

Halton Region Community Investment Fund Impact Report 2024



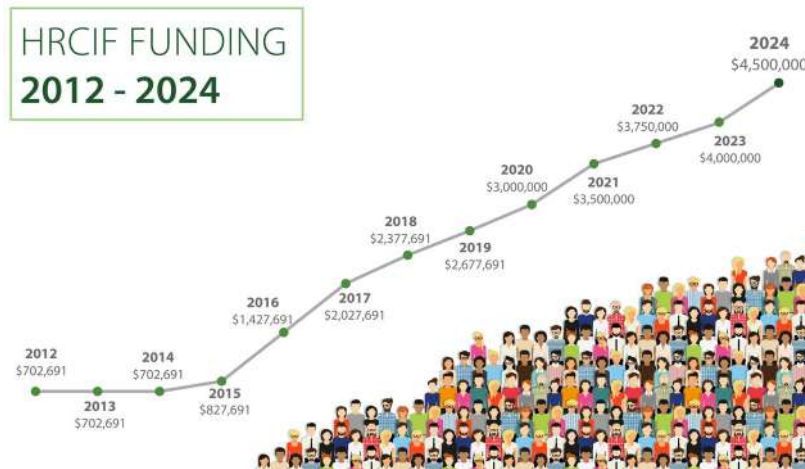
About the Halton Region Community Investment Fund

The Halton Region Community Investment Fund (HRCIF) provides grants to non-profit human service organizations whose programs seek to enhance the health, safety and well-being of Halton residents. The Fund offers both single-year and multi-year grants through two funding categories, focusing support for residents who are vulnerable to negative health and social outcomes. Collaborative applications that improve coordination and collectively achieve impact are encouraged.

Between 2012-2024, the HRCIF grew from \$702,691 in annual funding to \$4.5 million. This represents an increase of 540 per cent.

In 2024, HRCIF funding was allocated to 83 programs and initiatives that support well-being of children, youth and older adults, increase food security among residents with low incomes, strengthen equity and inclusion, and enhance mental health.

Of these 83 grants, 65 were approved through the 2024 allocations process, and 18 received second or third-year funding that was awarded through multi-year commitments in 2022 or 2023. This report highlights 2024 grant recipients and profiles several initiatives that illustrate the impact of HRCIF investments in Halton.



HRCIF Overview

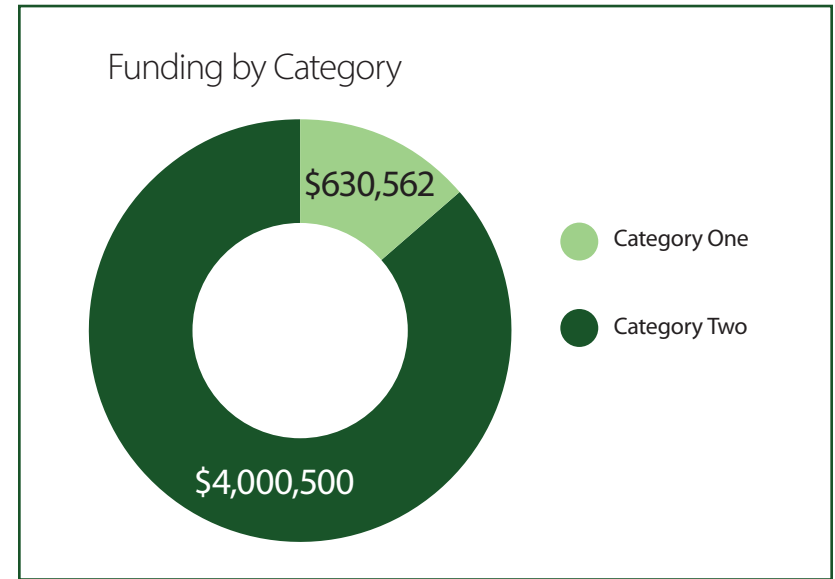
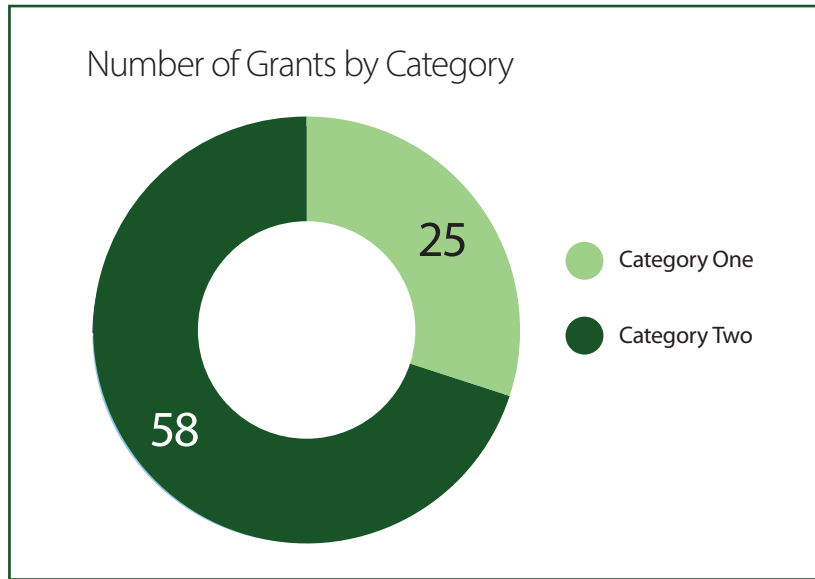
The HRCIF has **two categories of funding**:

