



Christie
Refugee
Welcome Centre

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2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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“ At Christie Refugee Welcome Centre families find refuge in a place they had to start calling home. As they navigate through various aspects of their settlement journey, they start to feel a sense of empowerment and strength as they make their way out into the world, embracing what comes their way.”

– CRWC Staff



Mission, Vision, Values

OUR MISSION

We are a Christian organization serving and advocating for refugee families by providing safe, temporary housing, initial settlement services, and follow-up support. We influence and engage the broader public through education and advocacy networks.

OUR VISION

The Christie Refugee Welcome Centre is a place of welcome, safety and support for refugees.

OUR VALUES

- We are **Christian**
- We respond to refugees with **dignity and respect**
- We are **resilient and responsive** to the changing needs of refugees
- We are **committed to children and families**
- We **partner** with others to serve refugees more effectively
- We are **advocates** for refugees



Christie's shelter and outreach teams, together with our Executive Director, at this year's Outreach Christmas Party

Leadership Report

2025 was an exciting year of beginnings. In February 2025, Christie officially opened Anchor House, a 12-bed shelter for unaccompanied and separated refugee youth aged 16-18 years old. This is the first emergency housing program in Canada dedicated to refugee youth who are in the country without a parent or guardian. This is a new chapter for the Centre for Refugee Children which in 2026 will celebrate its fifth year of groundbreaking work with unaccompanied and separated children and youth. The ability to now provide housing as a direct service is a great compliment to the settlement and legal support we have been engaged in these past few years.

Christie residents welcomed eight newborns in 2025, adding to 11 babies born in 2024. This is a new trend for our shelter, and our staff team have been incredibly busy caring for and supporting all the new mothers, families and babies. This level of care is emblematic of the staff at Christie and the extraordinary dedication and resilience they must have to provide the high-level care needed each and every day in a shelter.

As a family shelter, our responsibility to the children living at Christie is incredibly important to us and a key driver of our work. This past year we launched monthly cultural field trips to provide new families the opportunity to discover Toronto – places that make this city so great including Ripley’s Aquarium, Casa Loma, the ROM and other landmarks. Planning also began for a youth program to start in March 2026. These initiatives along with our existing after-school children’s program and summer camp will strengthen our focus to ensure that children

and youth are fully supported during their time at Christie and have built a foundation for future success after they move out.

We’re excited to see what 2026 brings as we continue the process of redeveloping our current property into a purpose-built shelter with transitional housing and community space. Though a couple of years away from shovels in the ground, there is exciting work ahead to make it a reality.

As we build upon our work to ensure that refugee families forcibly displaced by external factors are supported to have fruitful lives in Canada, we are also cognizant of shifting global perspectives, world events and government responses and actions. In this current environment, it is a good reminder of Canada’s important commitment to respect the international rules-based order and our duty to protect refugees.

Thank you for your connection to Christie. As we now find ourselves in a period of changing public and government sentiment towards refugees, your support is incredibly meaningful to us. We can’t thank you enough and are encouraged and inspired that you care about the work that we do.

Sincerely,



Bruce Cameron,
Board Chair



Manny Wong,
Executive Director

IMPACT Shelter

Our **Shelter Team** welcomes new families to Christie Refugee Welcome Centre. Families seeking shelter at Christie are newly-arrived refugee claimant families who have arrived to Canada within the last six months and have no place to stay upon their arrival to Toronto. In partnership with the City of Toronto, our 76 bed program can support up to 30 families at any given time.

In a family's first few days at Christie, our Shelter Team orients families to their new living environments. We guide families through their refugee claim process, help register children and adults for school and English classes, and connect families to healthcare services, recreation programs, financial assistance and more. After a few weeks, our Shelter Team supports families with their housing search; intensively helping families to find and secure permanent housing – one of the most important milestones in their settlement process.

BELOW: Families of two are most common at Christie.

Families sheltered: **53**

Newborn babies sheltered: **9**

Pregnant women sheltered: **10**

Residents who accessed basic needs: **100%**

Basic needs include personal care products, transportation supports, diapers and other baby products, school supplies and winter clothing.

Families who received support with immigration (i.e. support to ensure their refugee claim process is submitted completely and correctly): **100%**

Residents who accessed on-site employment supports: **49**

Adults enrolled in ESL classes: **5**

Families reunified: **1**

Children served by Christie's After-School Children's Program: **23**

% of residents who received care from Christie's on-site health clinic: **100%**

Residents (current and former) seen by Christie's on-site health clinic: **283**

Families housed: **31** or **58%** of families who moved in to Christie in 2025 were successfully moved out of the shelter in the same year

Walk-In individuals helped to find alternative shelter space: **24**

These are individuals who arrive at Christie looking for shelter space but whom Christie cannot admit into its shelter due to unavailable rooms or eligibility requirements.

