



ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Social Services Network is a grass root, community based organization with strong functional partnerships with the diverse ethnocultural community groups, faith leaders and community centers. SSN has a dedicated community mobilizer (CM) in place at each location. These CMs belong to the community they serve, speak their language, understand their culture and along with a group of dedicated volunteers encourage and deliver culturally and linguistically sensitive programs at the community centres/clubs and places of worship. SSN services 27 centers which are diverse S.A. communities and have a potential outreach of 35,000. We partner with other healthcare and support services organizations to deliver their services to our seniors, family and youth. Following are a list of activities this year.

SENIOR PROGRAMS

South Asian Adult Day Program (SAADP):

(In partnership with Unionville Home Society)

The program provides the diverse South Asian community seniors an opportunity to access information and participate in activities on based prevention and wellness philosophies. The program is designed to help older adults regain their independence and enjoy each day. It also addresses seniors' needs and provides equitable access to care in a safe and sensitive environment to enable improved supports in their home. It takes place two days per week (Saturdays and Sundays) at Unionville Home Society, in Markham and is delivered by staff speaking Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, Tamil and English.

Mental Health Awareness and Support Drop-In Centres:

This program is funded by UWYR to provide culturally and linguistically sensitive awareness and support programs on mental health through eight community access points, 128 Mental Health awareness workshops and presentations, to raise awareness of programs and services for mental health to 1200 South Asian community members and 120 Newcomers visiting the 8 community access points. This project will train 16 volunteers.

Family Programs:

Creating Bridges for Healthy Communities

[In partnership with Blue Hills Child and Family Centre and Kinark Child and Family Services]

Creating Bridges for Healthy Communities was established to focus on enhancing children's emotional well being through regular, predictable and consistent opportunities for parent engagement and community linkages through information booths at 5 community centers. A booklet was produced and materials are available in English, Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil and Punjabi.

Diabetes Prevention and Self Management Program

Delivered a 12 week program to increase awareness and capacity building through a community based integrated approach for the **prevention of chronic diseases** like diabetes in collaboration with **Markham Stouffville Hospital** and Carefirst. Total 1500 clients were screened in three months and 155 referred to Diabetes Education center at MSH.

Six Months' Evidence Based Study to Prevent and Manage Diabetes:

The study measured the community impact of integrated approach of healthy eating, active living and mental health management on preventing chronic diseases. The results demonstrated the success of the diet and exercise component of the program. Regular monitoring and trending of 45 clients' blood glucose levels indicated that clients were better able to control their blood glucose level with regular contacts and follow-ups with the health care team. The program attained significant success in enabling clients to reduce their blood pressure level.

Outreach and Connections within the SA Community

SSN has been a leader in providing all round support to newcomers, who needed to adapt, contribute and prosper in the Canadian society. Towards this end the programs include, needs assessment, orientation to local environments, interpretation-translation, information and referral, and sessions to support networking with the community. weekly community outreach sessions are held at health and settlement support drop-in centers (total eight) across Greater Toronto. This project is funded through Ontario Trillium Foundation

South Asian Outreach Project (SAOP)

[In partnership with Family Services York Region]

This project is aimed towards increasing awareness on domestic violence and abuse through information and support groups sessions. 10 sessions were delivered in Hindi, Punjabi, Tamil, Urdu and Gujarati.

Youth Projects:

Leaders of Tomorrow, Today (LOTT)

LOTT aims to address prevailing youth issues in society. It is an opportunity for South Asian youth to find their voice and leadership potential for a healthy, safe and successful present and future. LOTT invites new youth members to join in the efforts of addressing and resolving issues faced by South Asian youth. Youth Promotional Videos – were used to recruit youth to join LOTT and participate in the various events. Ektaa, New recruits, Hoops for Hunger and a HYPE conference was organized by LOTT.

EKTAA "Unity within Diversity"

5th annual EKTAA – Unity within Diversity was celebrated in November. The theme this year was bridging the intergenerational gap. In line with the theme the event was organized and planned by SSN's intergenerational committee and the youth group (LoTT). The celebration included variety of intergenerational performances including a fashion show staged by seniors and youth. The event was appreciated both by the audience and the chief guest Mr. Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism, Ontario Govt.

Sports Tournament/ Food Drive was held at the Milliken Mills High School. 100 youth were in attendance. 7 teams participated. In total approximately 5 neighboring high schools participated. As an outcome the youth raised 3 large boxes of food to be donated to a local food bank. The youth will be going to the Food Bank in early August to deliver all the food collected

Multimedia Film Festival of YR

3 documentaries produced by LOTT were nominated to be screened at the York Region Film Festival. SSN is now part of the board of the film festival.

Our Heritage- through South Asian Eyes (New Horizons)

This aim of this project is to encourage and enable S.A seniors to contribute their skills, resources and wisdom about the diverse South Asian history and heritage to the youth through planning. A Picnic was held in July at Milne Park engaging the seniors and youth. EKTAA in November at the beginning of November

Focus on Family Literacy

This project consists of a series of courses for parents and grandparents in the GTA's many multicultural, multilingual communities. All the sessions for fathers and grandfathers were held and completed by the end of year. SSN has been funded again for another year (2011) on Stress Management, Time Management and Financial Management.

VOLUNTEERS

Since April 2010 SSN has recruited 42 new volunteers who participate at all the SSN functions and also go to the various booths held at the centers. Volunteers provide support on clerical part and office inventory.

OUTREACH

We partnered with three inter-agencies for their events. They were York Region Food Network, INTAKE and VISION.

Other Activities:

Candlelight Vigil:

The Toronto Area Interfaith Council, the Association of progressive Muslims of Canada, Social Services Network with the support of Mayor Frank Scarpitti and the Town of Markham successfully organized the Candle light Vigil event on 17th October 2010 for the victims of the floods in Pakistan.

Almost 600 – 700 people attended this event and that helped to raise awareness among Canadians about the current threatening conditions and critical needs of the victims of the recent floods of Pakistan.

Mayor Scarpitti was inaugurated the event traditionally along with his municipal colleagues. It brought together all the spiritual leaders of more than 30 different faiths. The Volunteers from Social services Network & TD Bank extended their fullest support to regulate the baseline needs, such as registration, selling of candles and taking care of refreshments.

The sponsor of this event is TD Bank and Canadian Red Cross managed to set up their booth in the premises.

Tradition based Cultural programs performed by group of “first Canadians” along with some other musical performances as well. All faith leaders appeared on the stage together and delivered their blessings. That was the high light of the program. Finally all the participants were lit the candles and remembered the victims.

SSN Thanksgiving Night

SSN organized a thanksgiving dinner on Wednesday, November 24, 2010 at The Host Restaurant. The event's purpose was to celebrate SSN's partnership with community leaders and recognize our collective efforts in improving the health and quality of life of our communities. More than 40 community leaders attended this event.

HR & Staff Development:

Training of Program Managers on performance management
Health Insurance for full time staff
Hired a Program Manager Youth and Family programs
Recruited a volunteer coordinator