

SOS Insights

from my desk to your heart

There is an expression that says that when one person suffers in our community, we all suffer. That's because poverty holds our entire community back from reaching our full potential!

Poverty is the most debilitated social issue we face as a society and has a dramatic effect on the mental, social and economic wellbeing of our area as a whole. It strips people of their self-esteem, robs children of their security and causes families to lose hope.

In "normal" times, even though poverty's impact is significant, it isn't always as visible. The pandemic changed all that.

COVID-19 has moved many individuals and families, who were already struggling, into a new category of vulnerability, where the prospect of homelessness is very real. These are our neighbours and our friends. Many who have lived in our community for years and now find themselves having to ask for help for the very first time. **Poverty in our community has become much more visible.**

That's why having a strong SOS matters.



You see, for more than 52 years, we've been filling the gaps when other agency or government support has not been available. And when COVID-19 forced a lock-down of many businesses and our very own Thrift Shop, we made sure that essential services continued for residents who were the most vulnerable.

And now, with the restart of many of our child, youth and family programs, families who have felt the emotional and financial brunt of the pandemic have a safe place to go for resources, connections and a respite from anxiety and worry. But we couldn't have done this without the help of our community who gave us the means to care for others.

As we approach the winter months and especially the holiday season, SOS is gearing up for what we expect to be one of the busiest times in recent memory.

More families will turn to SOS for grocery store gift cards, and gifts to put under their trees, during our Caring for Community at Christmas campaign.

More vulnerable seniors, who will not be able to see their loved ones during the holidays, will need comfort and assistance to get them through these isolating times.

And **more children and youth will need outlets** for positive support and peer connections as they navigate this new normal over the next few months.

The good news is that we live in a caring community that provides a safety net for those most in need. Time and time again, we've seen that when residents work together with shared purpose, **we lift people up, instead of leaving people out**. Our resilience in the face of adversity is what will get us through these next few months.

Poverty is real. But so is our collective capacity to help. To find out how you can support our [Caring for Community at Christmas](#) this year with a cash or toy donation, [click here](#).

Thank you so very much!



Susanna Newton
Executive Director
Society of Organized Services



[Donate to SOS Caring for Community at Christmas](#)