



Brintha's Story: One LOFT Client Comes Full Circle

In 2015, Brintha was diagnosed with Lupus, an autoimmune disease that causes the body to attack its own healthy tissue. The diagnosis was difficult, and Brintha was struggling with her mental health. Feeling like she couldn't cope, Brintha dropped out of high school and stopped aspiring to anything.

"After my diagnosis with Lupus, life presented itself with so many changes and I had a really tough time navigating those changes, along with the emotions that came with it," said Brintha, "I saw my disability as a limitation and I didn't see much purpose to my life."

Things began to turn around when she connected with LOFT's Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) Program. It became a safe space where Brintha could be vulnerable, talk openly and get support.

"The LOFT team helped me build on skills that I never knew I had, and supported me through every step of my recovery. It was definitely a learning curve for me, and throughout the whole process I worked on my own self-growth and was able to re-discover myself."

With LOFT's help, Brintha began to plan for her future: She successfully completed high school, and went on to college where she completed a Social Service Worker program. Her journey with LOFT didn't end there: Brintha has come full circle and, thanks to the support and generosity of our donors, she is now employed by LOFT as a Peer Support Worker.

Brintha wanted to give back to the community that once supported her. Today, she provides emotional and social support to other young people in the TAY Program.

"My journey so far has definitely had its highs and lows, but I've learned to appreciate each day and embrace the changes that come my way. I am excited to see what else the future holds for me."

LOFT's Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) Program provides housing, one on one care, drop-in social support, mental health and peer support, and group therapy for youth under 25 who live with mental health, physical health and substance use challenges.



Giving Love in the Form of Food

On a normal day, you'll find Sandra Greenlund in the kitchen of LOFT's 416 Community Support for Women, lovingly taking donated raw ingredients and turning them into healthy meals – 200 of them every single day. When COVID-19 hit, Sandra and the 416 team had to adapt quickly to be able to continue to meet the needs of the 416 community.

"COVID hit and that totally put a monkey wrench in everything," said Sandra, "I would say for the first two days it felt overwhelming."

What were normally sit-down meals had to be planned, prepared and packaged for take-out, and there were concerns about the food supply.

"We received notice that our deliveries might be reduced due to grocery stores running out of supplies. So I had to go through the fridge and the freezers and look at all the ingredients, all the stuff we had, and actually sit down for about three to four days and plan 65 days of meals."

Sandra and the team made some tough decisions, adjusting how often and where we provide meals and reducing service to three days a week. Rain or shine, you'll find Sandra and the 416 team handing out meals from the courtyard – often with passersby honking and clapping in support.

"I really enjoy those days," says Sandra, "because I'm getting to actually chat with some of our clientele and see how they're doing, and ask how they're doing, ask how they're feeling."

Sandra's resilience and can-do attitude also led her to help other LOFT sites with their food needs after, they too, were affected by this crisis. On the days that she's not making a hundred meals for the 416, she's cooking dozens more for other programs.

"Nobody knows the time frame of when things will open up and function properly again. Right now, we're just going to keep doing what we're doing."

The 416 Community Support for Women Program provides daily drop in-meals and programming, mental health and addictions case management, and a health and wellness program.

A Special THANK YOU to LOFT Staff

LOFT works with some of the most at-risk communities in the province. For us, every day is the front line. COVID-19 has presented our staff with new challenges. Many staff have been redeployed to new locations, and all of our staff is adapting to great change while also managing things in their personal lives. Once again, LOFT staff has risen to the challenges and done their very best to serve our clients.

Thank you. You are so valued.





We knew that our clients faced higher risk during a pandemic. With over 800 people living in high-support congregate living, we had to move fast when COVID-19 hit.

It has been an extraordinary team effort. Staff from across our various programs mobilized to develop action plans that included deep cleaning protocols, keeping an adequate supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) and proper staff coverage.

Youth groups were moved to virtual platforms. Clients received information and coaching about physical distancing and how to stay safe. Visitors were restricted at our high-support residences and screeners greeted every person at the door with personal protective equipment (PPE) and to check the status of their health.

Caring for staff is a critical part of our pandemic plan. "Heroes Work Here" signs were painted by friends of LOFT and presented at our many

programs as a way to encourage staff. Thoughtful donors brought moments of joy by providing snacks and meals. Virtual support groups for our staff were established at the beginning of the pandemic, including a workshop on parenting during COVID-19.

To help protect the community, LOFT led the way by sharing the COVID protocols we developed, helping other agencies with their COVID response. We presented our Caring for the Carers staff resiliency strategy to over 400 agencies across the province.

Our hard work has paid off so far. No LOFT residents have tested positive for COVID-19.

We are facing uncertain times ahead. But with our values of compassion, community and collaboration, we are ready to face the future with confidence.



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YES, I WOULD LIKE TO HELP DURING COVID-19

I would like to make a one time donation of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

My personal cheque/money order payable to LOFT Community Services is enclosed.
--OR--

Please charge my Credit Card

Card Type: Visa Mastercard Amex

Card #: _____ Expiry: _____

Signature: _____

By providing your email address you consent to receive regular updates, solicitations and other opportunities from LOFT. Your contribution is tax deductible. A tax receipt will be issued shortly.

Become a Monthly Donor



I would like to become a Monthly Donor and help support long-term change.

Beginning with the next month, and continuing until I notify you otherwise, I authorize a monthly gift of:

\$15 \$25 \$50 Other \$ _____

Withdraw this amount directly from my bank account. My void cheque is enclosed.

Please charge the amount to my credit card (please fill in card information beside)

Monthly Donors – Know Your Rights. You have the right to change, cancel or put a hold on your donation at any time. Just call the LOFT Development Office at 416-979-1994, x 2033 or email fundraising@loftcs.org. To obtain information about your recourse rights if any charge or withdrawal does not comply with the form you have signed, contact your financial institution or visit www.payments.ca.



Acts of kindness and communities pulling together: that's what is getting us through the COVID-19 pandemic. We have received tremendous financial support from our donors, and we're grateful to everyone who has given to us during this crucial time.

LOFT has also received many non-monetary donations from individuals and companies, and they've made such a difference to the wellbeing of our staff and clients. Thank you to everyone who has given us these much-needed treats and supplies!

Booster Juice Woodbridge Square
Canadian Tire
Dominion Lending Altra
Giant Tiger
Homemade Masks for Hometown People
Josh Ingleby
KFC
King and Bay Clothiers
KlikHealth
KNIX/Robert Kerr Foundation
Pizzaville

Tibetan Community Centre
University of Guelph, SEDRD, Landscape
Architecture Department
We Make Masks TO (Deane and Judy Collinson)
The Woodbridge Group and Woodbridge Cares

*Every effort has been made to ensure that this list is accurate. If we've made an error or omission, please accept our sincerest apologies.

WAYS TO HELP

COVID-19 has put a great strain on the communities and people we serve. Many are going without much-needed supplies.

Please consider a financial gift so that we can purchase items like medical grade personal protective equipment (PPE), or an in-kind donation of:

- Reusable cloth masks and gowns that open at the back
- Meals for LOFT staff and clients
- Personal care products such as shampoo, toothpaste and feminine hygiene products
- New, unused sheets and blankets
- Air conditioning units, since many of our locations aren't air conditioned

Have something you'd like to donate? Email fundraising@loftcs.org today!