

SOS Annual Report

Rebuilding Community Capacity



2021-2022

Who We Are

SOS is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization meeting the needs and improving the lives of District 69 residents since 1968.

Our Mission:

To improve community through programming and provide a safety net for School District 69 residents.



Our Vision:

A supported and inclusive community.



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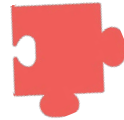


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Message from the Board Chair

I was elected to the SOS Board in 2016 and became Board Chair in 2021. In my career as a Community Psychologist I have seen the results of communities working together to ensure a healthy quality of life for all citizens. I joined SOS because I felt the values on which it was founded were aligned with that purpose.

This last year was like the Monty Python expression: “and now for something completely different.” Our volunteer Board of Directors met on zoom, squinting at screens to recognize peers with their longer COVID haircuts and casual clothes while we marveled at the creativity of staff who provided services to clients, going to homes offering games, food and social support. Restrictions at the Thrift Shop affected sales revenues significantly. The community, along with the support of 17 local businesses that joined our SOS Biz for Good program, helped carry us through this unprecedented time.

We had an astonishing response to our fundraising program Project Rebuild, raising nearly a million dollars. That allowed us to continue essential services and restart

other programs. When the Board of Directors phoned donors to thank them for getting us through this difficult period we heard heartwarming and humbling stories of community members’ commitment to helping others and accolades about SOS that reenergized us.

Community is not the structures, or a setting, but the experience and interdependence that people feel and the sense that members matter to each other when in need. This past year our community demonstrated that allegiance and it was my great privilege to be part of it. ~ Jennifer Mullett



Message from the Executive Director

SOS has been a staple in our community for over five decades. It has been a bastion of support, assisting residents through ups and downs, meeting needs, connecting people, and enriching lives. But in 2020, the rug was pulled out from under us. Like so many organizations, the pandemic made it difficult to continue operating. Somehow, thanks to your support, we managed to continue offering essential services.

In our 2020 Annual Report, we didn’t even take staff team photos as employee numbers were so low. This year, I’m happy to report, staff numbers are back up to pre-pandemic levels. We have reopened the majority of our programs, and now that we have the capacity,

we’re working on restarting the last few.

Volunteers are back! It’s so nice to see those smiling faces in the Thrift Shop, hear positive stories from our Child, Youth &

Family Program volunteers, and welcome our office volunteers back to support coordinators and the programs they deliver.

We have come a long way towards rebuilding your SOS, and in the process, have become better prepared to handle anything that comes our way. Thank you for your continued support. ~ Susanna Newton



Board of Directors



Dr. Jennifer Mullett Board Chair

Jennifer is a psychologist and adjunct professor dedicated to creating healthy communities.



Paul Ruffell Vice Chair

A consulting engineer for 40 years, Paul has volunteered on several private and non-profit Boards.



Martin Fereday Past Board Chair

A retired engineer and land developer, Martin now enjoys spending time with his family and volunteering.



Brandon Charlesworth Director

Raised in the Comox Valley, Brandon is a Chartered Professional Accountant and a partner at Robbins & Company.



Mike Cochrane Director

Mike works in renovation and home maintenance. His aunt, Edith Chamberlayne, was a founding member of SOS.



Jo Dunn Director

Jo continues to enjoy volunteering as he did throughout his 35-year career in telecommunications.



Dawn House Director

Dawn practiced law for the Ministry of the Attorney General and now enjoys volunteering.



Andrea Manson Director

Andy operated a private nursing business for 30 years. She believes in the importance of volunteerism.



Penny Shantz Director

Penny had a career with Scotiabank. She won an Olympic gold medal in 1988 with her curling team.



Anne Thompson Director

Anne's career and volunteer work has focused on empowering people to lead independent and healthy lives.

Nearly \$1 million raised

Despite the ongoing disruption caused by the pandemic for so many local businesses and individuals, the generous spirit of our community once again prevailed, helping us to raise \$953,336 towards our SOS Project Rebuild campaign goal of \$1 Million. This remarkable achievement set a new fundraising record for SOS, thanks to thousands of small and large donations that came in throughout the year.

