



Dear Friend,

Think back to summers when you were a child.

Spending long days with friends, drinking from the garden hose, staying out until the streetlights came on; there was something special about that. Those summers were filled with innocence and anticipation, with the simple belief that the next adventure was just around the corner. They were full of hope.

For many of the children and families involved in our programs, hope can look different. To a child, hope may mean stability—knowing when their next meal will be and trusting that there will be enough food. For parents, hope might be the assurance that their child is in a safe environment where they can learn and grow.

Hope has a way of sticking with you. It gives you strength to take on the next challenge, to seek out the next adventure. It encourages us to reach for opportunities that create memories that will last for years to come.

That is why Mission Services is committed to making this a Summer of Hope.

With your support, children will find the stability that comes with having a nutritious meal to come home to at night and a fridge full of groceries. They will be given an opportunity and a place to grow through summer camps and find a calming presence in a chaotic world.

This summer, over 6,000 children will receive groceries from our Good Food Centre. Hundreds of kids will get nutritious food through our summer camps and community partnerships. Kids like Ronaldo – whose story you will read in this newsletter – will learn essential skills like leadership and compassion.

You can play a part in spreading hope by joining us to reach our community. With your support, we can offer those programs to children and families who count on us in troubling times. You can show them what stability and hope look like and give them the strength to reach beyond their wildest dreams.

Will you help make this a Summer of Hope?



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn MacKeigan".

Shawn MacKeigan
Executive Director



A Place to Grow

Feature Story by Glen Cuthbert

Since he joined The 196 Program two years ago, Ronaldo's parents have seen him grow and thrive in ways they never imagined.

When Priya and Rakesh first enrolled their son Ronaldo in The 196 Program at Mission Services, they weren't really sure what to expect. Two years later, they're very glad they took that leap.

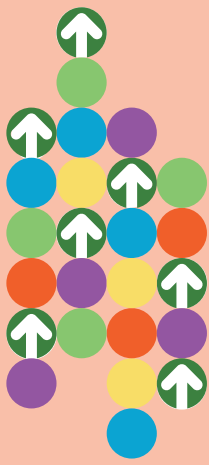
"Our nephew had done a similar program in the past, and one of Ronaldo's friends was part of The 196. He told Ronaldo how much fun he was having," Priya said.

"We wanted Ronaldo to have something else in his life other than just his regular school time," Rakesh said. "With both of us working, it can be hard to juggle schedules, and we don't want him to just have screen time, so this gets him out of the house."

The 196 Program runs as an after-school program for kids in our community during the school year. It introduces them to practical life skills in an uplifting and positive environment. For the summer months, The 196 switches to a summer camp for kids whose parents are working during the day. It provides kids with activities, fun, and food.

Program leader Adalia says it's important to have these types of programs in the community so that every child has the opportunity to learn and grow without barriers.

Continued Inside...



“Kids programs can be very expensive, but because of the generosity of our donors, we’re able to offer them at no cost. This makes such a difference.”

The 196 Program receives funding from the Hamilton Community Foundation’s ABACUS Fund, as well as support from our generous donors.

Summer camp with The 196 includes field trips and fun activities, as well as the opportunity to learn essential skills like cooking and sewing. The kids also develop personal skills like leadership and compassion.

“When Ronaldo first started coming in Grade 6, he was on the quieter side, but in the past two years, we’ve seen him grow to be a positive influence on the other kids and become viewed as a leader,”


Adalia said. “Seeing growth in each of the kids is so rewarding, and makes the time and effort we invest in them so worthwhile.”

Priya echoed that statement, saying how

wonderful it is to see Ronaldo putting the new skills and lessons he’s learned at The 196 Program into practice at home and at school.

“The other day, he had a rip in his pants, and he asked me if he could sew them up. He’d learned how to sew in this program, and wanted to try it himself. He’s also learned the basics of how to cook, and he likes the food that he makes in Mini Chefs better than any other food.”

Soon, Ronaldo will be graduating from The 196 Program and moving up to The 196+, Mission Services’ program for high-schoolers, and his younger brother will be taking his place in The 196 Program. Rakesh is glad to know that there is a place that he can trust for both of his children.

