



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2021



A Year of Revitalization
& Reflection

This year, we updated our acronym to
"Peace, Actualization, Community, Transformation"
to reflect a broader, more inclusive framework for
the work we do.

PEACE | ACTUALIZATION | COMMUNITY | TRANSFORMATION



CONTENTS:

	ABOUT	4
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE		5
2021 HIGHLIGHTS		7
REFLECTIONS		8
GROW-TO-LEARN		10
LIFEPLAN COACHING		14
YOUTH PROGRAMS		17
HOPES FOR 2022		19
FUNDERS		20

ABOUT PACT

The PACT Urban Peace Program is an award-winning, outcome-driven, and equity-minded Canadian charity. We are committed to working with, supporting, and empowering young people, systemically under-resourced communities, and youth in the criminal justice system.

WHAT WE DO

WE HELP YOUTH EXPLORE THEIR PASSIONS AND BUILD SELF-EFFICACY WHILE GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY.

WE ENRICH AND SUPPORT EDUCATION THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL, ACTIVITY-BASED GARDEN WORKSHOPS.



WE PROVIDE SAFE SPACES FOR BELONGING AND ADDRESS FOOD SECURITY.

WE BUILD CAPACITY AND ENCOURAGE POSITIVE CHANGE IN YOUTH IN SCHOOLS AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

OUR MISSION

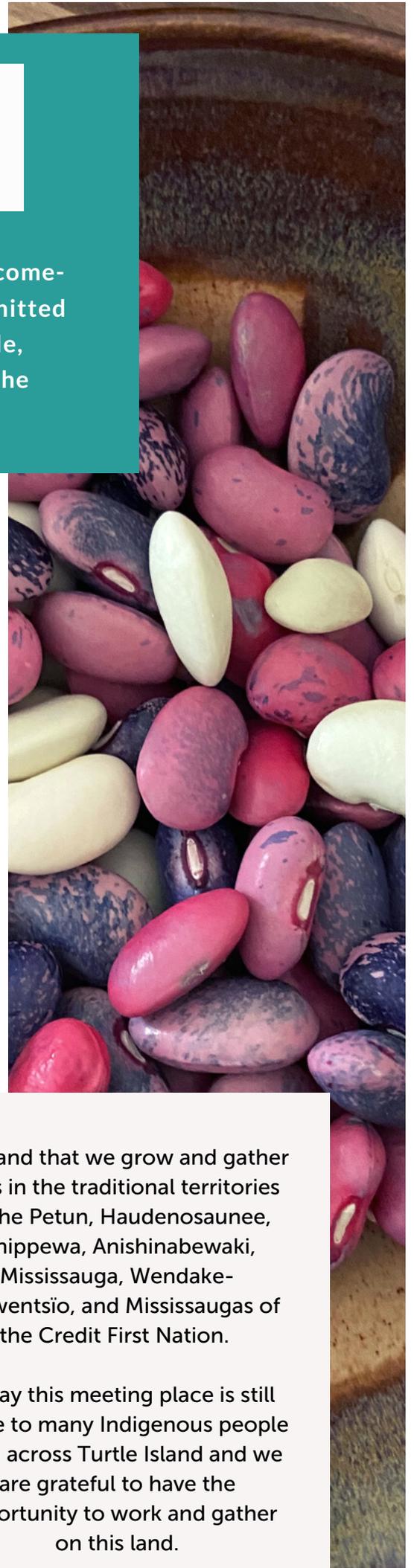
To strengthen community wellness by supporting and empowering youth, families, and seniors within nurturing, inclusive, accessible environments. We develop, deliver, and scale our best-practice community programming, food security initiatives, mentorship, and experiential learning opportunities and create strategic community partnerships with organizations that share our values and goals.

OUR VISION

Vibrant, thriving communities that are inclusive and accessible so that every person has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The land that we grow and gather on is in the traditional territories of the Petun, Haudenosaunee, Chippewa, Anishinabewaki, Mississauga, Wendake-Niowentsio, and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Today this meeting place is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and gather on this land.





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY DAVID LOCKETT

2021 has been another challenging year as the world has been moving forward dealing with the challenges related to COVID. Vaccines are making a remarkable difference.

At the same time, PACT has introduced innovative strategies to comply with mandated COVID health and safety protocols set out by Toronto Public Health, the school board, and the court systems in order to deliver our programs to the youth and individuals we support.

