



oneROOF
YOUTH SERVICES

INFORMATION PACKAGE

Revised November 2014

The Story of oneROOF

How it all began...

In late 1988, Kate Millar noticed that there were a lot of young people living on the streets of downtown Kitchener. With the help of others in the community, Kate began working with youth who were experiencing homelessness or who were at-risk of becoming homeless. In 1989, a friend donated office space to Kate, and ROOF (Reaching Our Outdoor Friends) was officially born.

In 1990, ROOF moved into a facility at Duke and College Streets. While at this location, ROOF began to define a set of values and principles that were to become the foundation of the present day agency. In 1991, ROOF moved into 43 Cedar Street. During this time, ROOF increased services to seven days per week and added a variety of services: connective outreach, food hamper program, comprehensive volunteer training program, and counsellors. On March 1, 1996, ROOF began its partnership in the Betty Thompson Youth Centre, which increased its capacity to provide service to high risk youth.

In 1999, through the generous support of a private donor, ROOF purchased a new facility at 242 Queen Street South. This facility allowed us the space to offer extended hours of service and more diverse activities. An on-site partnership with Public Health Nurses also began.

On December 28, 2005, the building at 242 Queen Street South suffered a devastating fire which resulted in its closure. Fortunately, through our continued partnership with the Betty Thompson Youth Centre, ROOF was able to open for limited services within a few days. Working closely with the City of Kitchener, the Board was able to quickly find what was thought to be a more suitable location. On January 17, 2006, ROOF officially opened its temporary quarters at the KOR Gallery, located at 79 Joseph Street. During this time, various options for ROOF's 242 Queen Street location were explored.

Unfortunately, the KOR Gallery proved to be more temporary than anyone anticipated. Coal Tar contamination made it necessary for ROOF to move yet again. During April 2006, ROOF staff were temporarily housed in the Betty Thompson Youth Centre and drop-in was run out of Trinity United Church. The arrival of a new Executive Director in June 2006 offered a renewed sense of energy and motivation to move forward. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we returned to a renewed building at 242 Queen Street South on January 2008.

During the first years of existence, ROOF provided services to approximately 80 to 100 youth. Our numbers continued to increase, and in 2013, we served 825 distinct youth. The amount of youth requiring our services has grown, not only in numbers, but also in needs. The issues they face have become much more complex, with many facing overlapping issues. In order to meet these needs, ROOF is committed to supporting youth with the intent of breaking the cycle of homelessness. This is done through the implementation of programs such as the ROOF Lunchbox and Street Designs, which help youth develop vocational skills, making them more employable and confident. At the same time, ROOF is committed to continuing our regular services such as Outreach and Drop-In.

In 2014, ROOF changed its name to oneROOF.

In the 20+ years that oneROOF has provided service to our community's homeless youth, we have seen many youth reintegrate into the mainstream of society. Thousands of youth facing hardships have benefited from the immediate services and have developed the personal confidence, resources, and skills that are necessary to rise above adversity. oneROOF remains committed to the ideal that "one youth on the street is one too many."

Who We Are: Our Mandate, Objective and Funding

Philosophy of oneROOF: Unconditional Positive Regard

Mantra: One Youth on the Street is One Too Many

oneROOF'S MANDATE

Our agency is committed to the safety, support, and the overall well-being of youth aged 12 to 25 who are at risk or experiencing homelessness in Waterloo Region. We offer resources and linkages that allow youth to develop the self-care skills needed to stay alive and eventually move forward to more stable, healthy living situations. We offer choices and a brighter future.

oneROOF'S OBJECTIVES

To maintain the health and safety of youth by providing meals, food hampers, clothing, hygiene products, laundry and shower facilities, connective outreach, and employment opportunities to develop skills and a safe environment for people to challenge and change their value systems.

To guide and enable youth to get off the streets by providing resources, services, and referrals, such as life skills training, anger management, sports and recreation, crisis counselling, therapeutic craft/art work, educational groups, advocacy, family mediation, substance abuse education/treatment, treatment aftercare, and emergency shelter.

To educate the public on youth homelessness and related issues through forums, public speaking engagements, etc.