When the campaign launched in April 2021, we took a multi-faceted approach to encourage the entire community to get behind our goal of reaching more and doing more for vulnerable residents. We knew that we would be facing new challenges as an organization in order to meet the growing needs of children, youth, families, seniors, and other adults in our region.

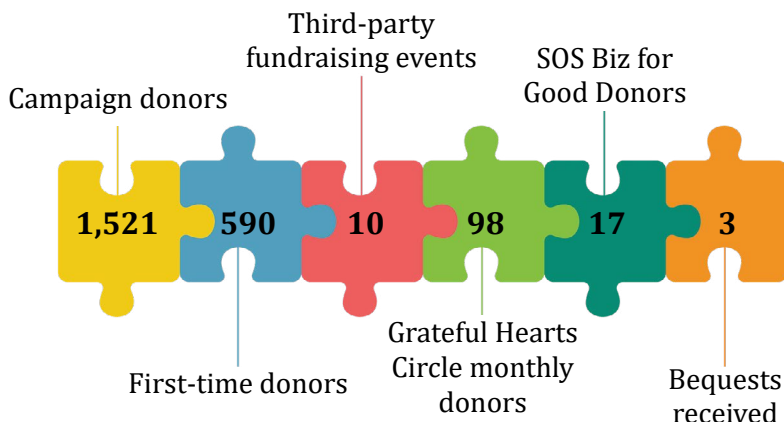
Early on in the campaign, we created a new business giving program called SOS Biz for Good that encouraged local companies to contribute \$1,000 or more to support the work we do.



SOS Project REBUILD

*Campaign to **Reach More Do More***

It was a resounding success and will continue as an ongoing initiative for developing deeper partnerships with our business community. (View them at sosd69.com/our-supporters/#biz-for-good). As always, we are grateful for the financial support we receive each year for our Caring for Community at Christmas program. 2021 was our 54th year for this important program that helps local low-income families and individuals celebrate Christmas with dignity.



The impact of the campaign will be far reaching. It will help to reduce poverty in our region, it will enable more kids to thrive and it will support more seniors to age in place comfortably.

SOS Programs



Essential Services



- Caring for Community at Christmas
- Counselling Referral
- Emergency Assistance & Advocacy
- Homeless Prevention Program
- Income Tax
- Meals on Wheels
- Oceanside Better at Home
- Seniors' Advocacy Services



Children, Youth & Families



- After School Education Assistance
- GradWear
- Family Night
- Kids Movement: Play, Express & Grow
- Recreation Assistance for Children & Youth
- School Night Out
- TIC TAC
- Youth Open Space



On hold due to the pandemic

- Medical Appointment Transportation Service
- Men's & Women's Personal Growth programs
- Transportation to non-medical appointments
- Seniors Connecting

Program Information

Children, Youth & Families

April 2021 - March 2022

Time in Comfort for Tots & Caregivers (TIC TAC)

A fun and welcoming space for young children to make connections and play while parents/family caregivers join in or take a break. We continued to deliver crafts and snacks to our TIC TAC families, and in our summer programs, we offered outdoor programs at Foster Park in Parksville and Storybook Village in Qualicum. Outdoors, we were able to provide programming in a larger capacity while keeping safe. In September, we began providing indoor programming at a reduced capacity with safety protocols.

"I wish we came to the program sooner, because it is so amazing, and we had so much fun!"

Total participants: Parksville: 161 Qualicum: 88

Kids Movement: Play, Express & Grow

Connection and creativity inspire confidence, friendship and a healthy self-image for children in grades 4-6. Program participants received deliveries until the summer when programs resumed at a reduced capacity. Participants hiked and paddleboarded among other activities. In the fall, in-center weekly programming resumed at both sites with safety protocols. Staff and participants were overjoyed to be reunited!

"I do a lot of things here that I've always wanted to try that I'm not able to do at home because we don't have the stuff."

