



Rose of  
Sharon

SERVICES FOR YOUNG MOTHERS

ROSEOFSHARON.COM

# Annual Report

2021/22



## Board Chair & Executive Director



Susan LaRosa, Board Chair

It remains a privilege to chair the Rose of Sharon Board of Directors and work with such resolute board members. As volunteers, the members give their time and share their unique talents to ensure Rose of Sharon has the resources to meet the needs of the young mothers of York Region in our ever-changing world. To achieve our mission, the Board of Directors rely on the leadership of the Executive Director, the tireless dedication of the staff and willing volunteers to continue to provide the vital and the free-of-charge services required by the young families during this unprecedented time in our lives. I cannot overstate

the value of our donors. Raising 1.5 million annually is only achievable through their financial support and commitment to the mission of Rose of Sharon. Donors enable us to provide our services to meet the demand that exists with local young families. It is so gratifying to know that we are supported by grant funders, local businesses, schools, churches, community service groups and individual donors. We continue to promote the monthly donor concept that supplies predictable income enabling risk-free decision making. Rose of Sharon remains a key contributor to the well-being of the next generation. Thank you for considering joining the other community donors who make our mission achievable.

Over these two years, I remain in awe at how everyone continues to go out of their way to welcome all who come through our doors, in-person and virtually, while masterfully dealing with the changing environment during this pandemic. Our participants, staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, donors, and funders have demonstrated unwavering resilience and support. Our connecting, collaborating, and networking allow us to respond faster and recover stronger, demonstrating our ability to evolve and to test our creativity. The pandemic has required adaptation and partnerships to meet the ever changing and escalating needs through innovative ways. New programs have emerged, and existing programs have pivoted to continue to provide essential supports for our young mothers, fathers, and their babies.

As we say farewell to our dedicated teacher Melene Popa, who for years has been here to teach and guide the students, we now welcome Melissa Froio and thank York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) for their valued and ongoing partnership. We appreciate everyone involved, you are embracing the 'new normal' as we celebrate our 37th year as lifelong learners, seeking to learn and grow. On behalf of myself and the leadership team, thank you.

Susan LaRosa  
BOARD CHAIR



Deanne Kukulewich,  
Executive Chair

Deanne Kukulewich  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# OUR MISSION



*Empowering young mothers to embrace their strengths and support the future they envision for themselves and their children.*



## About Us

For 37 years, Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers has provided free supportive programs and educational services in York Region to pregnant and parenting youth mothers (14–29 years) while they build greater stability in the lives of their children. Our programs empower young mothers to embrace their strengths, continue high school, build parenting skills, increase child development knowledge, receive personal counselling and have access to food and practical supports needed to raise a healthy family. Offered online and on-site in a welcoming, safe and inclusive space – youth parents set goals and work toward building the future they envision for themselves and their children. 100% of the free programs and services that we offer are funded thanks to community support.

## Values

### Courage

We honour courage by embodying acceptance, empathy and respect for every individual.

### Belonging

We foster connections to create meaningful relationships and a culture of belonging for young mothers.

### Inclusivity

We embrace diversity by creating open and welcoming spaces and programs.

### Responsiveness

We develop innovative practices to meet our families' evolving needs.

## Board of Directors

Susan LaRosa  
**CHAIR**

Lynn Conforti  
**VICE CHAIR**

Andree Vincent  
**SECRETARY**

Thomas Reid  
**TREASURER**

Gurneet Bhela,  
Kirsten Eastwood  
Bob Interbartolo  
Sarah Mocherniak  
Vincent Picone  
Laura Rice  
Amber Smith

## Program Roster



**York Academy  
High School**



**All Babies Count  
(ABC)**  
Prenatal Nutrition



**Rosie's Closet**  
Food Security &  
Practical Support



**Child  
Development  
Centre**



**Group Programs**



**Counselling  
Services**

# Land Acknowledgement



We would like to acknowledge the Indigenous people who lived here before us and live here still, who cared for this land and were forced to share it with us under the Williams Treaty of 1923: The Wendat, the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and we recognize the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as our neighbours to the North.

It is important that we not only acknowledge the land but also continue to reflect and be both allies and accomplices in increasing an awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in everyday life.

## Our Impact & Participant Outcomes

In its 2021–22 fiscal year, Rose of Sharon served...



**239**  
MOMS



**169**  
CHILDREN



**10**  
scholarships awarded



**161**  
mothers participated in prenatal, parenting and personal development group programs



**140**  
participants in our food security and practical support programs

In 2021's annual participant survey, young moms who received our support self-reported the following improvements in their lives:



**91%**  
improved decision-making skills



**84%**  
improved sense of self-worth



**84%**  
improved family stability



**80%**  
improved interpersonal relationships



**89%**  
increased hope for the future



**88%**  
improved parenting capacity



 **Find By  
Postal Code**

\*Enter Postal Code Here

L3Y 1K3

Search

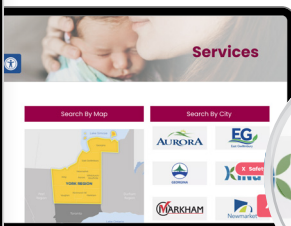
Launching in Fall 2022...