To carry out preventative work with youth especially in junior and senior high schools, stressing alternatives to street life.

oneROOF'S FUNDING

The bulk of our budget is derived from municipal and community grants, the generosity of individuals from the Waterloo Region and foundations with an affinity for oneROOF. For complete financial details, a copy of our Annual Report is available.

oneROOF Youth & Who We Serve

Youth Experiencing Homelessness Defined

Anyone between 12 and 25 who find themselves in the cycle of homelessness, has no permanent or stable living address, and is part of the street subculture.

The cycle of homelessness begins when a youth either runs away from or is asked to leave their familial home or child care facility. These youth have few options and turn to the street. Youth often move between a variety of places including friends' homes, shelters, and rooming houses. They may resort to sleeping in abandoned buildings, the park, stairwells, etc. The street becomes the most stable aspect of the transient lifestyle.

Youth experiencing homelessness are a voiceless population. They are young, under-educated and either unable or unwilling to access the system designed to help them. They are evidence to our communities that our Canadian families are far from idyllic, demonstrating that our society can be corrupt and neglectful. The realities of dysfunctional, abusive backgrounds and self-destructive lifestyles coupled with the struggles of adolescence make this a difficult population to serve. The difficulties have contributed to the gaps in services which fail many youth. These youth are vulnerable, marginalized and exploited... and these are our young people!

Downward Spiral of Survival

Street life is a cycle involving periods of time spent on the street (e.g. under bridges, in abandoned buildings, in parks, just walking), in hostels, staying with friends, and perhaps renting a room or apartment (often low quality, unhealthy and relatively costly).

The downward spiral of survival begins immediately upon becoming homeless. Homelessness is initially viewed as being temporary but soon becomes prolonged and discouraging. Daily needs must be met and the majority of youth's energy is used attempting to meet basic needs. Planning for the future becomes difficult as survival needs outweigh everything. The future extends as far as the next minute, hour, or day.

Self-esteem begins to erode while shame and guilt increase. Youth slowly lose touch with their previous support network and the feelings of alienation and isolation increase. Anger and frustration towards their current situation are turned inward resulting in depression for many, and suicide for some.

Those who fight through suicidal thoughts begin to reach out to an accepting subculture on the street. They begin to share and are socialized into the lifestyle of partying, using drugs and/or alcohol—mechanisms used to combat the pain of living on the street. The downward spiral often leads more deeply into substance abuse, crime, ill-health, and continued loss of self-worth and hope.

CHARACTERISTICS AND STATISTICS

Youth come to oneROOF with a variety of problems. Issues such as a history of abuse, lack of

self-esteem, difficulty with commitment, and a lack of identity and self-awareness are prevalent. These problems often, though not always, stem from home and upbringing and are almost always worsened by street subculture. It is very difficult for a person with no stable living environment to continue to participate in the educational system or employment. According to The McCreary Centre Society (2001)

approximately 70% of youth experiencing homelessness come from abusive backgrounds (e.g. physical, sexual, and severe emotional abuse). 24% of youth on the street have been beaten three times or more. Over 1/4 of youth experiencing homelessness have attempted suicide. Over 1/3 of youth experiencing homelessness have been in government care, including foster care or group homes. Although most youth experiencing homelessness have been expelled or suspended from school at some time, about 2/3 say they are currently attending school.

There are many very distressing stories about the lives of youth experiencing homelessness. It is a sad reality that **young people in our own community are suffering and struggling to survive in a world of abuse, discrimination, betrayal, and rejection** – often perpetrated by those who are “supposed” to take care of them. They are choosing the street over something they consider much worse.

In order to provide people with the opportunity to create long term stability, growth, and a sense of hope and purpose, we need to provide opportunities that will allow youth to feel good about themselves and about life, inspiring them to create a positive future. Self-esteem has been directly linked to self-care, goal setting, and a sense of accomplishment.

Programs and Services

1. Basic Personal Support

- Safe place and meals seven days a week
- Food hampers
- Clothing
- Hygiene products (e.g. soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste)
- Towels, bedding, sleeping bags
- Shower facilities, laundry facilities
- Bus tickets (local for emergencies, longer distance to rehab or home)
- Condoms
- Telephone services (long distance services to maintain family connections)

We are a member of the Food Bank of the Waterloo Region, receiving weekly donations of food for a minimal annual fee. Donations of hygiene products, bus tickets, sleeping bags and financial assistance to provide the other services are always needed and gratefully accepted.

