

Featuring:
Rotholme Family Shelter

Curb Notes

Rooted at Rotholme

Jessica Gowers, Communications & PR Coordinator



Miguel

It was in 2019, after just landing in Canada, that Miguel and his family were standing in the airport asking a transportation company if they knew of any nearby family shelters. “This was one of the hardest times of our lives,” explains Miguel. “The company called Rotholme Family Shelter and told them about our situation. Rotholme said we could stay there, and we were on the next bus to London,” Miguel explains.

Facing extreme culture shock and knowing very little English, Miguel, his wife, and their three children were comforted when they arrived at Rotholme and found that some of the staff spoke Spanish. “I can’t explain how important that was for our family,” Miguel reflects. “During a time where we were very lonely and vulnerable, unable to speak to most people because of the language barrier, having Spanish speaking staff at Rotholme was so helpful,” he says.

“When we had nothing, the staff at Rotholme were the ones who hugged us and told us everything would be okay. They are angels.” — Miguel

While at Rotholme, Miguel’s two-year-old child became sick. “This was during the pandemic,” Miguel explains. “Recognizing the urgent need for stability because of my son’s illness, Rotholme pushed very hard for us. They found us a home, and we’ve been housed ever since,” says Miguel.

Once housed, everything began falling into place, and Miguel and his family began to prosper. “My wife and I were both working,” says Miguel. “But I started making authentic Mexican food and selling it on the side.” First, Miguel made five kilograms of food to fulfill the orders. “Five turned to ten. Then, ten turned to twenty. Next thing I knew, I needed a bigger kitchen to keep up,” Miguel recalls.

Three years ago, Miguel opened his first restaurant. Then, last year, Miguel opened a second location. “Now, my wife and our two oldest children work for our family business,” says Miguel.

Today, Miguel says he is most proud of how united his family is. “When you are in need of shelter, it is always very hard. With hard work and caring people around you, you will be able to make it to the other side,” says Miguel. “I want to thank the people at Rotholme. They really helped us a lot. All of them. Thank you,” Miguel concludes.





Helping Hands, Guiding Hearts

Anne-Marie Irvine: Our New Director of Shelters



Anne-Marie

Mission Services of London (MSL) is pleased to introduce our new Director of Shelters, Anne-Marie Irvine. Anne-Marie oversees our two emergency shelters, Men's Mission and Rotholme Family Shelter.

Before joining MSL, Anne-Marie supported children and adults experiencing developmental disabilities in both direct care and leadership positions. "My love for people is what initially drew me to the direct care sector and what's kept me in the field. I am passionate about helping, supporting, and empowering individuals," Anne-Marie says.

"When you see someone find belonging, watch them grow, and their hopes, dreams, and passions come to life — it's just so fulfilling." — Anne-Marie

Anne-Marie's philosophy of care is rooted in dignity and person-centered support. "Every individual, regardless of their vulnerabilities, deserves to be seen, heard, and valued," says Anne-Marie. "I believe in leading with empathy, recognizing people's strengths, and building genuine connections," she explains.

"I hear often at MSL that we meet need at the point of need, and when I heard that articulated for the first time, it resonated with me. That's what I've tried to do all along, throughout my entire career in direct care." — Anne-Marie

Family Day Comfort, Care, and Kindness

Mission Services of London thanks the generous donors who came alongside the families at Rotholme Family Shelter this Family Day.

Thanks to you and your wonderful gifts, the lounge at Rotholme now has comfortable new furniture and two new computer desks, and the kitchen has new pots, pans, and cooking utensils. The impact of your kindness will bring comfort to families at Rotholme for years to come.



Khadijah and Shelby: Bringing Smiles, Making Memories

Twice a week, Khadijah and Shelby spend their evenings with the children at Rotholme Family Shelter. "We do activities with the kids and just spend time with them," explains Shelby. "They love crafts," agrees Khadijah. "We've made paper-plate flowers and friendship bracelets. I love seeing how excited they get when we bring out the pompoms, pipe cleaners, paint, and balloons," Khadijah laughs.

Both Khadijah and Shelby began volunteering at Rotholme Family Shelter last autumn. "I'm in my second year of Child and Youth Studies," Shelby says.

"I knew I wanted to volunteer at Rotholme because one of my family members is a loyal donor and feels strongly about the impact of Mission Services of London's work in the community." — Shelby Harris

Khadijah is a third-year Medical Science student and wanted to volunteer somewhere other than health care. "I have professional experience in medicine already, so when it came to donating my time, I wanted to help people who were facing different types of challenges," explains Khadijah.

The impact of volunteering has been particularly special for Khadijah and Shelby. "Originally, I wanted to be a dermatologist. After volunteering with the children at Rotholme, my focus is now on becoming a pediatrician," Khadijah says. "There have been many impactful moments for me," explains Shelby. "One thing that warmed my heart was how kind the parents were to us. They thank us when we see them in the hallway," says Shelby.

Khadijah and Shelby have plans to continue volunteering at Rotholme for the foreseeable future. "Volunteering here was made easy because the people at Mission Services of London (MSL) were so welcoming. It's always scary to come into a new place, but the transition here was very smooth. I want to stay here for at least the next few years," Khadijah shares. "Volunteering here feels different than a job," Shelby reflects. "I truly come here because I want to," Shelby says.

MSL is grateful to Khadijah and Shelby for the smiles, laughs, and memories they've given the children at Rotholme Family Shelter. During a difficult season, they have facilitated moments of happiness, imagination, and creativity. *Thank you.*



Khadijah and Shelby

Feeling Inspired?

Complete our online Volunteer Application form: missionservices.ca/volunteer



Impacting LIVES
through sites and programs:

Men's Mission
459 York Street
519-672-8500

Rotholme Family Shelter
42 Stanley Street
519-673-4114

Quintin Warner House
457 York Street
519-434-8041

**Community Mental
Health Programs**
4-797 York Street
519-439-7700 (Streetscape)

Mission Store
4-797 York Street
519-438-3056

**Mission Services of
London Foundation**
4-797 York Street
519-433-2807

Administration Office
4-797 York Street
519-433-2807

Visit missionservices.ca

Find us on Twitter (X), Facebook,
LinkedIn, and Instagram

Newsletter Contact:
jgowers@missionservices.ca

Charitable Registration
#119302578RR0001

Thank you to our
government funders:



In Review!

Thanks to You – Coldest Night of the Year 2025

Mission Services of London (MSL) thanks everyone who supported our thirteenth annual Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) walk on Saturday, February 22, 2025.

Whether your support came in the form of walking, donating, volunteering, sponsoring, or spreading the word, you helped raise over \$130,000 and increased awareness around the challenges faced by our vulnerable neighbours.

MSL also thanks Lewkowitz Financial for being the Lead Sponsor for the seventh year in a row and providing walkers with hot apple cider and other sweet treats at their office on Dufferin Avenue.

Thank you to every supporter for coming alongside your neighbours in need after an especially challenging winter. The funds raised will help men, women, and children in need in London through emergency shelters, addiction treatment, mental health and substance addiction support, crisis outreach and intervention, and many other vital services.

Thank you.



Save the Date (CNOY 2026): Saturday, February 28, 2026!