# PARENTS connect.ca

Join our **NEW** easy-to-use Resource portal  
launching this fall!

Parents Connect provides safe and  
secure means of attaining info and  
resources during your parenting journey.



Browse and locate Rose  
of Sharon's **Programs**,  
digital and print **Library  
Resources**, as well as  
**Services** nearest to you!



Want to keep your visits  
private? Use our omni-  
present **Safety Exit** feature.

Special thanks to the Government of Canada for its financial support of the Healthy Communities Initiative project through Community Foundations of Canada. **#HealthyCommunities**

Canada



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATIONS  
OF CANADA

FOUNDATIONS  
COMMUNAUTAIRES  
DU CANADA



Canadian  
Urban  
Institute

Institut  
Urbain du  
Canada

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# Community Support

## Thank you

To our amazing volunteers and donors for their continued support during challenging times.



*\*Due to pandemic safety restrictions, we worked alongside fewer volunteers. **33 volunteers** contributed **1539 hours** of their time, valued at approximately **\$40,630** in Donated Volunteer Support.*

*\*Based on a 2012 TD Economic study, "An Economist Case for Volunteering," a volunteer's average hourly rate is \$26.40/hr (adjusted to cost of living).*

In the words of a Rose of Sharon Participant...

# Katie's Story

*"Who is Rose of Sharon? Rose of Sharon is a group of amazing, big hearted women!"*



In the last year of being a client at Rose of Sharon, I've overcome a lot! In August 2019, I lost my first son Dominick when I was 18 years old. I thought I'd never be happy again! Thanks to all the wonderful women at Rose of Sharon and the amazing programs they have, I overcame the intense sadness and learned how to grieve my loved ones past, present and future. At 20, I had my second son, Jayson. After leaving a tough situation with my son, I had nothing and felt alone. A friend of mine mentioned Rose of Sharon and I'm so glad I reached out! I've made some amazing friends and reconnected with old ones. The joy, love, compassion and support my son and I have received from Rose of Sharon is so overwhelming (in the best way possible) and beautiful. My son always looks forward to going to programs. From stroller walks to yoga to learning mindfulness and how to cook healthier meals, the programs are endless and so helpful! I've learned how to be a better parent, cook better meals for my son and I, and when and how to potty train! It's also amazing for socializing not only ourselves but our little ones too. I've struggled a lot with being a single parent and can't explain how thankful I am for all the love and support I've received from Rose of Sharon. I know they give that same love and support to every single parent and child that walks through their door. They've created a second home for me and my son where we feel safe and I can't begin to explain how much my son and I needed that! I will forever be thankful as I am for everyone at Rose of Sharon.



**Katie with her little boy, Jayson.**



**Reading a book together at bedtime.**



**Jayson photobombing Mom's picture.**

# Sally's Story



Sally enjoying the great outdoors.

*"It's good to know that, even during uncertain times, young mothers could count on RoS to continue supporting their basic needs."*



I learned about the services offered by Rose of Sharon (RoS) in an article in the local newspaper in late 2017. At the time, I already volunteered at my children's school but was considering other organizations to volunteer with. The article really sparked an interest in me - RoS offered schooling (including parenting/prenatal education and cooking) and life coaching to young mothers. As a mother of 2 young kids myself, RoS's Mission Statement - **empowering young mothers to embrace their strengths and support the future they envision for themselves and their children** - inspired me to help these young mothers too! When I first joined Rose of Sharon's volunteers in January 2018, I was assigned to Rosie's Closet. Weekly, I would unpack and organize donated clothing, hygiene products, baby items (diapers & wipes), toys, food and small household items. I also made weekly trips to local clothing/home décor stores to pick up items donated to RoS. Twice a month, the girls would 'shop' at Rosie's Closet for items that they and their babies needed. I loved meeting and helping the young ladies who visited during Rosie's Closet days.

When COVID-19 hit in early 2020, RoS had to adapt and transform Rosie's Closet: the food security program was launched. Late in 2020, I returned to RoS to assist staff with the weekly food security program. Per week, we pack food, diapers, wipes, hygiene products, clothes, etc., and tailor deliveries to each mother. Other volunteers deliver these items to our young ladies the next day. It's good to know that, even during uncertain times, young mothers could count on RoS to continue supporting their basic needs.

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*\*Our Food Security & Rosie's Closet programs currently support 140+ young families each month thanks to volunteer and donor support.*

Why I give to Rose of Sharon...