Total participants: Parksville: 40 Qualicum: 34

Family Night

A safe and comfortable place where families can come spend quality time together, while SOS takes care of dinner. We continued to deliver hot meals prepared by our volunteer chefs until we were able to safely re-open our doors in the summer of 2021. We picked up where we left off with fun, interactive, family bonding activities, conversation and a home-cooked meal.

"It always feels like a family reunion coming back to family night."

Total participants: Parksville: 121 Qualicum: 95

Program Information

Children, Youth & Families

April 2021 - March 2022

School Night Out

A safe place for youth in grades 7-9 to express themselves, go on outings and connect with peers. Program materials were delivered until the summer, when participants were welcomed back at a reduced capacity. In the fall, weekly programs resumed and youth could drop-in at their convenience. Activities included laser tag, art projects and outdoor play. Staff also connected with youth and provided additional resources if needed.

"My daughter has been really struggling with making friends and this group has been such a breath of fresh air for her."

Total participants: Parksville: 18 Qualicum: 21

Youth Open Space

A positive place for teens in grades 10-12 to connect with others, play music, create art and receive support. The goal is to create an environment where youth can shed their responsibilities and just play. Deliveries and check-ins were done until the summer when pop-up programs took place. In September 2021, youth were welcomed back in-centre every week on a drop-in basis. The Youth Instagram page @sosyouthgroup has continued to keep in touch with youth and share information.

"I always get so sad when I have to miss a session. I just love it here!"

Total participants: Parksville: 11 Qualicum: 13

GradWear

Helps local grads look and feel their best for graduation ceremonies, without all the costs. The program provides new and gently used dresses, gowns, tuxes and suits, plus shoes and accessories, for \$5. Grads and their dates made private shopping appointments, or came in with a school group. A volunteer assisted with alterations.

"As a single mother of 3, I had no idea how I was going to afford a dress for my daughter until I learned about GradWear."

Total participants: 27

Program Information

Children, Youth & Families

April 2021 - March 2022

After School Education Assistance

After school professional, one-on-one tutoring services assist students in grades 6-12 in Math and English at no cost. Light snacks are also provided to students. The program has expanded to a third tutor, specifically for higher level Mathematics.

"Sometimes the lack of understanding reflects a lack of skills, knowledge, and abilities from an earlier grade, which leaves the participants unprepared for the next grade. As tutors, we have been able to fill the gaps, as we are not grade-oriented." (SOS Tutor)

Total participants: 36

Recreation Assistance for Children & Youth

Low income families receive funds to help register children and youth in recreational activities that they would otherwise be unable to afford.

The program also assists with applying for provincial sports grants.

"It has helped my son make new friends, learn new skills, and be an active part of our community. I am so very thankful for this program that better our children's lives."

Children and youth assisted: 54 Activities funded: 63

Caring for Community at Christmas

Provides special gifts to local children and youth in low-income families. Adults receive grocery store gift cards. A drop-off tent was set up outside due to the ongoing pandemic, and all gifts were wrapped in baskets to minimize touching.

Christmas stockings are assembled by local Newcomers' Clubs and 78 were delivered by SOS volunteers to seniors who are isolated.

"The program allows people who have lower incomes to be able to enjoy spending time with family and provide food and gifts for them, which is a show of love."

Adults: 869 Children and Youth: 952

Program Information

Adults & Seniors

April 2021 - March 2022

Oceanside Better at Home

Provides a range of non-medical support services to help seniors aged 65+ remain in their own homes. The program is administered by SOS in partnership with the United Way British Columbia and funded by the Government of BC.

A grocery shopping and delivery service was introduced early on in the pandemic and continued. Friendly Visiting transitioned to phone visiting.

"Those conversations with the friendly voices of the volunteers, or the person delivering the groceries, or doing the cleaning, it's a really important response to isolation."

Housekeeping Services: 1,291 Grocery Trips: 257

Yard Work: 82 Friendly Visiting: 322

Seniors Advocacy Services

Assists seniors in finding supports and solutions through SOS programs and other resources. The program provides emergency financial aid for things like food and medicine, helps seniors fill out government forms, provides advocacy and helps seniors work through various concerns.