“It’s safe and secure, Adalia treats all the kids like they are her own kids, and we’ve seen incredible growth in Ronaldo. His younger brother asks every day when it can be his turn to join the fun.” 



Your Support Helps...

Ronaldo

Years in The 196 Program: **2**

Favourite Mini Chefs Meal to Cook: **Corn Dogs**

Favourite Field Trip:

Lazer Mania

Favourite Class: **Music**

Favourite 196 Activity: **Playing chess with the other students**

We’ve seen him grow to be a positive influence on the other kids and become viewed as a leader.

Act Justly. Show Compassion. Offer Hope.

Mission Services of Hamilton is located on the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Mississaugas.

MISSION

Restoring hope and empowering people to find their way forward.

VISION

We envision a resilient and healthy community that is compassionate, equitable and hopeful.

VALUES

We are dedicated to and guided by these core values:

- Dignity
- Innovation
- Compassion
- Excellence

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Filling Bellies

Feeding Hearts

Your support helps neighbourhood kids beyond the walls of Mission Services

It's a hot Thursday afternoon and the community kitchen at Mission Services is full to the brim with excited kids, eagerly awaiting the day's lunch. "Food's ready!" Nick the Cook calls out, and a cheer erupts from the kids.

On PA days and during their summer break camps, the kids attending camp at the Eva Rothwell Centre pack up their things and walk as a group to the community kitchen at Mission Services. There, they are served a hot meal prepared by the Mission Services cooks.

"About 10 years ago, we realized that a lot of the kids attending our camps didn't have the nutritious food that they needed," said Sam, Executive Director of the Eva Rothwell Centre. "We knew Mission Services was up the street and had food programming, so we reached out and made a partnership."

Since that day, thousands of Hamilton-area kids have received nutritious meals through this partnership.

Mission Services serves over 600 meals a month to youth through our Youth After School Meal Program - including those in The 196 Program and other local programs, like Eva Rothwell. Youth in The 196 Program also have daily access to a food pantry.

"It's wonderful to be able to extend our reach and help more kids in the community. When organizations work together, we can create healthier, stronger pathways for our youth to thrive," said Sheryl, Senior Director of Integration and Impact at Mission Services.

Ensuring that kids have good food to eat is the first step to helping them succeed in other aspects of their lives as well.

"Having these kids with a full belly helps them to focus and is one less thing they have to worry about," Sam said. "It's a weight off their shoulders and gives them the confidence of knowing there is food for them. It gives them an opportunity to be productive and successful later in life."

"It also helps them to see the role that Mission Services has in making a difference in the community," Sam continued. "They know that Mission Services is there to help them and their families."

For the kids, meal time has become a special time that's about much more than the meal that is being served.

"The kids love going to Mission Services. Not just because of the food,

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Your Gifts at Work in 2026



34,841

**MEALS
SERVED**



4,994

**HOUSEHOLDS
ACCESSING
GROCERY
ASSISTANCE**



6,934

**WILLOW'S
PLACE
VISITS**



15,208

**OVERNIGHT
SHELTER
STAYS**



559

**PEOPLE
ACCESSED
ADDICTION
SERVICES**

but also because of the relationship and rapport that the cooks and the staff have with the kids. They get to know them by name, and building that relationship is so important," Sam said. "Their favourite cook is Nick."

Nick has been cooking with Mission Services for nearly three years, and is most often the cook who prepares the lunch for Eva Rothwell Centre. He says his joy in the partnership is two-fold.

"It's amazing to watch the kids grow up over the years, and I

love to see them truly enjoy the food I've cooked," Nick said. "They're so appreciative and respectful, and they always make sure to say 'Thank you!'"

As the partnership between the Eva Rothwell Centre and Mission Services continues into the future, Sam was sure to stress who it's really all about.

"It's about making a difference for all the children and families in our community. This partnership isn't about either organization, it's about helping kids and impacting their future."



Your generosity changes lives and offers hope to future generations. You can support our youth programs by calling 905-528-4211 ext. 3113 or by visiting mission-services.com.



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