Through the challenging times, we are inspired by the resilience of the youth we support as they often deal with extremely difficult circumstances in their own lives, yet find the courage to continue moving forward.

There is a food security crisis in our city that is being exacerbated by rapid inflation. In other words: the cost of fresh vegetables has increased disproportionately. To address this, PACT provided a weekly fresh food box of vegetables, partially grown in our school gardens, to 321 clients from June through October of this year.

Through it all, the entire PACT team has continued to adapt and improve all of our programs to better serve our clients. I am so grateful for the professionalism and unwavering commitment of our staff and appreciate the remarkable work they do.

Lastly, I want to thank all of the individuals and organizations who have financially supported us on an ongoing basis. We look forward to a new and more normal year in 2022.

**"WE ARE INSPIRED BY THE RESILIENCE OF THE
YOUTH WE SUPPORT"**



2021

HIGHLIGHTS &
REFLECTIONS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR



This season in our Grow-to-Learn gardens was all about revitalization.



We began our redevelopment at Thistleton CI including a brand new Accessibility Garden.



We expanded our Fresh Food Box Program to serve even more families and seniors in need every week.



We focused on self-care and wellness in our LifePlan Coaching program and took part in trauma-informed coaching training.

PACT GETS A BRAND NEW WEBSITE!

This year, our Director of Marketing and Communications, Taylor, gave our website a much-needed makeover to showcase and articulate all the important work we do and the changes we've made throughout the pandemic. Visit us online at www.pactprogram.ca to see the update. We invite and welcome your feedback!

Check out our new website!
www.pactprogram.ca





REFLECTIONS

LOOKING INWARD

This year at PACT, our team spent a considerable amount of time having important and challenging conversations about the world we live in and the issues many of our clients face. Many of these issues, including things like racism, food insecurity, criminality, and unemployment are faced by a large percentage of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) community. Global awareness has shown us that these issues affect BIPOC and other minority groups at a disproportionately higher rate and that this discrimination exists at a systemic level. For many people around the world, this means having to navigate a variety of systemic barriers while often coping with inter-generational trauma.

Since many of the clients we support are BIPOC, we understand how important it is to recognize these systemic barriers and advocate for equitable change. Our team had many discussions talking about tangible ways we can address this systemic discrimination in our work, with the first action being: *thinking critically about our language*.

For example, in the recent past we have often referred to many of the clients we serve as 'at-risk'. Reflecting on the systemic influences that may contribute to an individual's risk factors, we recognize the importance of putting the onus on the system, rather than the individual. Instead of referring to clients as 'at-risk', we are working on shifting our language to a more critical and accurate understanding like: 'clients from systemically under-resourced (and over-policed) communities'. We understand that terms like 'troubled' and 'career criminals' stigmatize youth and we want to remove that stigma from our language.

INSTEAD OF

'At-risk' or
'troubled'

Primarily white
staff

Language puts onus
on the individual

DO THIS

'From systemically
under-resourced
communities'

More BIPOC
leadership

Language puts onus
on the system

As a team, we have been taking a critical eye to all of the programs we offer and the models we use to inform our work. While in the past, we have often highlighted measures like the cost of our programming versus the cost of the prison system to help showcase the efficacy of our work, we recognize that there are many other measures that are meaningful and don't reduce the clients we serve to numbers in a capitalist system, thus adding to the stigma they already face. Going forward, we want to begin shifting away from these frameworks and towards a more human, more client-driven understanding of how our programs make a difference.

As an organization, we always strive to do better and support our clients in the most effective, dignified, and equitable way. Taking accountability and being critical of our language is just the first step in working towards these changes. In 2022, we aim to bring more professional development and training opportunities, developed and delivered by BIPOC experts, to our staff and leadership who work so hard to empower the clients we serve. We feel strongly that experts be compensated at fair rates for this programming, and while we may not have had the funding to do this in 2021, we hope to receive the financial support to make it happen in the new year.

Some other goals we have include: 1) providing safe spaces for BIPOC staff and clients, 2) hiring more BIPOC staff in leadership positions to amplify BIPOC voices and so that our team better reflects the clients we support, 3) providing fair and equitable living wages for our staff including employment benefits, and 4) incorporating anti-Black racism frameworks into the work we do. We want to be fully transparent about the changes we make as an organization and eventually hope to further articulate our goals by creating public-facing action items with timelines to achieve them.