Children enrolled in public school: **18**

Children enrolled in daycare: **3**



IMPACT Outreach

Our **Outreach Team** provides ongoing settlement support to the refugee families of Christie Refugee Welcome Centre who move out of the Centre and may continue to require follow-up settlement support once living independently in the community.

Developed in 2006 in response to the identified need for ongoing settlement support for shelter families as they transitioned from living at Christie into their own housing, the Outreach team helps families with advocacy and referrals, navigating new public systems, filling out forms, and most frequently – troubleshooting emergency housing, legal, immigration and financial situations as they arise.

Former residents served: **227**

Individuals supported to find employment: **83**

Individuals assisted to file their income taxes: **44**

Families supported to maintain their housing after moving out from Christie: **258**

Individuals who attended a settlement-related workshop: **556**

Outreach's settlement workshops cover topics including immigration, education, financial literacy, violence prevention and more.

Families provided with and/or supported with basic needs items: **189**

Basic needs can include grocery store gift cards, transportation supports, diapers and other baby products, school supplies and other miscellaneous items.

BELOW: Our Outreach and Employment staff together with former residents brainstorming a new Women's Program.



Individuals supported to maintain their housing after moving out from Christie:

258

IMPACT Centre for Refugee Children

Some refugee children and youth arrive to Canada on their own. In an unfamiliar country, without their parents, they are expected to navigate the refugee claim process alone.

The Centre for Refugee Children, founded as an initiative between Christie Refugee Welcome Centre and the FCJ Refugee Centre in 2021, provides direct settlement services to unaccompanied and separated refugee children. The Centre for Refugee Children consists of settlement workers and housing workers who provide unaccompanied refugee children with needed immigration, education, legal, shelter, and financial support and referrals.

With much anticipation, the Centre for Refugee Children launched **Anchor House**, Canada's first dedicated emergency housing program for unaccompanied refugee youth, at the onset of 2025. Anchor House can house up to 12 refugee youth aged 16-18. Besides providing emergency shelter, Centre for Refugee children staff provide on-site case management and settlement supports to Anchor House's residents, helping young people navigate their refugee claims, apply for income support, get started in school, learn their new community and more.



World Refugee Day at CRWC in 2025

Refugee children and youth provided with access to CRC's Emergency Support Fund: **34**

CRC's Emergency Support Fund provides refugee children and youth with one-time emergency expenses for things such as immigration applications, housing assistance, winter clothing, etc.

Unaccompanied and separated refugee children and youth served: **224**

Refugee youth housed at Anchor House in 2025: **17**

Refugee youth supported by CRC staff in their admissibility hearing process: **189**

Admissibility hearings are held by Canadian border authorities to determine if an individual can come into or stay in Canada.

Top countries of origin of CRC youth:

- 1 India**
- 2 Iran**
- 3 Nigeria**
- 4 Türkiye**
- 5 Romania**
- 6 Ethiopia**
- 7 Pakistan**
- 8 Sri Lanka**
- 9 Bangladesh**
- 10 Uganda**

OUR WORK Shelter



Women's Wellness Program sessions offered:

23

Primary care appointments held at Christie's on-site health clinic:

827

The Shelter's Women's Wellness Program Spring/Summer 2025 Graduation Day

Vaccinations provided by Christie's on-site health clinic:

81+

After-School Children's Program classes offered:

240

Average # of meals provided per day:

139

Cultural Family Field Trips offered:

10

Monthly, Christie staff take families on field trips exploring aspects of Canadian culture. Locations have included the CN Tower, Casa Loma Winter Festival, Royal Ontario Museum and Art Gallery of Ontario.

Resident Meetings:

12

Resident meetings are held once per month, allowing shelter residents and staff to address concerns, issues, feedback with one another about improving Christie as a congregate shared living setting.

Special Events organized:

11

Special events celebrating Black History Month, Canada Day, Christmas, International Women's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Back-to-School are regularly planned for residents by the Shelter Team each year.

OUR WORK Outreach

Consultations provided
(in-person, email,
virtual, telephone):

1,205+

Workshops
provided:

23

Employment sessions
offered:

42



Our Outreach team took 12 former families to a 5-day overnight summer camp this summer.

STORIES OF US

In our 37-year history, Christie Refugee Welcome Centre’s priority has always been to provide a warm welcome for refugee claimant families, ensuring they receive the care, support, and assistance they need to pursue their refugee claim and begin their new lives in Canada.