- **Category One:** Funding is for short-term, small capital or innovative projects. Funding is awarded up to a maximum of \$30,000 for up to one year.
- **Category Two:** Provides up to three years of funding for programs and initiatives.

HRCIF applicants must demonstrate impact in at least one of the following objectives:

- **Health** – A community where everyone is supported to reach both physical and mental well-being.
- **Safety** – A community where everyone can go about their daily activities without risk or fear of harm.
- **Well-Being** – A community where everyone is connected and engaged with a vibrant, healthy environment and strong social supports.

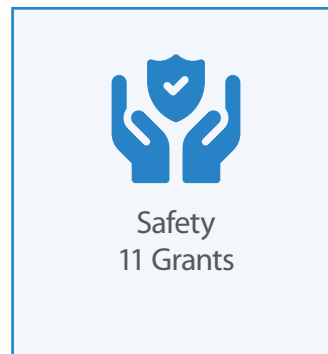
HRCIF 2024 by the numbers



\$131,062 of the investments were funded by the return of prior year grants.

Programs by Funding Objectives

In 2024, the HRCIF supported a wide range of initiatives that strengthened the health, safety and well-being of Halton residents within the following funding objectives:



Grants may impact more than one funding objective



“Three clients living in a nearby encampment struggling with mental health and substance abuse disorders found us at Churchill Neighbourhood centre. All of them grew up in Halton and along the way developed an addiction and became justice involved. Two of them were being trafficked. These members received wrap around supports from six agencies who worked together to help them meet their goals of becoming alcohol and drug free and finding housing.

Happy to report that all three are alcohol and drug free and that all are in housing or shelter now.”

- Staff Member, Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre

Churchill Community Supports - Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre

The Issue:

Some residents living in the Churchill neighbourhood of Oakville face multiple challenges. They may experience low income, high housing costs, and low education rates. The area has also seen a high demand for addiction related harm reduction supports and heightened police involvement.

The Response:

Through a multi-year investment from the HRCIF, Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre established a hub that brings together community health and social service providers. Full wrap around supports are provided directly in the neighbourhood five days per week with no appointment required to access service.

The hub supports 600 people per year with basic needs such as food and clothes, housing search, replacing identification, harm reduction and mental health supports including counselling, financial wellness, employment and life skills programming.

HRCIF Investment: A total of \$363,317 over three years.



"I never thought I would see my culture's food showcased at a work event. I feel seen."

– Program participant

"The events are so thoughtful; attention is paid to making me feel like I am welcomed here."

– Program participant

"It's great to have an organization that we can talk with [and] consult with. There's a lot of diversity in where everybody is in terms of DEI, in Halton. It's great to have a space where organizations who are leading the path might be able to come in and mentor smaller organizations, or just provide feedback on what their journey looked like and what worked for them, not necessarily as a direct playbook, but more as inspiration."