"I didn't have enough money. I had to choose between rent, food and medication.

This program has made a huge difference."

Client appointments: 1,495 Vouchers issued for emergencies: 101

Check-in phone calls to seniors

Although some of our seniors programs had to remain on hold due to the pandemic, we continued to check in with seniors by phone, and during two zoom meetings.

"I think it's so wonderful that you're doing this. It's good to know that seniors have someone checking in on them."

Phone support: 528 calls

Program Information

Adults & Seniors

April 2021 - March 2022

Counselling Referral

Provides referrals for counseling to low-income individuals, couples, and families. Sessions are led by local, professional counsellors helping residents work through challenges and develop strategies to cope, and create greater happiness in their lives. Fees are determined on an individual basis, and are subsidized by SOS. The program is partially funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Referrals and sessions resumed in-person once pandemic restrictions allowed.

"Thank you for the financial support for counselling. I think about so many women and men who never come forward to talk to a professional to help and heal."

Total referrals: 90

Homeless Prevention Program

Assists with housing and supports for a targeted group of residents who are homeless or at immediate risk of homelessness. This program has continued throughout the pandemic, helping to house residents while supporting others to maintain housing. The program is funded by the BC Government.

"Not only does this program bridge a housing access problem, but it also lends a hand of support, so you can figure out who you are, what you have to offer, and focus on the long-term without judgement or blame."

Total clients served: 85 adults and 10 children

Parksville Qualicum Haven House

SOS works in partnership with the Haven Society to provide a safe, temporary home for women and their children fleeing abuse in our area. This partnership began in 2013. The PQHH also provides emotional support and advocacy, and a safe place to begin healing.

"It's a safe, warm, comfy home where I can feel calm and gather my thoughts."

Shelter provided for: 6 women and their children

Bed Stays: 364 Crisis calls: 74

Program Information

Adults & Seniors

April 2021 - March 2022

Emergency Assistance & Advocacy

Provides assistance in cases of hardship with essentials like food, medicine, clothing and household items. Advocacy assistance helps residents overcome financial obstacles. Hot showers are available including a towel and toiletries. Referrals to Kerry's Car & Truck Service help with safety related repairs on vehicles.

"It's not easy with the cost of living lately that keeps going up, to put food on the table. I know when I have to see the program coordinator, help is always there with a very friendly loving smile and caring heart."

Essential vouchers issued: 451 Thrift Shop vouchers issued: 35

Advocacy meetings: 166 Showers provided: 158

Meals On Wheels

Supports health and independence by helping residents access hot, nutritious meals. The food is prepared at Arrowsmith Lodge and volunteers deliver the meals. The menu is prepared under the guidance of a certified dietitian and offered on a 6-week rotation. Interest in the program rose significantly this year.

"I don't have anybody here to cook for me. This makes life easier. The soups are fab, the desserts are wonderful, and the volunteers are so pleasant."

Meals provided: 17,874 Average monthly clients: 110

Income Tax

Provides support for low-income residents by filing basic income taxes at no cost. Filing taxes improves access to government benefits, support services and tax credits. This year the majority of taxes were filed over the phone due to the ongoing pandemic. Accommodations were made for people who were unable to do them over the phone.

"I am 80 years old, I couldn't afford to be going to an accountant, and especially for the simplicity of what I've got."

Total participants: 1,053 Total tax returns filed: 1,081

Thrift Shop

April 2021 - March 2022

**Main
funder
of SOS
programs &
services**

STAFF

There are 36 employees at the Thrift Shop, led by Paulette Harcourt who stepped forward as Manager in May, 2021. Several longtime staff members were promoted, Jackie Brice (19 years) became Assistant Manager, and Jessica King (16 years) and Diana Gorenko (18 years) became supervisors, joining Gwen Taylor (20 years), Tim McArdon (17 years) and Kim Harwood (6 years).