Our Shelter, Outreach, and Centre for Refugee Children teams each play a specific and important role in supporting our clients, whether it’s our Shelter team admitting a newly arrived single mother and her young son to Christie or our Outreach team working with a family who may have lost a job and their primary source of income after having moved out. Our Centre for Refugee team plays a pivotal role in housing young, unaccompanied

refugee claimant youth, walking with them as they navigate a complicated refugee process not built for young people.

The following stories provide a glimpse into some of the refugee families and young people we serve.



At Christie, I got support. I got things for my baby. I had staff I could go to and pour my heart out. From the moment I arrived here with my family and had my baby, I was not alone here.”

– T, who lived at Christie in 2025.



Images of some of the first refugee families at Christie Refugee Welcome Centre in 1989

Gaera's Story

Two days after Gaera and her five-year-old son Berhan arrived to Christie Refugee Welcome Centre, Berhan would be celebrating his next birthday. Without family to celebrate alongside or money to buy a few small gifts for him, the gift for Gaera and her son was safe shelter at Christie.

Like many refugee families, Gaera admits her arrival to Toronto and Christie was one of the most stressful periods of her life. She had arrived at Christie's doors after having lived three long months in a hotel, due to the lack of available family shelter space across the City of Toronto at the time of her arrival. Originally from Ethiopia, the family claimed refugee status at the airport upon which they were connected to Toronto Shelter and Support Services who made the connection to an emergency hotel and eventually, Christie.

Genet's son has a hearing disability and was unable to hear when the family arrived to Christie. The family was quickly connected to Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children and their Otolaryngology Department. The Shelter Team also quickly registered Berhan for public school while mom was enrolled into English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

"The language has been the most frustrating when it comes to integrating into Canada," admits Gaera remembering back to her first whirlwind weeks at Christie.

"I knew no English when I arrived."

"But Christie staff have really supported me – from helping me apply for a work

permit, helping me open a bank account in my early days to, more recently, guiding me through the housing process."

Most significant for Gaera however has been the support her young son Berhan has received for his hearing disability. Since arriving, he has connected to the right medical supports and received a hearing aid. He was also eventually transferred to an elementary school with a tailored special education program where he has learned sign language and speech therapy. This past summer, Berhan was very proud to show the children at Christie's summer camp how his hearing aid was removed and re-inserted (all by himself!) so that he could participate in swimming!

"Healthcare and more specifically the children's health support that I have received here in Canada has been very important and invaluable to me," says Gaera.

Gaera is now working part-time, saving, and exploring both transitional housing and private market rent options.

"When I came to Canada, I thought I would find a house quickly; I thought maybe it would take six months to find my own place. I am realizing it takes much longer. But I am grateful for the people who work at Christie who have been so supportive, showing me everything I need to know."

Bea's Story

Outfitted with smaller shelter rooms that typically cannot accommodate more than four persons, Christie Refugee Welcome Centre rarely admits larger refugee families due to our size constraints. When we do, these families often become unforgettable to our staff team and their time at Christie becomes a defining memory in Christie history.

Bea is a single mom from Romania who arrived to Christie in Spring 2025 with her three sons (ages 4, 10, and 14) and mother.

No one in the family spoke English when the family first arrived at Christie, and the shelter team was quick to connect them to local schools for the children, language classes for Bea and her mother, and important medical appointments to address outstanding health issues the family had.

For this family, outstanding health issues were quickly compounded by the new acclimatisation to Canadian food, as it became evident Bea's children were having an especially difficult time eating North American food they were not used to and did not like; for weeks, the children ate very little. The kitchen team at Christie responded with creative solutions that allowed the family to eat and prepare their own ethnic foods so that the children got the nutrition their growing bodies needed. This brought much needed relief to Bea who could focus on her housing search and continue taking care of her own health.

Bea quickly found a job and moved forward in her language classes, using her strong

interpersonal skills to practise her English daily, in addition to creating an valuable network of support for herself and her family in Canada. She and her family became heavily involved in Christie's events, field trips, and often helped unprompted around the shelter with keeping the Centre clean and beautiful. Bea's mom even became the sole caretaker of Christie's community garden.

In late 2025, many good things came together at once when Bea's family received a positive decision on their refugee claim and the family secured housing with the steady and consistent advocacy supports from Christie's Housing Team.

In the poetic timing that is life, the family moved out of Christie on the day of Christie's annual Christmas celebrations – an evening where resident refugee families are encouraged to reflect on the role hope, light, family and the strength of being together has for us all. As all five family members gathered their belongings in taxis and were ushered into the next journey of their settlement in Canada, the Christie family was able to see them off and wish them well.