– Program participant

Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable

The Issue:

Halton's demographics are shifting significantly. Between 2016 and 2021, Halton's racialized population grew by 50%, largely due to international immigration¹. Racism and discrimination were identified as a challenge experienced by 10% of newcomers to Halton, and 29% of newcomers to Milton in 2023². The changing socio-demographic characteristics of Halton's population highlights a need for a proactive approach to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion.

¹ Community Development Halton, *Our Halton Issue #5: Diversity, 2023*. ² Halton Region, *Halton Newcomer Strategy Community Survey, 2023*.

The Response:

The AIDS Network is the lead partner in the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable which aims to build systemic inclusion and equity in Halton. The Roundtable is a community collective of organizations, institutions, groups, businesses and individual members. Through a Category Two grant, it provides training and facilitates opportunities for dialogue, collaboration and learning. A total of 550 individuals will participate in its initiatives this year. The Roundtable addresses issues of discrimination by promoting equity, inclusion and understanding across Halton's diverse neighbourhoods.

HRCIF Investment: A total of \$125,107 in 2024.



Halton Deaf older adults felt a sense of community and were grateful for the events and opportunities to come together. The events allowed Deaf older adults to participate fully without feeling left out.”

– Staff Member, Bob Rumball
Canadian Centre of Excellence for the Deaf

Halton Deaf Seniors’ Club – Bob Rumball Canadian Centre of Excellence for the Deaf

The Issue:

Halton is home to a large Deaf population as the second largest School for the Deaf in Ontario is located in Milton. Services and programs need to be accessible to appropriately support Deaf older adults who are at risk of social isolation and reduced wellness.

The Response:

Modeled from a similar program operating in Toronto, Bob Rumball Canadian Centre of Excellence for the Deaf established a program to provide social and educational programming to Deaf and hard of hearing older adults using American Sign Language.

A Category Two investment through HRCIF supports 45 older adults with friendly outreach visits, wellness checks, educational workshops and social events. The goal is for participants to access learning and community connections that enhance their sense of autonomy and empowerment, leading to feeling more connected, engaged and better informed about the education topics presented. Pairing outreach services with educational events promotes and sustains wellness.

HRCIF Investment: A total of \$82,062 over two years.



“The Holding and Healing Space program has been an invaluable resource in helping me gain a deep sense of self-awareness and self-reflection, how to meaningfully process trauma, create healthy boundaries in relationships and develop emotional regulation and stress management techniques”.

– Program participant

Holding and Healing Space – Maternal Mind Matters

The Issue:

Through consultations with community members who are Muslim, the organization identified a need for culturally relevant mental health services. Consultation participants expressed that some mothers who are Muslim are at risk for mental health related issues such as anxiety, stress, depression, loneliness and isolation.

The Response:

With the support of a Category One grant from the HRCIF, the Holding and Healing Space program provides no-cost weekly interactive workshops to 24 mothers in Halton who are Muslim and experiencing mental health concerns. Culturally specific workshops are led by a counsellor who is Muslim to promote mental health and well-being. The interactive sessions teach participants how to develop strategies to communicate about their mental health, increase self-awareness and focus on self-care. Additional topics include building healthy parent and child relationships, understanding mind-body connections and relaxation breathing.

HRCIF Investment: A total of \$30,000 in 2024.



“One of our clients started coming in because she needed support with her groceries.

After feeling safe, welcomed, and loved, she started building relationships with our volunteers and staff. She currently comes into the Roxy Centre a number of times a week for various programs.

In my last conversation with her she told me how loved and welcomed she feels at the Roxy Centre and that it has been great making friends and having a space she can come to and not be judged.”

– Staff Member, Roxy Centre

The Roxy Centre Food Program – The Central Canadian District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada

The Issue:

Access to sufficient, healthy and culturally appropriate food is a growing need for many low-income families and individuals across Halton. Food Banks Canada recently noted that food bank usage has reached its highest levels in Canadian history.¹ Residents in Halton, including Acton and the surrounding area, are no exception. Those who are experiencing food insecurity may also face additional accessibility barriers.