# Picone Real Estate



Vincent Picone at the 2nd Annual Charity Golf Classic

PICONE  
REAL ESTATE

*"I am in awe at these young women's dedication to making a better life for themselves and their babies."*



At Picone Real Estate, we believe in building strong communities and understand that requires taking action. Since 2018 we are proud to share that we have been supporting Rose of Sharon (RoS) through sponsorships, fundraising, and volunteering. We have had the opportunity to get an inside look at the great work accomplished by RoS and are happy to continue our support by sponsoring the annual golf tournament and Diaperama: a diaper drive organized in collaboration with Market Brewing Company. We love actively contributing to community building and know that supporting organizations like RoS is crucial.

My wife and I are raising our growing family, and as many of you know, as rewarding as it is, juggling work and home life can be a challenge. Acknowledging how hard this is, I can't help but think about these young women. Imagine being 17 years old, being pregnant through a pandemic with little to no support, and then welcoming a baby into the world while continuing high school. I am in awe at these young women's dedication to making a better life for themselves and their babies. Where would they be without support? How much further along might they be if we supported them more?

Through Picone Real Estate, we have witnessed first-hand the programs and services provided by RoS; helping these young women meet their goals by providing them with the tools and resources to succeed. My team and I are passionate about personally supporting these caring young mothers and their infants. These young women are inspiring, and we are proud to say that Picone Real Estate is helping to be a part of their story and helping build strong communities for generations to come.

**Picone Real Estate launched the 1st Charity Golf Classic and has been Presenting Sponsor every year since!**



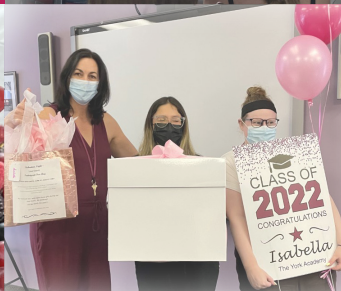


# Happy Retirement, Melene!

After 13 years of wonderful service, we at Rose of Sharon sincerely thank head teacher **Melene Popa** for her sheer dedication and passion toward providing our girls with the best quality education and options for their futures.



*"Education is not the  
filling of a pot but  
the lighting of a fire."*  
– W.B. Yeats





# Congratulations



## 2022 York Academy Graduates



### SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CELEBRATION NIGHT SPONSORS:



Wealth Management  
Dominion Securities



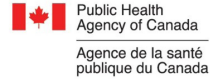
KNIGHTS  
OF COLUMBUS

BISHOP ROBERT  
CLUNE COUNCIL,  
No. 11535

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# Donor Support

*As a registered charity, Rose of Sharon relies on the financial contributions of individuals, businesses, service groups, community partners, foundations and grant funders to finance 100% of the free programs and services that we offer. Thank you to our generous donors:*



Sisters of the Good Shepherd



Vaughan Food Bank



Johansen Larsen Foundation



Sun Life



Wealth Management  
Dominion Securities



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS





# Financial Report

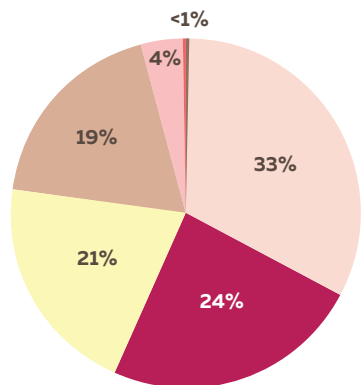
April 1, 2021 to  
March 31, 2022

## Revenues

### Legend (Revenues)

Federal Government	\$237,807
Provincial Government	\$1,800
Municipal Government	\$310,409
Catholic Charities	\$263,522
Foundations/Grants	\$47,637
Donations/Fundraising	\$417,489
Other Revenue	\$1,990

\$1,280,654

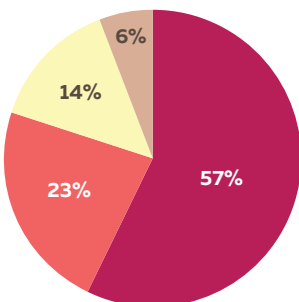


## Expenses

### Legend (Expenses)

Program Costs	\$684,398
Admin Salaries & Benefits	\$283,785
Operating Costs	\$166,155
Occupancy Costs	\$73,611

\$1,207,949





# Community Support

## Thank you

To our amazing volunteers and donors for their continued support during challenging times.





# Rose of Sharon

SERVICES FOR YOUNG MOTHERS

CONNECT  
WITH US

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WEBSITE: [www.roseofsharon.com](http://www.roseofsharon.com)



FACEBOOK

Rose of Sharon Services  
for Young Mothers



INSTAGRAM

@RoseofSharonYoungMothers



TWITTER

@RoseOfSharon\_YR



LINKEDIN

Rose of Sharon Services  
for Young Mothers

LAUNCHING  
FALL 2022

**PARENTS**  
connect.ca



Charity Registration Number:  
13323 5903 RR0001