While we understand there is still an immense amount of work that needs to be done, we invite you to join us on our journey of learning, unlearning, and growth to help to create a more equitable, just, and peaceful world.



GROW-TO-LEARN

A SEASON OF REVITALIZATION

This year, Grow-to-Learn was all about revitalizing our gardens after a late start to the season, due to COVID, which allowed many invasive weeds to flourish. Our efforts will help us continue to create beautiful and abundant green spaces for years to come. Our team at our John Polanyi CI (JPCI) garden **removed more than 20 tons of invasive species** throughout our one-acre plot, including clearing space to make room for a brand new native pollinator bed that will be planted next year. We also used this season as an opportunity to solarize the two southern plots of our garden (in other words - kill ALL the weeds!) which will allow us to return to full production capacity next season. Our team at our Elmbank CI garden were busy too - removing hundreds of pounds of weeds, maintaining a variety of fruit trees, and finally welcoming students back into the space.



Highlights from this year:

STUDENT WORKSHOPS

We were excited to host a limited number of student workshops at our JPCI and Elmbank CI gardens again this year. Following strict health and safety policies set out by the Toronto District School Board, we were able to welcome hundreds of students back to the garden to learn about pollinators, invasive species, and growing your own food. We hosted many 'Farmer for a Day' workshops to get classes outdoors and involved in nature-based, experiential learning.



WE DELIVERED **4** VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS TO **68** INDIVIDUALS.



WE OFFERED **23** EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND **14** AFTER-SCHOOL WORKSHOPS.

SUMMER STUDENT VISITS

661

187

131

343

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING VISITS

TOTAL STUDENT VISITS

AFTER-SCHOOL VOLUNTEER VISITS

We welcomed **Focus on Youth** summer students back into our gardens who fulfilled **1,575** placement hours through the TDSB!

A BRAND NEW SPACE & ACCESSIBILITY GARDEN AT THISTLETOWN CI

At our Thistletown CI garden, we installed and planted 6 raised, galvanized planters as part of our new Accessibility Garden, ensuring students and community members in wheelchairs or with limited mobility will be able to participate in and enjoy the space. We also broke ground at our new 2-acre Thistletown CI garden space, as we were moved from our original plot as part of the school's infrastructure plans.



EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS & VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

This Spring, we created two in-depth educational videos so we could connect with even more students and community members online. We created videos highlighting important things to consider when starting your own Backyard or Container Garden and discussed topics like soil, water, light, and pest control. This allowed us to host virtual workshops before we were able to welcome students back into the garden in-person. Check out our new YouTube Channel!

Follow PACT Grow-to-Learn on YouTube!

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0uGtes7KPCcLe4P_aExqLw



Emergency Fresh Food Box



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic last year, we transitioned our weekly community market to a new **Fresh Food Box Program**. While following guidelines set out by Toronto Public Health, the PACT Fresh Food Box Program distributes a weekly fresh produce box to individuals and families in need during this difficult time. With COVID making it *difficult for almost half of our clients to access the grocery store*, we expanded our program this year to serve even more people in the community every week from June to October.

IN 2021, PACT GROW-TO-LEARN:



DISTRIBUTED **5,372** FRESH FOOD BOXES TO **321** INDIVIDUALS IN NEED.



GREW **936 LBS** OF PRODUCE WORTH ALMOST **\$16,000!**



DISTRIBUTED ALMOST **\$55,000** WORTH OF FRESH PRODUCE INCLUDING CLOSE TO **1,500 LBS** OF FRUIT!



DELIVERED **1,830** FRESH FOOD BOXES TO SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED MOBILITY.

“ The program was fantastic and reliable, it was available every week, and everyone who worked to make it a success were truly remarkable - including the delivery personnel who were very prompt, courteous, and supportive. ”



"It was so helpful to have fresh vegetables delivered to my door. My husband and I are seniors and it has been very hard to get out in COVID."