¹ Food Banks Canada, *Hunger Count, 2023*

The Response:

A Category One HRCIF grant is supporting the extension of weekly food pick-up times at the Roxy Centre. As a result, over 200 families in Acton are receiving food through the Centre, representing a 54% increase from the previous year. Stronger community partnerships are also being developed, leading to more collaborative programming at the Centre. This includes weekly cooking classes designed to help participants develop skills to prepare healthy meals.

HRCIF Investment: A total of \$29,346 in 2024.



"In the summer of 2021, we received a referral to our Survivor-Led Peer Advocacy Program about Yuki (her requested pseudonym) who had escaped exploitation and was looking for support.

We helped to provide tangible items like a winter coat and slippers for her hospital stay, and when it came time for her to be released from the hospital, the Peer Advocate helped her navigate housing programs that would help in her recovery. We journeyed alongside Yuki and witnessed her accomplish many of her goals like maintaining sobriety, going back to school, and working on various life skills.

In spring of 2023, Yuki came to live at Nancy's House after graduating from a first-stage housing program. She was in the midst of completing her high school credits, and now she is nearly finished with her last one! She is now considering next steps of further professional development and career options."

– Staff Member, Restorations Second Stage Homes

Nancy's House – Restorations Second Stage Homes

The Issue:

Sadly, Halton is not immune to the problem of human trafficking. In 2023, 20 victims of human trafficking were rescued by Halton Regional Police Services.¹ Survivors may be at increased risk of homelessness and re-exploitation if they do not secure adequate, safe, and affordable housing.

¹ Halton Regional Police Services, Annual Report, 2023.

The Response:

A Category Two HRCIF grant is supporting survivor-centered programming and case management for three residents at Nancy's House, a second stage or transitional housing facility for individuals who are in the process of moving toward independent living. Each resident receives comprehensive support, including housing, connections to medical and healthcare services, counseling, referrals, and community resources. Additionally, they have opportunities for skill building, training, education, employment, and peer support.

HRCIF Investment: A total of \$186,360 over three years.

2024 HRCIF Funded Organizations and Programs

Organization	Program Overview	2024 Grant Amount (\$)	Location(s)			
			Burlington	Halton Hills	Milton	Oakville
Acclaim Health and Community Care Services	Provide backbone support for a Community Safety and Well-Being Action Table addressing older adult isolation in Halton.	14,959	•	•	•	•
Achëv	Provide a range of supports to newcomer women including settlement, employment workshops, and wellness activities.	84,873	•	•	•	•
Art Gallery of Burlington	In partnership with Joseph Brant Hospital, provide art programs for those experiencing complex and serious mental health disorders.	21,979	•			
ArtHouse for Children and Youth	Provide free extra-curricular arts programs for low income youth aged 12 to 17 to build life skills and form positive relationships.	46,940	•	•	•	•
Bandology Canada Inc.	Provide free music workshops to newcomers, individuals with low income and youth at-risk of dropping out of school.	28,932	•	•	•	•
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Halton and Hamilton	Provide youth with education, career pathway and life skills training to support the transition to adulthood.	29,992	•	•	•	•
	Provide cultural mentoring, promote inclusion and reduce risk for racialized youth aged 12 to 17.	60,107	•		•	•
Black Mentorship Inc.	Connect youth, professionals, newcomers, and entrepreneurs from the Black community with mentors who will help set career goals, establish self-advocacy techniques, develop skills and share resources needed to attain professional and personal advancement.	67,499	•	•	•	•
Bob Rumball Canadian Centre of Excellence for the Deaf	Provide sessions that promote health, well-being, education and inclusion for older adults who are Deaf or hard of hearing.	42,506	•	•	•	•
Brain Injury Association of Peel & Halton	Provide supports to youth who have survived an acquired brain injury. This includes supporting the families.	29,592	•	•	•	•
Burlington Baptist Church	Support lunch and activity programs that provide older adults with opportunity for social interaction with peers to decrease isolation and connect them with other needed services.	13,481	•			
Canadian Mental Health Association, Halton Region Branch	Pilot an alternative approach for the Crisis Outreach and Support Team to help those in the community experiencing mental health or addiction crises.	173,607	•	•	•	•