RECYCLING

By working with the Parksville Bottle and Recycling Depot, items that are not sellable are recycled and spared from the landfill. This includes toaster ovens, vacuum cleaners, old TV's, small appliances, used paint, and some metal.



HISTORY

First opened in 1969 on Morison Avenue in Parksville, SOS Thrift Shop was created to give SOS a secure funding base. After moving locations several times, it opened at its current location, 188 Hirst Ave. W., Parksville in 2003.



VOLUNTEERS

We now have 44 volunteers assisting at the Thrift Shop and we couldn't do it without them! Before the pandemic, there were 130 volunteers at the Thrift Shop. When we reopened in June 2020, we welcomed back 30 volunteers.



SALES & DONATIONS

Large furniture and appliances were once again accepted in the summer as space and staffing levels increased. Sales continued to increase throughout the year thanks to generous donations and loyal customers.

Volunteering with SOS

George Godfrey likes getting involved in his community, that's why he signed up to volunteer with SOS when he moved to the area four years ago. Today, he continues to see great value in volunteering with SOS.

"I learned quickly of SOS and the unique role it plays in providing the community-wide safety net," he said. "It gets me out of the house two days a week — a benefit to my wife also! — doing something that makes me feel useful. It gives me a focus every week."

Godfrey has volunteered as a driver in several areas at SOS — the SOS Meals On Wheels program, the Medical Appointment Transportation Service, and in the Oceanside Better at Home program. He said delivering groceries and meals has helped him become more familiar with the geography of the region, and he enjoys meeting and assisting many residents.



SOS volunteer coordinator Heather Jones said that even though the volunteer numbers have been lower than in previous years, SOS volunteers still logged more than 6,500 hours in the last fiscal year, which SOS estimates has a monetary value of about \$130,000 (at \$20 an hour). "That's an amazing amount of support offered by our volunteers and an incredible resource for our community," she said.