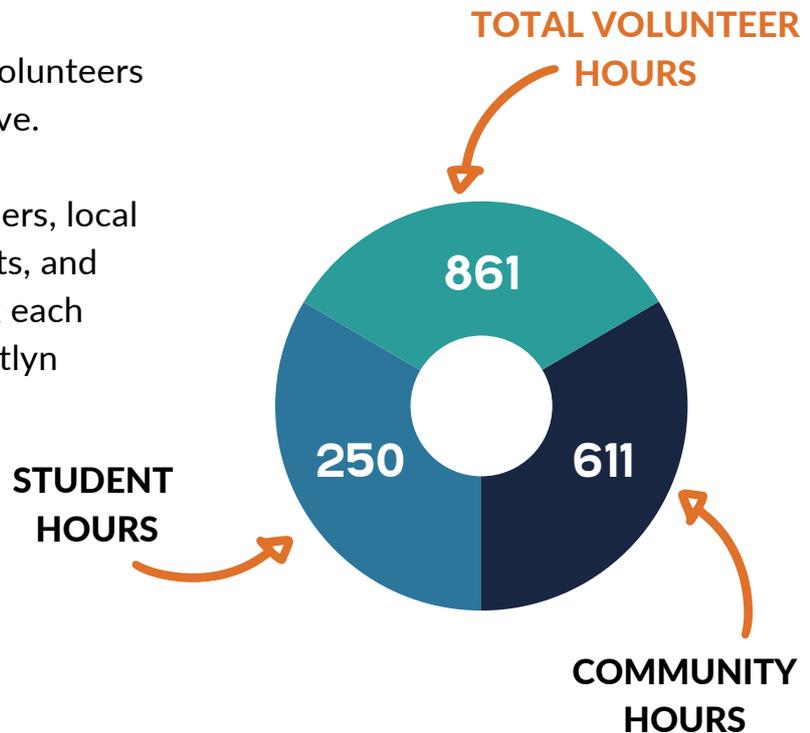
TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS

WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

Sending a heartfelt thank you to all of the volunteers that give their time to help our gardens thrive.

We are grateful to all the community members, local teachers, Food Box delivery drivers, students, and dedicated senior volunteers that come back each year, as well as our placement students, Kaitlyn and Yasmin, who assisted in all areas of our operation.

From weeding and harvesting to packing produce bags and mulching, we thank our volunteers for all they do to help keep our gardens beautiful and bountiful.



Thanks to one of our wonderful garden volunteers, Jessica, we secured a donation from the Corporate team at **Swiss Chalet** of several hundred coupons for free and discounted family meals for our clients. We were thrilled to host the Business Development Manager at Swiss Chalet's parent company, **Recipe Unlimited**, for a day of volunteering in the garden.

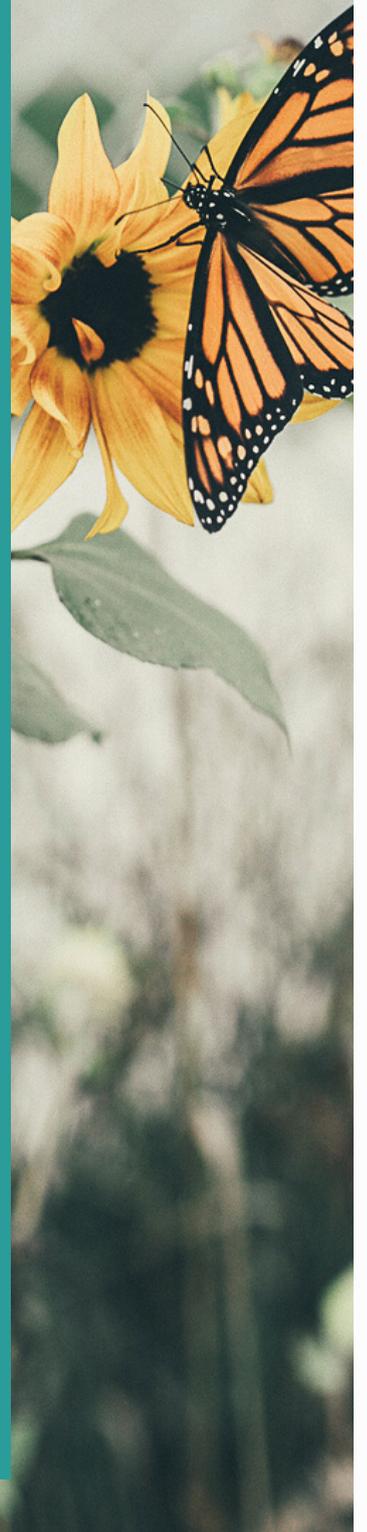


LIFEPLAN COACHING

As we slowly and cautiously emerge from this challenging pandemic, we are pleased to report that we've been actively re-engaging with our partners in the youth court and school system to identify and connect with new clients for the LifePlan Coaching (LPC) program. At the same time, we've continued to put a lot of much-needed focus on improving self-care, wellness practices, and training for our coaches to help address the significant mental health impacts our youth are increasingly dealing with.