2024 HRCIF Funded Organizations and Programs - Continued

Organization	Program Overview	2024 Grant Amount (\$)	Location(s)			
			Burlington	Halton Hills	Milton	Oakville
Central West Specialized Developmental Services	Provide in-home respite allowing caregivers who are approaching a crisis situation to remove themselves from the home for a defined period of time to enable personal care.	70,800	•	•	•	•
	Support families who have a child with a developmental and mental health diagnosis (dual diagnosis) to provide navigation supports and strategies to divert from emergency services and out-of-home living environments.	156,000	•	•	•	•
Centre canadien pour l'unité de famille	Provide culturally adapted cooking workshops and grocery vouchers to Black Francophone immigrant and refugee families.	30,000	•	•	•	•
Centre for Diverse Learners	Provide monthly workshops and peer to peer connection for parents of children with learning disabilities focusing on mental health and advocacy. The program will also provide navigation and advocacy support for parents meeting with schools.	76,945	•	•	•	•
	Provide specialized literacy interventions and one-on-one supports to children from marginalized backgrounds who have reading challenges and are neuro diverse.	83,809	•	•	•	•
Community Development Halton	Develop a team of researchers with lived experiences of homelessness to interview and raise the voices of Halton residents living in encampments.	58,107	•	•	•	•
Compassion Society of Halton	Hire a staff to manage volunteers, receive food and clothing donations and support individuals with low incomes.	30,750	•	•	•	•
Country Heritage Agricultural Society	Support repairs and upgrades to the community kitchen in order to better serve the needs of people who face food insecurity.	30,000	•	•	•	•
Creative Community Hive	Provide arts, cooking and entrepreneurial skill building workshops for older adults and newcomers experiencing barriers such as low income.	28,139	•			•
Dare To Be Youth Charity	Provide peer mentorship and workshops for youth aged 17-24 to develop life and coping skills, self-esteem, confidence and resiliency.	27,579	•	•	•	•
Distress Centre Halton	Provide a free outbound call support service to help Halton residents who are experiencing isolation and mental or health issues.	85,000	•	•	•	•

2024 HRCIF Funded Organizations and Programs - Continued

Organization	Program Overview	2024 Grant Amount (\$)	Location(s)			
			Burlington	Halton Hills	Milton	Oakville
EFRY Hope and Help for Women	Support mobile support case worker who will work collaboratively with Halton Regional Police Service to provide a continuum of care for victims of human trafficking.	96,367	•	•	•	•
	Provide programming to educate girls about the risks of sexual exploitation and support girls who have been exploited to prevent future abuse.	36,049	•	•	•	•
	Provide case management to individuals participating in the Halton Drug Treatment Court, a specialized diversion court for offenders who have addiction or substance use issues to prevent future drug related crimes.	32,585	•	•	•	•
Food for Life Canada Charitable Corporation	Support the sourcing, collection and redistribution of food to community programs that support residents who are food insecure throughout Halton.	223,423	•	•	•	•
Grandmother's Voice International	Provide a community of practice for community leaders and service providers as well as supporting Indigenous cultural and learning events.	29,960	•	•	•	•
Halton Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Assessment, Prevention & Treatment Services (Halton ADAPT)	Provide dedicated staff for onsite supports at the Milton and Halton Hills Youth Centre locations related to substance use, addiction, and co-occurring mental illness.	106,920		•	•	
Halton Black History Awareness Society	Teach educators and community leaders about Canadian Black history and equip them with the tools and knowledge to address racism and discrimination through a train-the-trainer program.	11,500	•	•	•	•
Halton Black Voices	Create leadership and engagement opportunities, and foster inclusion, well-being, and empowerment for Black youth.	29,942	•	•	•	•
Halton Environmental Network	Support community garden programming in Halton Community Housing Corporation communities to improve food security and reduce isolation.	68,074	•	•	•	•
Halton Food for Thought	Support infrastructure needs of student nutrition programs helping Halton students access healthy food at school.	20,954	•	•	•	•
	Provide student nutrition programs, including expansion to new schools.	93,348	•	•	•	•
Halton Multicultural Council Inc.	Facilitate access to community supports and assist newcomers and refugees who are in crisis.	47,681	•	•	•	•
Halton Women's Place	Provide specialized mental health supports to women at the shelter with mental health or addiction issues.	60,114	•	•	•	•
Heartache2Hope	Provide support programs for individuals who have experienced a loss due to suicide.	70,272	•	•	•	•