2. Lifeline Program (funded through the United Way of Kitchener-Waterloo) Provides youth with the opportunity to develop coping skills to survive and also to avoid or escape the cycle of homelessness. Lifelines include:

Crisis Support and Planning

- Available on a one to one, no wait basis or by appointment
- Support is solution-focused, short-term and based on strengths of the youth
- Support focuses on developing a plan of action for changing their life situation, with appropriate referrals and follow-up

Group Sessions and Life Skills Training

- Address topics such as communication, healthy relationships, sexual health, financial literacy, cooking, cleaning, literacy, self-esteem workshops, values investigations
- Recreational and educational programming is held every night from 8pm-9pm

Recreation and Special Events

- Recreation opportunities
- Foosball table and board games on premises
- Special events like a Christmas party, day trips (e.g. Canada's Wonderland), scavenger hunts, bbq's, camping, outings
- Volunteers and community donations are essential to the success of special events and outings

Substance Abuse Prevention Program (SAPP)

- Helps youth deal with the pervasive issue of drug and alcohol use
- Drug education and information provided to all youth
- Goal setting, advocacy, and referrals

3. Information and Referrals

- We help clients link to temporary and permanent housing, employment, schooling, addiction treatment, counselling, doctors, lawyers, etc.
- Brochures from community resources are available; staff and volunteers are available to assist youth individually
- Youth are encouraged to make calls to existing services on their own, but they are assisted if they are unable
- A lack of overall resources and lack of housing options for youth may make referrals difficult.
- Waiting lists can be barrier to counselling and rehabilitation centres

4. Outreach Workers

- Reach youth in their own environment in order to initiate contact and establish helping relationships
- Distribute essential items such as toiletries and food, and link youth to referrals
- Efforts are made to reach new contacts, as well as those already enmeshed in the street subculture
- Reach a youth population that, for various reasons, are reluctant to access traditional services

- Provide accompaniments to legal, housing, and/or medical appointments

5. Runaway Prevention

- Conducted in elementary/high schools, focusing on the dangers of living on the street and encouraging young people to “ask for directions before you run”

6. Public Awareness

- In schools, universities, colleges, community groups, churches, etc.
- Making it known that there are youth living on the streets in Waterloo Region and inspiring community action is vital.

7. Social Enterprise Programs, Lunchbox & Street Designs

- Employs youth for four days per week (Tuesday to Friday) for three months
- Helps youth acquire transferable job skills and skills necessary to maintain employment
- Lunchbox: food preparation for our day services and delivering lunches to businesses in the downtown core. Lunchbox is able to provide deliveries between 11:00am to 1:00pm.
- Street Designs: Youth’s artistic, graffiti, or Photoshop skills are used on marketable merchandise (t-shirts, key chains, etc.) which can be publicly sold

8. Family Reconnect/Intensive Case Management Worker

- Family mediation and counseling to help resolve conflict within families
- Helps youth re-engage with their community by providing the appropriate, necessary supports
- Individual counseling, case management and support
- Community referrals

9. Mental Health and Addictions Worker

- Supports youth living with substance abuse and/or mental health concerns
- Provides community referrals
- Educate youth on harm reduction

How Can You Help?

Volunteer Requirements

Through community support, oneROOF is able to provide basic needs which enable youth to survive the streets, feel better about themselves, overcome their pain and make healthier choices for their future.

Because we are a non-government, charitable organization, we rely heavily on the assistance from the community for volunteers, funds, and resources necessary to run our programs which foster the survival and healthy future of our youth.

oneROOF does not require volunteers to have specific experience in dealing with youth on the street and street issues. We are looking for individuals who believe in the power of a caring community, who can accept differences, and who live up to their commitments.