While business as usual changed in 2021, we took the opportunity to establish some very important and strategic partnerships with a number of complementary community agencies. These partnerships assist and improve the wrap-around process of further supporting youth with health and wellness, learning, school success, community engagement, and recreational programming. As well, we provided in-depth trauma-informed coach training for both LPC coaches and PACT staff.

As we prepare for and look towards a bright 2022, we have also been busy recruiting and on-boarding new and motivated life coaches from many diverse backgrounds who bring a wealth of relevant experience to our team.



This year we focused on...

SERVING YOUTH IN THE COURT SYSTEM

LPC continued to liaise and work with probation officers, judges, and criminal lawyers to identify and provide specialized, transformational life coaching to youth in the court system. Several youth were matched with our LPC coaches, most of whom were on serious charges and house arrest, all of whom carry an immensity of untapped potential and unacknowledged trauma.

BUILDING A DIVERSE TEAM OF COACHES

PACT has been actively recruiting new, professional life coaches who bring a diverse, wealth of knowledge and experience to join our team, as we anticipate an increase in referrals and clients in the upcoming year. As part of our new coach on-boarding, LPC staff and mentors provide ongoing support, including role-playing sessions and other relevant training.

NEW STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PARTNERS FOR INCREASED YOUTH HEALTH & WELLNESS

As we strive to refine our program and provide the most individualized and empowering support for our youth clients, LPC continues to align with other community agencies and healthcare providers. These partnerships further facilitate a supportive wrap-around process to better address unmet needs and potential.

A revised connection with Unison Health Services will allow for customized mental health services and nutrition/fitness workshops for our youth. Mentors from Youth Assisting Youth will also further enhance the support we're able to provide to the youth we serve within the community.

TRAUMA-INFORMED COACHING

PACT delivered specialized trauma-informed coaching training to all coaches over five weeks in 2021. This was created and presented by PACT board member and certified trauma-informed coach, Wendy Fortune, MCC. As we continue to see extensive and increased mental health challenges among young people, it is more important than ever to recognize trauma and provide safe spaces in our work. Although all PACT certified coaches operate using a collaborative and empowering strengths-based framework, we also recognize the importance of ensuring our work follows this trauma-informed approach.

LPC IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Toronto-area schools resumed in-person classes this year, allowing LPC the opportunity to reconnect and offer one-on-one coaching support to vulnerable, high-needs students in grades 7 and 8. Since the introduction of the LifePlan Coaching program in the school environment, we have identified common challenges and concerns, as well as implemented successful, best-practice strategies and solutions to address them.

PACT is developing close relationships with several Rexdale, Toronto, and Scarborough Middle Schools, as well as continuing to work with students at Lawrence Heights Middle School.

CASE STUDIES OF CLIENTS LPC SUPPORTED AND EMPOWERED THROUGH COACHING THIS YEAR:

1 A youth with a history of school suspensions, fighting, and robbery charges was referred to LPC. He experienced gun violence trauma as well as identified as having ADHD. A 6-month coaching participation was agreed on, with the youth showing up by phone each week for sessions. Although initially hesitant to commit to the weekly program, the youth did persevere with ongoing encouragement from his coach, staying on track with goals and reaching accomplishments along the way. He graduated high school, found a part and then full-time job, saved money for a car, and set weight-loss goals. Upon completion, the youth thanked the coach for making him feel comfortable enough to be vulnerable and speak openly. He feels he learned a lot about himself, became more organized, learned to procrastinate less, and became a more mature person overall.



2 A young female client on house arrest, as a result of several charges that include assault, car theft, and drug dealing, was referred to LPC. While this youth did well in elementary school, participated in athletics, and lives with both parents, she also has a history of strained relationships, anxiety, and drug use. Over the one-year coaching relationship, the coach supported the youth through engaging in and completing virtual high school, getting a part-time job, improving communication with parents and employers, and better decision-making. This youth was referred to an addiction counsellor and is seeing other medical professionals about severe anxiety. She consistently showed up each week to meet with her coach, exploring past trauma and patterns, and future goals and possibilities.

