



THE HH REPORT

2021 A Year in Review

There was a feeling in Santa’s workshop this year—an almost palpable sense of hope—that despite the hardships of the last two years, when our determined community comes together at Christmas, it can make miracles happen.

But this wasn’t just about providing things for families in need. It was about our community coming together and reclaiming something we haven’t been able to feel as much of late—our connection to each other and our shared sense of humanity.

This is why Holiday Helpers set out to help 200 more families than in 2021. Providing over 865 low-income families with holiday packages was an achievement only made possible through the exceptional generosity of an army of donors, sponsors, and volunteers. Inspired by the idea that while we normally go out of our way to give to our loved ones, this year, we turned our attention to families—ones we would likely not ever meet—who needed it most.

For some, these packages brought a simple sense of enjoyment: toys for the kids and new clothes for the parents. For others, the packages were overwhelming. They brought more than just joy. They provided the relief that next month’s rent could be paid because there was no longer a need to buy winter coats for the children or food.

The thank you letters that have been coming in since Christmas reflect that sentiment and have been incredible to read and pass on to you. We are always overwhelmed by the selflessness and generosity of this community, but the gratitude of our recipient families literally jumps off the page.

This is because of you—thank you.

2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- 865 total families sponsored (179 more families than in 2020)
- 3,217 people received packages (801 more people than in 2020)
- Over 5,000 boxes delivered
- Over 30 partner agencies referring families to the program
- Over 2,000 volunteers to help wrap and deliver packages



"We had a beautiful Christmas because of you! You made Christmas really awesome, with the beautiful clothes and toys for the children. They were so excited to open them on Christmas morning"

Princess, #998



Lani is a single mom that fled an abusive relationship with her three children. After living in a shelter for several months, she was finally able to move into her own apartment.

"The past couple of years were tough. We got housing and started to get back on our feet, but I was still not looking forward to the holidays. Upon opening the boxes, I was brought to tears upon seeing all the wonderful gifts. I never expected all this! Our spirits were lifted up, the kids were excited, the tree brought the Christmas atmosphere back.

You have been so kind and generous to a complete stranger. You made this year end on a wonderful happy note and I can't thank you enough for that!"

Lani, #1297

SANTA'S WORKSHOP WAS BUZZING

The number of people who pass through our warehouse each year is staggering. Thousands of volunteers come to organize, wrap, and deliver packages to over 870 families. This year, we housed two warehouses to service families in the greater Toronto area and Hamilton.

Our GTA warehouse, located in the old Chapters at Square One, came alive for two weeks in December. Although we still had to maintain social distancing and masking, we were happy to welcome volunteers back at 50% capacity (compared to 30% in 2020).

Each day, over 100 volunteers showed up ready to go. Lots of families, groups of friends and even corporate groups came together sort and deliver gifts. From our individual and corporate volunteers to our team leads and drivers, we could not have made this year a success without you.

A HUGE THANKS TO OUR PLATINUM SPONSORS FOR DONATING SPACE FOR SANTA'S WAREHOUSE.

OXFORD *Eastgate*
SQUARE

After months of covid-closures, it was great to see so many corporate groups come back to volunteer. We had companies like OMERS, Starbucks, RJC Engineers and Whitehorse Liquidity drop by and take over the entire floor for a few hours, making sure gifts were organized, wrapped, and prepared for delivery.

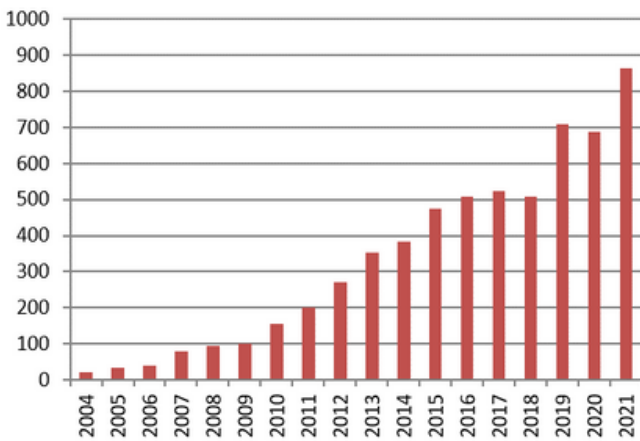
And once all the gifts were wrapped and boxed, our delivery drivers had the task of delivering everything to a waiting family. Not only did we get every last package delivered, but our volunteer drivers would come back twice, sometimes three more times each day to make sure we were still on schedule to get everything delivered before Christmas.

HAMILTON

We were so thrilled to return to Hamilton after a year off due to COVID. This year, we supported 75 families in Hamilton, but also had an incredibly fun weekend running a mini workshop from the old Sears location in Eastgate Square. We had incredible volunteers and drivers all weekend.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 CORPORATE PARTNERS!

With their help, we are able to keep the program open and help more families.



GROWTH YEAR OVER YEAR

One of our priorities each year, is to help more families than the year before. With your support, we are well on our way to helping 1000 families in 2022!

PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



"I saw a whole slew of different people—different ages, genders, different ethnicities—and everybody was just working together to give to people who needed the help."

Volunteer





Pure joy! Deya and his family are new to Canada and this is their first Christmas in Canada. Getting gifted snow suits for his children was such a relief!

"Firstly, I would like to thank everyone for all your help. We are so grateful to our donor. There are not enough words to express our thanks and gratitude. These pictures are of my boys playing in the snow."

Deya, 1129

Holiday Helpers started two and a half decades ago to give a Christmas tree to a family whose house had just burned down. Over 25 years, it has grown to help thousands of families realize the joy of Christmas at a time when they might just need a small helping hand to do so.

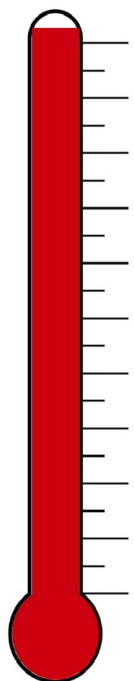
But over two and a half decades, this has turned into more than just providing things to families throughout the GTA. It is about a community rallying around a common purpose and in reaching for our higher ideals, connecting with each other through a collective sense of compassion and goodwill.

Volunteers and our corporate sponsors came together to adopt a family or help out in our warehouse—they told us they met employees from other floors in their office and made friends with people they had never met before.

As you reflect on this report, we hope you are reminded of one thing: that for those of us who are lucky enough to have the things we need, we still very much need each other. And for those who came out in whatever capacity—sponsoring a family, wrapping gifts, delivering packages—you gave that gift to each other, and you more than certainly gave that gift to us.

We hope to see you next year.

April & Sarah Rutka
Founders of Holiday Helpers Canada



Over \$621,678 was raised for low income families.

Did you know that over \$0.92 of every dollar donated to Holiday Helpers goes directly to helping a family in need.



Donors who sponsor a family's wishlist, do more than purchase Christmas presents. they are giving a low-income family vital household items and necessities, like cooking pots, bedding, and snow suits.

Providing a child with a gift, brings a smile to their face and provides hope for a better future!