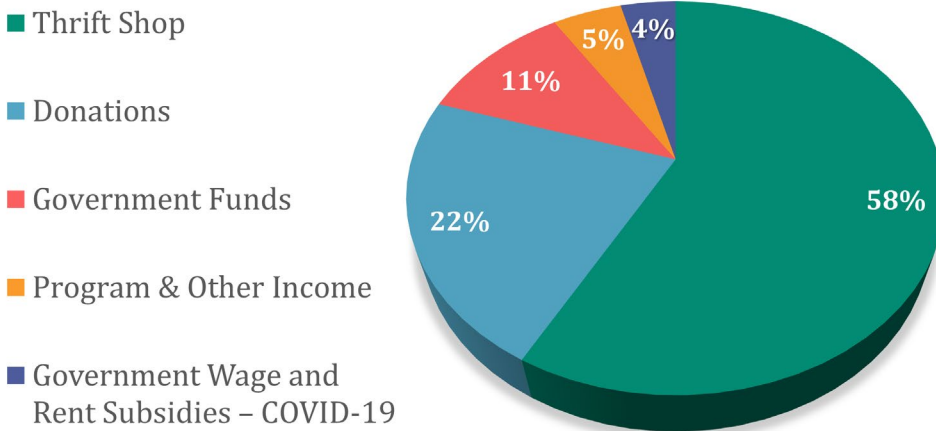
Active
Members
1,417

Active
Volunteers
212

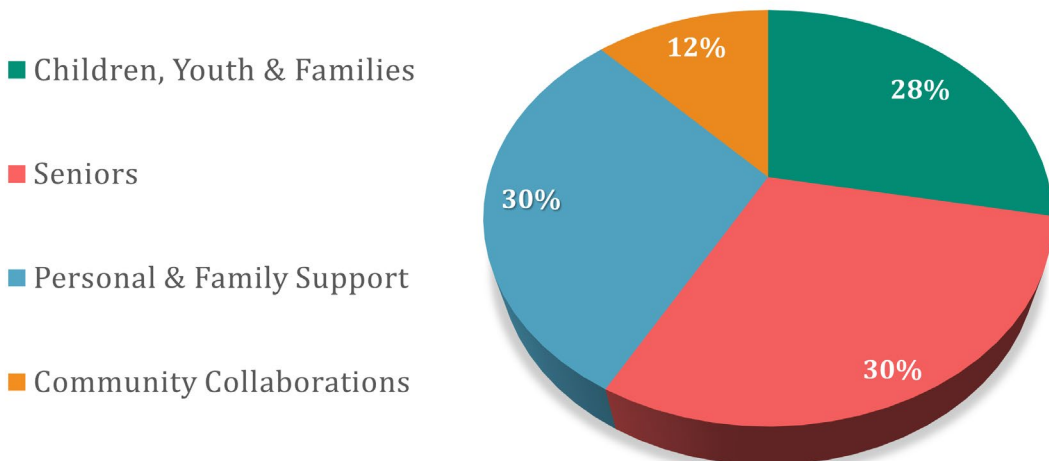


Financial Information

Revenue Sources



Program Expenses



Condensed Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Position

	2022	2021
Assets:		
Current assets	\$1,485,462	\$998,309
Cash & short term investments - internally restricted	1,269,500	1,223,500
Long term investments	179,974	31,520
Long term investments - internally restricted	600,000	600,000
Capital assets	<u>2,502,127</u>	<u>2,572,996</u>
	<u>\$6,037,063</u>	<u>\$5,426,325</u>

Liabilities & Net Assets:

Current liabilities	\$240,265	\$147,395
Deferred revenue	186,684	136,863
Deferred capital asset contribution	37,421	40,362
Net assets	<u>5,572,693</u>	<u>5,101,705</u>
	<u>\$6,037,063</u>	<u>\$5,426,325</u>

Statement of Operations

Revenue:	\$4,354,759	\$3,655,914
Expenses:		
Management & administration	232,035	231,203
Programming & operations	3,543,111	2,647,872
Amortization & asset losses (gains)	<u>108,625</u>	<u>107,350</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>\$470,988</u>	<u>\$669,489</u>

Supporting both community and family

Don Cameron was a child of The Great Depression, but because he had a strong and resilient mother, he came out unscathed.

"I owe everything to my women," he said. "I do. I've been spoiled."

SOS received a series of significant donations from Anne and Don Cameron. Anne — Don's late wife — was another shining example of a strong woman. That's why Don is excited about the assistance his donation will provide.

"I hope that it does a lot of work for the women in our communities," he said.

Don discovered SOS when he took part in the SOS Seniors Connecting program, where

he was able to meet and socialize with local people and enjoy educational speakers.

"I like the whole idea of SOS," he said. "To me, it's a fine organization."

By including SOS in his estate planning, Don can ensure he is caring for his family and his community at the same time.

The Camerons' donations came in the form of RIFs (Retirement Income Funds). Don recommends others donate in this way. Not

only will his donation give a hand up to struggling women, it will also help reduce poverty, support local seniors and give kids the opportunity to thrive.



Our SOS Staff Team



Staff Years of Service

5 years

Kimberly Harwood,
Thrift Shop Operations
Supervisor

Greta Hogan, Homeless
Prevention Program
Coordinator

Aimee Pope, Thrift Shop
Merchandiser

Teresa Siscar, Thrift Shop
Merchandiser

10 years

Melanie Stokes, Thrift
Shop Merchandiser

15 years

Jim Husband, Custodian

Jessica King, Thrift
Shop Operations/Office
Supervisor

Rodger Sefton, Thrift
Shop Shipper Receiver

Dawn Kristjanson, Thrift
Shop Merchandiser



Thrift Shop Team



Essential Services & Administration Team



Child, Youth & Family Programs Team

Collaborations

SOS collaborates with a number of organizations for the betterment of our local residents



Supporting Community Together



District 69 Society of Organized Services

245 Hirst Avenue West | PO Box 898 Parksville BC V9P 2G9 | 250-248-2093

744 Primrose Street | Qualicum Beach BC | 250-752-2040

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Charitable Number: 107021537RR0001