3 A 15-year-old male with multiple high school suspensions and serious firearm-related charges was referred to LPC during the stay-at-home-orders. He started weekly coaching sessions, meeting with his coach by phone and having intimate conversations about the challenges of virtual schooling, improving close relationships, and managing anger and mental health throughout the pandemic. This youth continues to engage in school, seek out positive peer groups, and be more contemplative overall.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

STAYING CONNECTED, VIRTUALLY

PACT's youth programs offer a supportive and inclusive space for youth aged 13-21 to explore their passions, develop important life skills, connect with like-minded people, and learn how to navigate meaningful employment. This year, we continued to offer many of our youth programs virtually and facilitated **more than 130 online workshops**.

BUILDING BEATS: DIGITAL MUSIC PRODUCTION

Youth learned how to create digital music with our instructor and audio engineer, Jesse. This year, youth took part in **22 workshops** exploring various musical genres and sounds and created their own instrumental tracks using professional theory, technique, and software.

CREATIVE SONGWRITING

Aspiring songwriters explored self-expression through words and rhythm in this weekly drop-in class. Youth participated in **20 workshops** with instructors, Julie and Micah, where they learned about song structure, poetic devices, and shared their original songwriting in a safe, supportive environment.

CROCHET CLUB

In this 8-week program, youth learned a variety of basic crochet stitches and made projects like baby blankets, hats, and planters. Youth in the program participated in **50 workshops** with our



instructor, Kaitlyn, and donated their finished blankets and hats to those in need.



FASHION

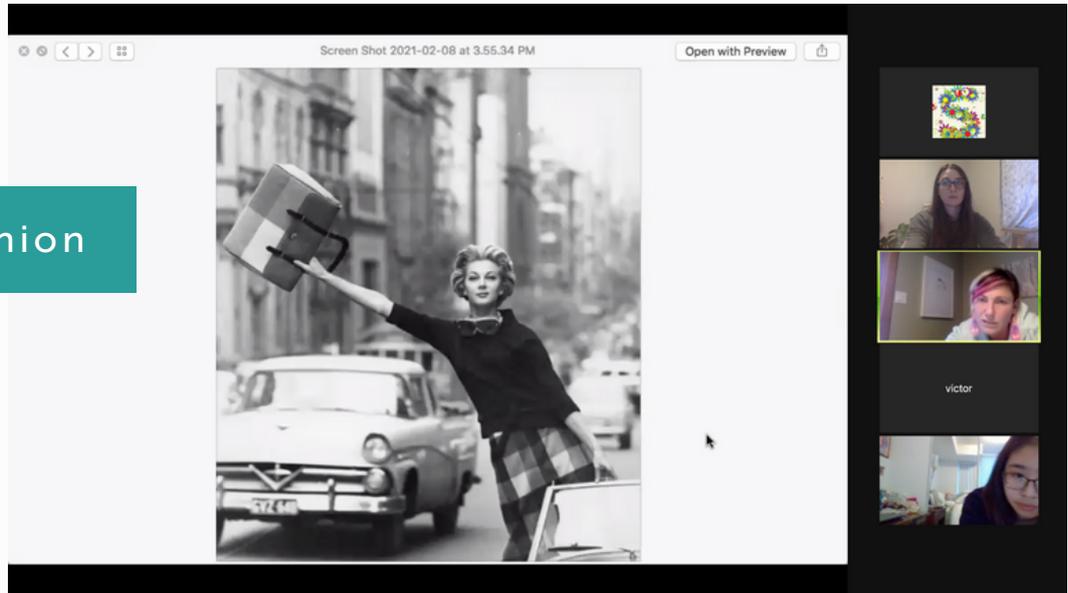
Youth learned practical mending skills, explored fashion photography, and created photoshoots with their own clothing. Youth took part in **15 workshops** and each received a Patch Kit, including sewing needles, embroidery thread, and more. Youth learned about the environmental impact of the fashion industry, upcycled their own existing garments, and created masks to donate.

FILM CLUB

An inclusive space for youth to have some fun and talk about their favourite movies. Youth participated in **24 workshops** designed to bolster communication, connection, and social skills while providing a casual environment to enjoy films and unwind together.