A First Summer Camp Experience

Deep in northern Ontario, surrounded by the forests and lakes of Ontario's Madawaska Valley region, ten former Christie families (who had recently moved out of the shelter) found themselves experiencing their very first overnight summer camp experience. In partnership with The Boundless School, an outdoor adventure camp turned private high school, Christie's outreach staff traveled the four hours by bus to bring ten refugee families to 600 acres of wilderness for a week of outdoor learning and adventure.

For Rihanna* who lived at Christie for just over one year, it was her and her mom's first-time canoeing, hiking, kayaking, white water rafting, and making s'mores; dozens of new experiences in just a few short days. The teen admits it felt like they were away for weeks and it was a getaway the family deeply needed. Between adjusting to living in their own apartment—juggling school and work and training classes—to acclimating to a different country with a vastly different culture from their own and a city as fast-paced as Toronto, the slowdown in nature came at the right time.

It was also the family's first time in northern Ontario, a reminder to them and other families of how large and expansive both Canada and Ontario are. The family admits the largeness of Ontario and its many settlement possibilities are often forgotten on refugee newcomers, who arrive to the first place of safety within Canada, usually a city, and don't get the chance to explore regions or towns outside of it.

The views of hills, cliffs, forests, and lakes are something she says she'll never forget.

Rihanna, who is a middle schooler, was grateful for the opportunity to experience the Canadian rite of passage that is overnight summer camp, an experience most teenagers take for granted but an experience that for underemployed refugee families is almost always unattainable. She was proud to bring the stories of all she experienced and saw back to her friends when school started in September.

**name has been changed*



STORIES OF US

Anchor House

With much anticipation, the Centre for Refugee Children officially and eagerly launched Anchor House, at the beginning of 2025.

Anchor House is Canada's first dedicated emergency housing program for unaccompanied refugee claimant youth. The site houses up to 12 refugee youth aged 16-18 who are here in Canada on their own, without a place to stay and navigating the refugee claim process alone. Since Anchor House opened in 2025, young teens from Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda and countries across the Middle East and South America have found a first home here in this three-story house turned emergency shelter, tucked away in a quiet, residential neighbourhood. With separate shared bedrooms for boys and girls, a family room, a study/activity room with desktop

computers, a recreational area and a large communal kitchen on the ground floor, Anchor House aims to feel more like a home than an emergency shelter.

Besides providing emergency housing, Anchor House staff also provide on-site case management and settlement supports to the shelter's teen residents, helping young people navigate complicated refugee claims, apply for income support, get enrolled in school, learn their new community and eventually find safe and appropriate permanent housing elsewhere in the city.

For iftar dinner, it has become tradition for Anchor House's residents and staff to gather in the site's communal kitchen to share the last iftar meal of Ramadan together, with many of the teen residents preparing traditional foods from their home country.

DID YOU KNOW?

Each year, approximately 400-500 unaccompanied and separated children come to Canada seeking asylum.

Most unaccompanied refugee youth in Toronto find themselves living in Toronto's homeless shelters, foster care, or with distant relatives and acquaintances.



Some of the CRC team at Anchor House

Partnerships

Thank you to our 2025 organizational partners.
We are deeply grateful for your continued partnership.





Christie kids with their favourite books at an IBBY reading session

Volunteer With Us

Together we can do so much more. You too can help refugee claimant families and unaccompanied youth settle and reconstruct their new lives in Toronto.

VISIT us. Stop by Christie or Anchor House, see our shelters, receive a tour and learn about our services.

VOLUNTEER. We're always looking for young mentors to work directly with our children and youth and make a lasting impact on their lives. Email volunteer@christiestretrc.com.

PARTNER with us. Join our team or corporate partners to make an impact through our charity events like RIDE for Refugee and World Refugee Day. You can also get involved via group volunteering and helping us with big maintenance projects.

FOLLOW us on Facebook and on Instagram @crwcTO or subscribe to our newsletter to stay up to date with our latest news, photos, and videos.

For more ways to get involved, email us at volunteer@christiestretrc.com or call us at 416.588.9277 x.111.

BELOW: Volunteers painting Christie's parking lot



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Thank You and List of Supporters

**Your support means the world to us.
We're grateful to have you on our team.**

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Thank you to the City of Toronto for their steady funding of Christie Refugee Welcome Centre and ensuring refugee claimants continue to get access to urgent shelter and support needs.

A special thank you to each of our individual donors. Whether you donated \$25 or \$2500 this year, your financial support helps us to be able to continue the work we do.