2024 HRCIF Funded Organizations and Programs - Continued

Organization	Program Overview	2024 Grant Amount (\$)	Location(s)			
			Burlington	Halton Hills	Milton	Oakville
HIPPY Halton Home-Based Program	Support skills development for newcomer parents and their pre-school children through a peer-based education model.	41,028	•		•	•
Home Suite Hope Shared Living Corp.	Provide specialized mental health supports to single parents transitioning from homelessness and working to stabilize their situation.	45,360	•		•	•
John Howard Society of Peel-Halton-Dufferin	Divert individuals away from the criminal justice system, in collaboration with Halton Regional Police Service.	30,000	•	•	•	•
Kerr Street Community Services	Provide personalized life coaching, practical strategies to deal with life challenges and improve the health and well-being of low income and diverse populations served by the organization.	65,794				•
Knox Presbyterian Church	A sponsor to the Out of the Cold program in Georgetown, which provides seasonal night-to-night accommodation, food, and access to laundry for homeless individuals in Halton Hills.	23,000		•		
Licensed to Learn Inc.	Train student tutors and match them with students with similar lived experiences who are facing educational challenges.	34,303	•	•	•	•
Links2Care	Provide supports for older adults who are isolated in coordination with a Community Safety and Well-Being Action Table addressing older adult isolation.	39,546	•	•	•	•
	Provide system navigation and support to homeless and precariously housed populations to help them access the health care system.	94,989	•	•	•	•
Maternal Mind Matters	Provide mental health programming designed to build connections and manage stress and anxiety for Muslim mothers.	30,000	•		•	•
Milton Community Resource Centre	Provide access to infant food and supplies and menstrual products to families with low incomes.	112,113		•	•	
Mind Forward Brain Injury Services	Provide specialized in-person and virtual day programs for residents living with a brain injury.	67,352	•	•	•	•
MusFit	Promote physical activity and mental health through martial arts-based self-defense training for women and youth with a focus on the Muslim community.	29,897	•		•	•
Muslim Advisory Council of Canada	Support students and families who identify as Muslim through navigation services and development of a resource hub.	30,000	•	•	•	•
Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre	Provide year-round tax filing and individualized financial counselling for low-income Halton residents.	106,357	•	•	•	•
	Provide a range of hub-based supports for a community in Oakville in collaboration with community partners. This includes life skills, financial literacy and access to food.	116,841				•

2024 HRCIF Funded Organizations and Programs - Continued

Organization	Program Overview	2024 Grant Amount (\$)	Location(s)			
			Burlington	Halton Hills	Milton	Oakville
Oakville Meals on Wheels	Upgrade heating elements used to keep food warm to ensure safety of food delivered and improve the meal delivery service.	14,010				•
	Subsidize meals for clients with low incomes in response to the growing complexity and number of clients.	25,000				•
Oakville React Inc.	Upgrade radio communication equipment used to communicate with emergency response departments and teams about health and safety incidents at community events.	12,713	•	•	•	•
Oakvillegreen Conservation Association	Provide guided outdoor activities including walks, gardening skills, social engagement and volunteer opportunities for older adults who are isolated.	30,000				•
Oasis Youth Care Programs	Provide safe, stable housing and culturally responsive support services to Black youth aged 18-25 transitioning from the child welfare and youth justice systems.	60,575	•		•	•
Punjabi Community Health Services	Support mental health counselling and provide programming on substance use issues and parent-child conflict with a focus on the South Asian and Muslim communities.	89,924	•	•	•	•
Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK)	Support staffing for specialized assessment and treatment programs for children, youth and families who have been affected by abuse and/or neglect.	41,860	•	•	•	•
Redleaf Cultural Integration	Provide culturally appropriate dementia care, social activities, workshops and system navigation to Chinese older adults and their caregivers.	30,000	•		•	•
Restorations Second Stage Homes	Provide case management and supports for survivors of human trafficking.	64,200	•			
Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services of Halton (SAVIS)	Assist survivors of sexual violence and human trafficking by expanding access to specialized mental health supports.	67,922	•	•	•	
Shifra Homes Inc.	Support young pregnant women and former clients of Shifra Homes Inc. with specialized mental health supports.	57,007	•	•	•	•
Tetra Society of North America	Design and build custom-made assistive devices to enhance the lives of individuals with a disability.	5,800	•	•	•	•
The AIDS Network	Support the Halton Equity and Diversity Roundtable (HEDR) to implement initiatives to strengthen equity and inclusion. HEDR is a community collective of organizations, institutions, groups, businesses and individual members that are committed to building systemic inclusion and equity in Halton.	125,107	•	•	•	•
The Army Cadet League of Canada (Ontario)	Support upgrade to computer infrastructure to improve access to programming that addresses bullying, harassment, dating violence and abuse in Milton.	12,450			•	