“ This class has helped me feel less isolated. The projects for the beginner class were very appropriate for beginners. Small class size and crochet supplies were an added bonus. ”

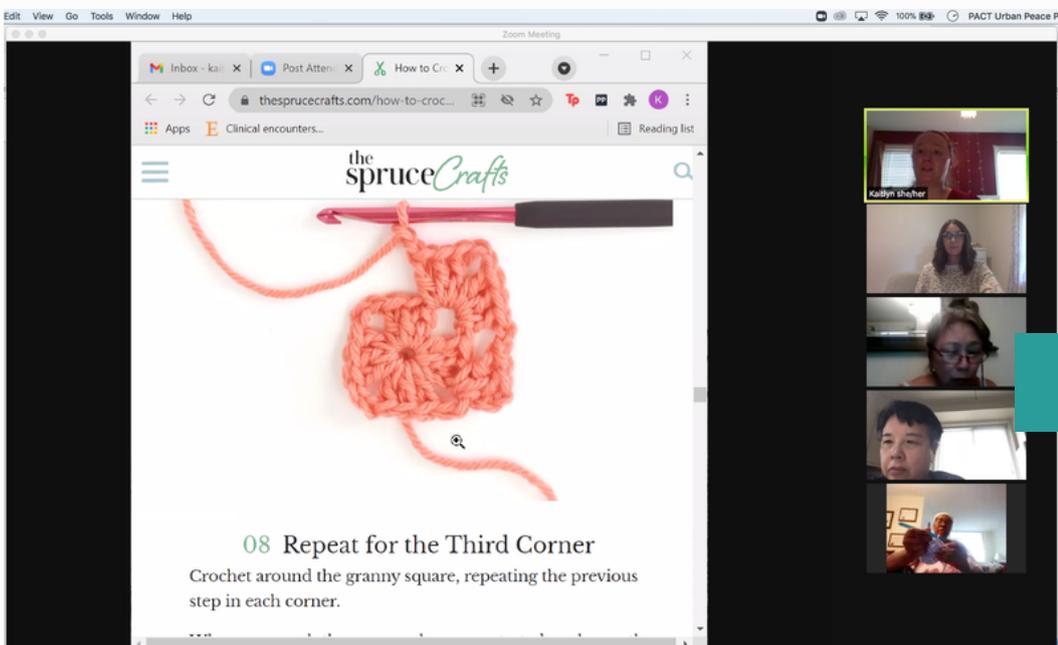
PACTFashion



Building Beats: Digital Music Production



Crochet Club



HOPES FOR 2022

As the new year approaches, we are envisioning all the hopes we have and goals we wish to achieve in 2022. Imagining a post-pandemic world, we hope to return to **in-person Youth Programming** and finally be able to reconnect in person. We aim to further **expand our Fresh Food Box Program** to reach even more community members in-need and **welcome more corporate volunteer groups** into our gardens. We plan to **introduce our new Accessibility Garden** at Thistleton CI to the community in 2022 and **expand our LifePlan Coaching Program** into more middle schools in the GTA.

Stay tuned!

For regular updates and to stay in touch, follow PACT on social media (Facebook and Instagram).

To donate, please visit our website at www.pactprogram.ca/donate or send your valued donation to: PACT Urban Peace Program, 312 Brooke Avenue, Toronto, ON M5M 2L3 (a tax receipt will be issued).

Please contact David Lockett, PACT President & Co-Founder at 416-256-0726 or david@pactprogram.ca to discuss sponsorship or funding proposals.

DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO ALL FUNDERS

thank you!

PLATINUM LEVEL SPONSORS, OVER \$40,000

JOHN ZANINI FOUNDATION

GOLD LEVEL SPONSORS, \$15,000-\$25,000

DALGLISH FAMILY FOUNDATION
DAN AND MARY CORNACCHIA
SECOND HARVEST
JOHANSEN LARSEN FOUNDATION
COMMUNITY FOOD CENTERS OF CANADA
CHICKAPEA PASTA/THE NEW FARM
SUSAN LEVESQUE, NORMA CROXON, DAISY BRIMBECOM, NANCY &
ROBERT HOLDER



SILVER LEVEL SPONSORS, \$5,000-\$14,999

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WHOLE FOODS WHOLE KIDS FOUNDATION
VOLUNTEER CANADA
THE CHAWKERS FOUNDATION
ENCIRCLED
CAREER FOUNDATION
LRJ BRAYDON FOUNDATION

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR EMERGENCY FOOD BOX SUPPORTERS

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL THE PACT FRIENDS AND FAMILY WHO GAVE INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS TO SUPPORT OUR EMERGENCY FRESH FOOD BOX THIS YEAR DURING OUR MONTHLY FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN. THANK YOU!