1. Youth Support Volunteer

- Treat all youth with unconditional positive regard
- Initiate contact with youth to build supportive relationships with them
- Role model through all actions, words, and behaviour
- Enforce rules to maintain a safe, supportive environment
- Be comfortable performing practical duties e.g. laundering clothing donations, meal preparation, cleaning, organizing
- Accompany youth to various parts of the building (e.g. laundry, donations, PAR, lockers)
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Remember volunteers and oneROOF are ultimately here to serve youth
- Make community referrals e.g. crisis counselling, emergency shelter
- Work directly with youth as a helpful, adult figure within a multidisciplinary team
- Make and distribute food hampers (Wednesdays)
- Listen to youth if they need or want to talk
- Participate in fundraising events when available
- Communicate all pertinent client behaviours and/or disclosures to the Shift Supervisor

Volunteers are able to receive specialized training when opportunities arise within the agency. Offering suggestions or sharing any special talents with the Volunteer Coordinator are considered assets to improving the functioning of the agency.

Youth may access oneROOF between 1pm and 10pm for meals, support, clothing, hygiene products, showers, laundry, storage space, computer use, or assistance with housing, employment, education, or legal issues.

On Wednesdays, volunteers make and distribute food hampers to youth who access. The nurse practitioner and psychiatric outreach nurse are also available at oneROOF on this day.

Volunteer Shifts:

Monday-Friday: 12:00 pm-5:30 pm

Monday-Friday: 6 pm-10:30 pm

Wednesday Food Hamper Shift: 11:00am-5:30pm

Saturday/Sunday: 11:30am-5:30 pm

It is strongly suggested that oneROOF volunteers possess the following qualities:

assertiveness

flexibility

open-minded attitude

patience

empathy

willingness to learn

non-judgmental attitude

Time Commitment

- A minimum of one shift per week (4.5-6 hours) for eight months is required in order to provide consistency and reduce sense of upheaval for youth
- Attend two three hour standardized training sessions

2. Clothing Room Organizer

- Assist in the washing and organizing of our clothing donation room as its organization allows youth to easily find the clothing they need in a chaos-free environment

3. Programming

- Offer recreational or life skills programming between 8pm and 9pm
- Topics of interest need to be discussed with the Manager of Services

4. Administrative Support (flexible hours- 12-4pm daily)

- Data entry, letter writing, typing, mail outs, accounts payable, donor database
- Answering phones, communicating necessary information, maintaining agency files, forms, etc.
- Contacting community agencies, schools, clubs and scheduling staff for runaway prevention and public awareness presentations

5. Newsletter Volunteer (flexible hours)

- Layout, data entry, editing, coordinating submissions from staff & volunteers, distribution to staff, volunteers, donors, funders and interested community members.

6. Board Member

- Work as a member of the board involved in fund-raising, human resources development, finances, publicity and or policy and procedure development Organizing our clothing donation room

What oneROOF has to Offer You

Volunteers are the backbone of oneROOF and supporting our volunteers is integral to our relationships. We are happy to be able to provide the following:

1. Training

Standardized Training- MANDATORY for all Frontline Volunteers BEFORE first shift

Two three hour training sessions to provide frontline volunteers with an introduction to shift responsibilities, relationship building, crisis support, problem solving, harm reduction, intimate partner violence, gender issues, appropriate self-disclosure, and boundaries.

Additional training opportunities on various topics are available for volunteers and staff on an ongoing basis.

2. Support

Briefing and Debriefing- a briefing session is held with your team and Shift Supervisor at the beginning and end of each shift to check in with everyone, prepare for the shift, and provide youth updates. Volunteers are able to provide feedback and address areas of concern to the Shift Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator.

3. Opportunities

To Learn about our youth, their struggles, their reality, your strengths, your abilities, and your impact on others

To Grow in awareness, understanding and ability to give of yourself

To Help young people begin to feel good about themselves and inspire them to create a positive future

To Mentor youth experiencing homelessness through positive role modeling

To Make a Difference in young lives!

Interested in Volunteering?

Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator to arrange an interview to determine if the job role suits your needs and you match the agency's needs. The Volunteer Coordinator can be reached at 519-742-2788 ext. 211 or volcoordinator@oneroof.org

Please bring the following documents to your interview:

- Resume
- oneROOF Volunteer Application Form (see below)
- Signed Volunteer Code of Ethics Form (see below)

Please note: Volunteers cannot have been an active oneROOF client for at least two years

After the interview...

