelorMittal Foundation

Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities

Charity of Hope

Government of Canada’s Emergency Support Fund

Enterprise Holdings Foundation

GWD Foundation for Kids

Hamilton Community Foundation

Niagara Community Foundation

Weston Family Foundation





| **Thank You Supporters**

We are so grateful to our community of supporters for sharing their time, prayers and financial gifts with us through another difficult year.

**Thank you for all your love and support in 2021.
Thank you for empowering resilience in our
organization and the children we serve.**

Thank you for helping us grow and evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of our community.

Thank you for transforming lives.

| **Thank You Volunteers**

Once again, when we called, our volunteers answered.

In 2021 our faithful volunteers packed lunches, Care Kits and Family Meal Kits. They wrapped presents and drove buses. They called and visited our kids and families. They took on countless important tasks that moved our mission forward.

Thank you to all the Servants of Love who volunteered their time and talent to bring faith, hope and love to the CityKidz community.





Financial Report

Once again, the CityKidz community has astonished and humbled us with their generosity. Every program, project and initiative we do at CityKidz is made possible by donors big and small who choose to financially support our mission. Thank you!

We are honoured by your faith in our mission and trust in our stewardship of the resources you share. We understand the responsibility of using your investments efficiently to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the children, youth and families we serve.

In 2021, the CityKidz donor community entrusted us with \$2,506,702 to invest in the lives of children growing up with the challenges of poverty. Thank you.

Last year, \$2,044,536 of our revenue went directly towards new projects and programs developed to help our children through the second year of the pandemic. The rest was used to cover the operating expenses – including staff wages, building, fundraising and administrative expenses – necessary to bring our programs to life.

2020 Revenue | \$2,648,252



62.86% Donations \$1,664,684	18.86% Grants \$499,379	17.58% Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy \$465,682	0.70% Other \$18,507
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2021 Revenue | \$2,506,702



72.27% Donations \$1,811,622	16.28% Grants \$408,214	9.72% Government Subsidy \$243,750	1.72% Other \$43,116
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2020 Expenses | \$2,069,366



85.30% Program Expense \$1,765,197	7.60% Admin Expense \$157,332	7.10% Fundraising Expense \$146,837
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2021 Expenses | \$2,382,290



85.82% Program Expense \$2,044,536	6.46% Admin Expense \$153,848	7.72% Fundraising Expense \$183,907
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Financial values are based on approved draft Audited Statements. Our T3010 and Financial statements will be available in late May 2022 at citykidz.ca



Strategic Priorities

Renewing Hope

The pandemic has, in many ways, tested our resiliency as an organization. Thanks to your unwavering support, we are proud to say that we have been able to weather the storm of COVID-19 and help our children and families do the same.

As we begin to carefully emerge from the pandemic and its accompanying restrictions, we are grateful for all the lessons these past two years have bestowed upon us, and excited for all the opportunities that lay ahead.

This year, our focus will be on rebuilding much of what was lost over the past two years – our in-person programming and the personal, trust and community-building connections to kids. We look forward to once again providing our children and youth with a safe space to learn, grow, share and celebrate. With your support, we know we will finish this year stronger than ever.

Our key strategic priorities in 2022 are to:

- 1** Transition from our pandemic programming response (the CityKidz Cares Project) and invest in rebuilding permanent programming in line with our new program model, including the development of outdoor space for our kids and youth.
- 2** Develop a new multi-year strategy to ensure the work of CityKidz continues to achieve deep, meaningful impact in the lives of vulnerable children and families.
- 3** Continue to increase our organizational capacity through staff training, volunteer development and improving our internal processes.

Looking Forward

This year, our focus will be on rebuilding much of what was lost over the past two years, that is, our in-person programming.

While we found new ways to nurture personal, loving and community-building connections with our kids throughout the pandemic, we look forward to once again providing our children and youth with a shared safe space to learn, grow and celebrate.

We have already restarted our in-person CityYouth mentorship program and this May, we'll be hosting our CityKidz Saturday program in our Studio Theatre.