2024 HRCIF Funded Organizations and Programs - Continued

Organization	Program Overview	2024 Grant Amount (\$)	Location(s)			
			Burlington	Halton Hills	Milton	Oakville
The Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton	Support community outreach staff to provide advocacy support and navigation for Black students and families, as well as outreach and coordination of educational programs, arts programs and leadership opportunities for youth and seniors.	93,348	•	•	•	•
	Support program development and delivery, and facilitate community engagement aimed at promoting equity, diversity and inclusion within the community.	68,023	•	•	•	•
The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)	Provide programming for older adults, children and youth who are blind, deaf-blind, partially sighted or have low vision to reduce social isolation and improve quality of life.	51,826	•	•	•	•
The Cedarbrook Society (o/a The Darling Home for Kids)	Provide respite care to support the mental health and well-being of parents of children with rare, permanent and complex medical conditions before crisis or burnout occurs.	31,304	•	•	•	•
The Central Canadian District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada	A sponsor to The Roxy Centre to provide supports to people who are food insecure in Acton and strengthen collaboration between food organizations.	29,346		•		
The Children's Aid Society of the Regional Municipality of Halton	Provide a range of supports for youth in the Bridging the Gap program including life skills support such as financial literacy and housing start-up costs.	19,089	•	•	•	•
	Support a program for youth aged 18 to 24 transitioning from the care of the Children's Aid Society to improve outcomes related to education, training and/or employment.	48,600	•	•	•	•
The Governing Council of the Salvation Army in Canada	Provide intensive case management focused on housing stability to support high acuity individuals accessing the Lighthouse Shelter.	69,251	•	•	•	•
	To enable the Milton location to serve individuals and families with food, social programs, and referrals to various community services.	30,000			•	
The Halton Region Conservation Foundation	Maintain and create new healing gardens to empower residents of Halton Community Housing Corporation communities who are Black and racialized. Residents will connect, learn and build social relationships through the program.	21,130	•			
The Jasmine House (o/a Syrian Canadian Foundation)	Support mothers who are newcomers and Arabic-speaking by providing training about mental health issues that could affect their children, while also raising awareness about resources they can access.	28,800	•	•	•	•
	Provide a range of supports focused on mental wellness, self-care, and coping skills for Arabic-speaking and English-speaking newcomer women.	57,148	•	•	•	•

2024 HRCIF Funded Organizations and Programs - Continued

Organization	Program Overview	2024 Grant Amount (\$)	Location(s)			
			Burlington	Halton Hills	Milton	Oakville
The Lighthouse Program for Grieving Children	Provide workshops to educate the public and service providers about grieving in order to build community capacity to support grieving children.	29,300	•	•	•	•
The Women's Centre of Halton	Support women who are survivors of intimate partner violence through counselling, support groups and educational workshops.	92,209	•	•	•	•
Wellspring Cancer Support Foundation	Establish safe, individual exercise routines for clients to build strength while reducing their cancer-related side effects and improving mental and physical health.	15,000	•	•	•	•
Wesley Urban Ministries Inc.	Support case management and cognitive behavioural therapy for adults who have hoarding disorders to help stabilize their housing.	209,154	•	•	•	•
YMCA of Oakville	Subsidize fitness memberships for newcomers to enhance community connections and improve personal health and well-being.	15,601	•			•

Smallest and Largest Grants by Category - 2024 funding



For more information, visit **halton.ca** or call 311.



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