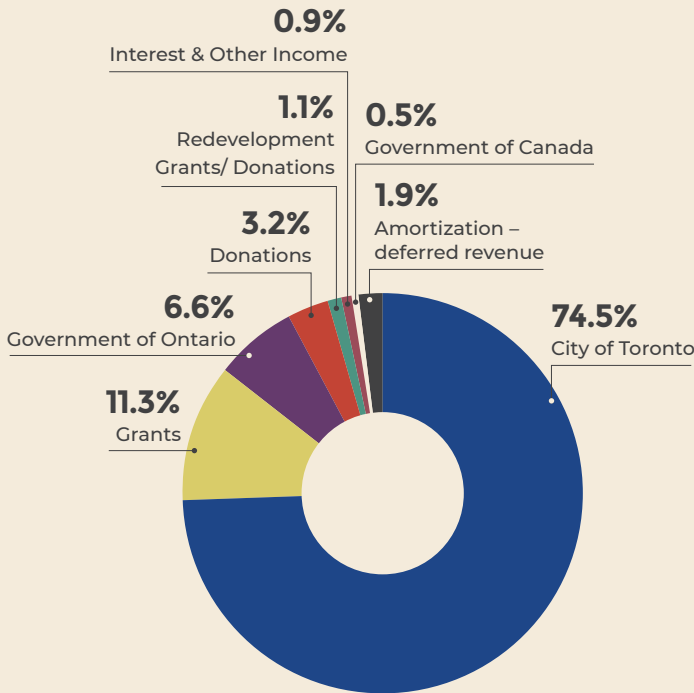


Christie and CRC staff, board members and residents at RIDE for Refuge 2025.

Financials

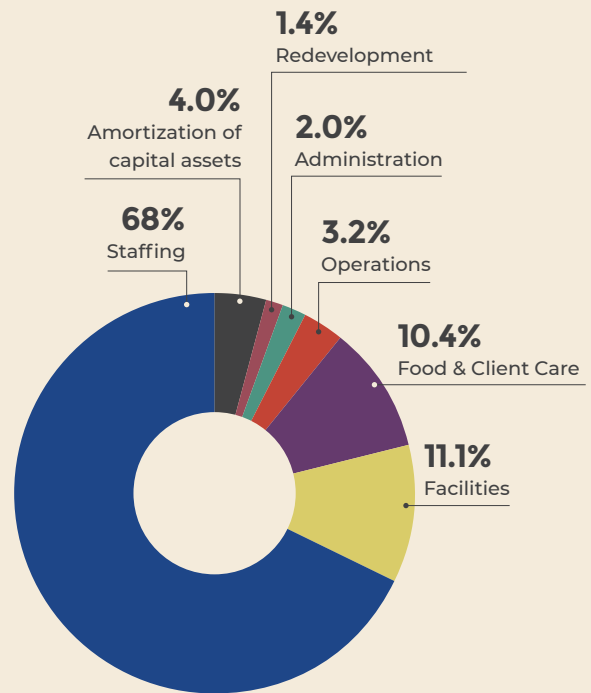
2025 REVENUE

\$3,860,660



2025 EXPENSES

\$3,824,198



Revenue		
	2025	2024
City of Toronto	\$2,875,422	\$2,294,907
Grants	\$437,635	\$366,027
Government of Ontario	\$253,045	\$568,881
Donations	\$122,869	\$175,523
Redevelopment	\$42,713	\$147,478
Interest & Other Income	\$35,307	\$53,681
Government of Canada	\$20,393	\$10,280
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	\$73,277	\$75,237
TOTAL	\$3,860,660	\$3,692,013

Expenses		
	2025	2024
Staffing	\$2,599,259	\$2,245,170
Facilities	\$422,980	\$305,925
Client Care	\$399,310	\$462,975
Operations	\$122,457	\$130,474
Administration	\$75,401	\$56,047
Redevelopment	\$53,326	\$189,233
Amortization of capital assets	\$151,465	\$140,735
TOTAL	\$3,824,198	\$3,530,560

Audited Financial Statements are available on our website



New backpacks for Christie's youngest learners during our 2025 Back to School BBQ.

CHRISTIE REFUGEE WELCOME CENTRE

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Phone: (416) 588-9277

Charitable No: 10822 2266 RR0001

If you would like to donate to Christie Refugee Welcome Centre, please send an email to donations@christiestretrc.com

If you would like to volunteer at Christie Refugee Welcome Centre, please send an email to volunteer@christiestretrc.com

If you have any other questions, please send an email to general@christiestretrc.com