We look forward to singing, dancing and celebrating with our children just like we used to before the pandemic. We've got lots of new stories, games and lessons to share with them as we begin the careful process of reviving our regular programming. We can't wait to see their beautiful faces and vibrant souls in our theatre again.

This year we are working hard to build the best and strongest version of CityKidz so that we can most effectively meet the needs of our children and their families. As we focus on rebuilding our organizational capacity, we will pause our KinderKidz and Roadmaps to Dreams programs until next year. Our changed world has left us with a lot of work to do to get back to our full program offering, so this year's focus will be our core programs and serving the biggest population of our children and youth. We look forward to welcoming back the youngest and oldest members of our CityKidz family as soon as possible.

With your support, we know we will finish this year stronger than ever. And with faith, hope and love, we'll keep nurturing big dreams in Hamilton's most vulnerable children.



Become a Servant of Love

Volunteers Transform Lives

Our volunteers bring with them an incredible assortment of skills. They serve our community by visiting kids, mentoring youth, driving buses, preparing meals, answering phones and sharing their countless other gifts. In a million different ways, they are bringing hope and inspiring big dreams.

Whether you thrive on the front-line, connecting directly with our kids, prefer to work behind the scenes in an office setting – or something in between – we’ve got a place for your gifts to shine and serve your community!

Right now we’re looking for:

Bus Drivers

Driving a bus for CityKidz, you’re so much more than a driver; you’re an integral part of our community of faith, hope and love. CityKidz bus drivers connect children from all corners of the city. They bring children and youth together to learn, grow, and, most-importantly, have fun together.

Home Visit Team Members

Want to connect with and mentor amazing kids on a one-on-one basis? Our Home Visit Team Members do just that! Each week these volunteers visit our kids at their front doors to say hi, encourage big dreams, deliver birthday gifts, meal kits, snacks, treats and more. You’ll get a front row seat as children grow and dream and transform their lives.

Youth Mentors

At our Wednesday evening program, mentors offer praise and encouragement, comfort and counsel, wisdom and patience to amazing, hopeful youth. They build genuine relationships of trust and support that our youth know they can turn to in their moment of need or celebration.

Bus Team Member

Looking to liven up your Saturday routine? Bus Team Members join our kids on the bus and in our theatres for CityKidz’ fun and interactive Saturday program. If you’ve ever been a camp counselor or you just like getting silly and having fun with kids ages three to 11, this is the role for you!

To learn more about volunteering at CityKidz or to begin volunteering, contact volunteer@citykidz.ca or visit citykidz.ca/volunteer



Join our Community of Hope

When we can depend on you, kids can depend on us

CityKidz' Community of Hope is a collective of amazing, like-minded people dedicated to seeing an end to child poverty in Hamilton.

Working together, monthly donors make an ongoing investment in the limitless potential of resilient children to transform their lives and with them, the world.

Becoming a monthly donor is a personal commitment to the long-term, sustainable well-being of the most vulnerable children in our city. Your monthly support allows us to be there for children and youth both in their moments of struggle and times of celebration. By pledging to a monthly gift, you ensure that every child can access CityKidz life-changing programs year-round.

Reliable monthly support:

- Allows us to be there for children and youth both in their moments of struggle and times of celebration.
- Empowers us to nurture long-term, transformative relationships that build resiliency and help children to thrive.
- Gives us the resources to go deeper in our relationships and programming so that we can have an ever more meaningful and enduring impact on the lives of vulnerable children.
- Is affordable – you can choose a monthly donation that works for you and you are free to change your giving amount at any time.
- Lowers our fundraising and administrative costs, meaning that more funding can go directly towards improving the lives of children.
- Enables us to plan ahead and develop new initiatives and investments in our children.

To learn more about joining our Community of Hope, visit us citykidz.ca/monthly-giving or contact communications@citykidz.ca.

We believe
every child matters
every child counts,
and **every child**
is a **gift from God,**
born with **purpose** and
limitless potential.

city**i**kidz

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