- Submit a police records check
- Attend the training sessions
- Phone well in advance if you are going to be late or absent for your shift; attempt to find a replacement

oneROOF Code of Ethics

All oneROOF volunteers and staff must follow the Code of Ethics as set out below. The purpose of the oneROOF Code of Ethics is to emphasize the seriousness of entering into a relationship with oneROOF. When you start volunteering or working at oneROOF, you are entering our clients' lives to provide support, an opportunity to grow and model integrity. As such, appropriate role modeling is a must! Remember, you are a volunteer or employee, and not a "buddy."

1. **ABSOLUTELY** no socializing with clients outside of the oneROOF premises without direct supervision authorized by the Executive Director.
2. **ABSOLUTELY** no sharing of substances (alcohol, drugs) around or with oneROOF clients.
3. **ABSOLUTELY** no circumstances allow for a client to be in your home. There are no exceptions.
4. **ABSOLUTELY** no dating/relations is allowed between oneROOF volunteers/staff and clients.
5. **CONFIDENTIALITY** regarding each and every oneROOF client must be respected and adhered to. No information shall be exchanged with outside persons for any reasons. If you feel you must share information, please talk to your immediate Supervisor.
6. **ABSOLUTELY** no attendance at known client hang-outs is allowed.

This is a binding contract and any breach of the above noted guidelines will be grounds for immediate termination of position.

VOLUNTEER

WITNESS

(oneROOF Volunteer Coordinator or designate)

PRINT NAME

DATE

DATE

SIGNATURE

SIGNATURE

oneROOF VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

PLEASE INCLUDE an updated resume in addition to the application. Potential volunteers will be asked to attend a screening interview, submit a Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check, attend orientation training, and sign a Volunteer Code of Ethics.

Basic Information

Name: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____
 Province: _____ Postal Code: _____
 Phone: _____ Cell: _____
 Work: (if appropriate to call) _____
 Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____
 Emergency Contact Phone Number: _____

Are you 18 years of age or older? Yes No
 Present occupation/life situation (ie. student): _____

Availability

Please indicate the best method and time of day to contact you:

- Home Phone Weekday – during the day
- Cell Phone Weekday – evenings
- Email Anytime

Shift Availability (circle all that apply):

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Daytime	Daytime	Daytime	Daytime	Daytime	Daytime	Daytime
Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening

Would you be available to volunteer for one shift per week (about 5-6 hours) for a minimum of eight months? Yes No

Experience and Motivation

Volunteering with oneROOF involves working with at-risk youth aged 12 to 25. Please describe any experience you have (work, volunteer, education, etc.) that you believe would help you work effectively within this demographic.

Why are you interested in volunteering with oneROOF?:

What skills, hobbies or interests might you share in your volunteer work with us?

How did you hear about volunteer opportunities at our organization?

- Volunteer Action Center Friend/Family Website
- Get Involved Fair Newspaper/Radio Other: _____

Volunteer Reference Check & Screening

Please list the name and contact information of two (2) individuals who can provide a reference for you. It is preferable that these individuals be a current/former instructor or supervisor (work or volunteer). Please be sure to sign the release at the bottom.

Name: _____ Title: _____
Organization: _____
Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____
Organization: _____
Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Reference Check Release:

In the interest of client safety, all volunteers are required to submit a minimum of two references. I, _____ (please print name), authorize oneROOF to contact the above people to provide any relevant information they may have concerning my suitability as a volunteer.

Convictions and Outstanding Charges:

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense for which a pardon has not been granted?

Yes No

Do you currently have any outstanding charges?

Yes No

If yes to either question, please self-disclose below. Please note that this may or may not affect your ability to become a volunteer at oneROOF:

A valid Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check is required to volunteer. Do you agree to provide one?

Yes No

Applicant's Authorization

I authorize investigation of statements herein. I hereby certify that the facts set forth in this application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. Personal information contained on this form will be used for the management of oneROOF volunteers. Questions about the collection of personal information should be directed to the Volunteer and Student Coordinator at 519-742-2788 ext 211.

Volunteer signature: _____

Date: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Interviewer name: _____ Date: _____

- References called
- Vulnerable Sector Police Check handed in
- Training session #1 complete
- Training session #2 complete
- Nametag acquired