

# Civics/Youth in Philanthropy Class

## FAQ

**Please read our website for supplementary information!**

When and why was The Refuge founded?

1. Dave Peppiatt started the Refuge in 1999 because he was obedient to God's calling on his life to reach out to the many street involved and homeless youth in Oshawa.

To whom do you offer your services?

1. Any youth in need but most specifically to youth between the ages of 16-24 who are either homeless or live a street-involved life.

Would you describe your charity as a grassroots social service provider?

1. The Refuge is very much a grassroots organization. The Refuge meets youth at the street-level, receives no government funding for operations and relies upon volunteers and the generosity of the community to keep offering life-changing programs for homeless and street youth.

What are some of the services you provide?

1. Besides our regular programming (see website), we provide a caring community. Young people can come get a solid breakfast and a hot lunch five days a week. We give out free clothes and personal hygiene products on Wednesdays. We will often refer a youth to agencies that do job prep and resume writing. We help youth book appointments for health and social services as well as help them to remember their appointments. Sometimes, time permitting we will go with them to those meetings, visit them in prison and in hospital.

What are some of the goals for The Refuge?

1. The Refuge exists show to God's love and compassion to the at-risk and street youth of the Durham Region community in such a manner that will bring about positive life changes in their lives. We accomplish these goals through programs that are focussed on presentation and intervention.
2. The Refuge seeks to provide youth with a 'home'. A place where they can be loved, nurtured, encouraged, safe and belong .... a community in which they can heal, develop, grow and contribute.

What are your short term goals as well as what you want to accomplish in the next five years?

1. Short term is to start an outreach team to reach out to youth gathered in pockets in the Durham region trying to help youth where they are at instead of waiting for the youth to come to us.
2. We want to start a program called Learning to Cook which would take an afternoon and have an actual certified cook or chef teach the participating youth to cook nutritious meals and provide them the skills to work in a kitchen.
3. Five years from now I would like to see a multi –disciplined team involving a resident psychologist and access to proper mental health professionals.

How many people do you help a year?

1. In 2009 The Refuge had 7482 interactions with 476 different youth. We saw 201 new youth in 2009.

How has your charity made a difference in your community so far?

1. We have made a difference in the meeting of the needs of over 3,000 different youth since we started keeping stats in 2002.
2. We have made a difference by educating over 4,500 high school and university students over the past 4 years as to youth homelessness and the issues homeless and street youth endure each day.

What makes your charity different from others?

1. Our focus is youth homelessness; we believe that most youth homelessness can only be helped through developmental restructuring. In other words by helping young people develop the missing aspects or missdeveloped aspects of their personality they gain the foundation required to move on in their lives escaping the rut of their homelessness.
2. We differ by offering a prevention and education program for members of the community called In Another's Shoes.
3. Our operating expenses entirely come from the private sector.
4. We also have programs designed around their youths person needs, Family Gatherings, and Revolution specifically.
5. We do an outdoor education program which is based on community and relationship development.

How many people work for The Refuge?

1. We have three full time workers, one part time employee and about 25 regular volunteers.

Who are your major sponsors?

1. We are sponsored mostly by individuals, churches, foundations, corporations and businesses and a few fundraising events. The Refuge does not receive funds from any level of government for operations.

What percentage of the donations actually go to providing services to the people?

1. 100% of donations go to providing services for homeless and street youth and to ensure that these services are made available to them continuously.

What fundraises do you run?

1. Annually we put on a ¼ marathon, our Annual Dinner, and a motorcycle ride called Ride for The Refuge. We also have our annual Christmas Wish Catalogue as well as sending out mail appeals to our database of supporters.

What do you look for in volunteers and what jobs do they do?

1. Volunteers are the back bone of our work. We usually look for at least a one year commitment from them. Volunteers can do anything from sweeping floors, cleaning bathrooms, preparing meals, to creating relationships.

If our presentation is the best and we win the \$5000 for your charity what will you do with it?

1. The money would go into new programming such as the Learning to cook program.

Is there anything specific you would like me to say during my presentation, or a message to get across?

1. We are the only youth centre of it's kind between Ottawa and Toronto.