



Newsletter

JUNE 2026

Pride Month
National Indigenous History
Month

June 12 - World Day Against
Child Labour (UN)
June 20 - World Refugee Day
(UN)
June 21 - Father's Day
June 21 - National Indigenous
Peoples' Day
June 23 - United Nations Public
Service Day
June 27 - Multiculturalism Day
(Gov't of Canada)



JUNE 2026

Lives permanently changed for the better

HIGH TEA WITH HSH



Home Suite Hope's **High Tea for Hope** was **Thursday, May 21** at **Narenj** in Oakville's Kerr Village. The sold-out event saw HSH supporters sample teas, play a few rounds of bingo, network and show off their best spring chic attire - including fascinators.

HSH is grateful to everyone who purchased a ticket, took part in the fun and supported single parents on their journey from poverty to stability.

Thanks, too, to all those who sponsored the event.

See inside for more

DON'T MISS COUNTRY ROADS

HSH's newest event is a family-friendly affair set to take centre stage at The Ranch in Oakville just as neighbouring Burlington celebrates a Nashville Takeover event the same weekend. Can't get enough country? Get your tickets before they're sold out!

[Purchase tickets to Country Roads Take Me Home](#)



PARTICIPANT NEWS

IN THE SPOTLIGHT ON THE GREENS

Fareen 'Far' Samji is a **5-time Canadian Women's Long Drive Champion**, entrepreneur, speaker, author, mentor, and community leader. Born in Mombasa, Kenya, she moved to Canada at 14, later graduating from McMaster University with degrees in Psychology and Kinesiology. A former golf touring professional with a personal best drive of 334 yards, Far now serves as Tour Commissioner and coach for **ALD Canada Long Drive**, developing talent for international events. Passionate about empowering women and girls, she authored **Smashing the Grass Ceiling** (2017) to inspire professional women to connect through golf.

Far empowers women through golf with **Smashing Nines** events, coaching, and mentorship, fostering confidence and connections in Hamilton, Burlington, Oakville.

On May 26 at the **Dundas Valley Golf Club** it was HSH in the Organization Spotlight at the Smashing Nines tournament.



HSH was the raffle beneficiary of the **Smashing the Grass Ceiling Women's 9 Holes & Networking** event. **HSH Board Member Lindsay Anderson** participated along with three HSH participants and grads.

According to Far, the participants made "an incredible impact."

"A HUGE thank you to Far for her incredible support of HSH and the participants! We had an amazing day and both myself and the Moms made great new connections. We raised \$1900 from the raffle and Levie contributed an additional \$1000 to HSH!!! Then, at the end of the day Far shared that the participants were gifted the clubs that they used, would continue to receive lessons every Tuesday, and Queen of the Green provided each of them with a membership to their travelling women's golf league!!" said Lindsay.

PARTICIPANT NEWS

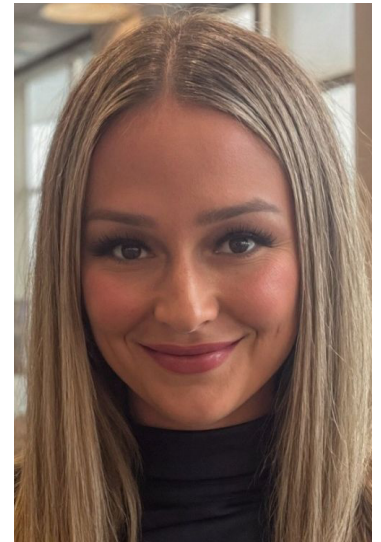
ON THE HONOUR ROLL

HSH participants celebrated achieving high academic marks in their academic upgrading, as well as in their second semesters of schooling. Multiple participants achieved averages in the 80s with a few even achieving in the mid-90s. Congratulations to all of our students who continue to put in the hard work at school! Keep shining bright!

SPECIAL GUEST AT HIGH TEA FOR HOPE

Melissa Filice, a Homeward Bound Halton alumna of Home Suite Hope who graduated in April 2022 from Sheridan College's Business Administration, Human Resources program, was a special guest speaker at **HSH's High Tea for Hope** May 21.

Since graduating, Melissa has gained HR experience supporting both startups and established organizations across a range of industries. She recently launched her own business, Practical People Co., where she provides fractional HR support and



guidance to growing businesses that are not yet ready for a full-time HR hire.

Her work focuses on helping small businesses build clear, compliant, and usable HR systems that support both their people and their growth.

Melissa Filice Founder, Practical People Co.

melissa@practicalpeopleco.com
www.practicalpeopleco.com

NEW FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENT

COUNTRY ROADS TAKE ME HOME JUNE 14

WANTED

COWBOYS & COWGIRLS FOR A COUNTRY FUNDRAISING EVENT

COUNTRY ROADS TAKE ME HOME



SCAN FOR TICKETS

★ IN SUPPORT OF **HOME SUITE HOPE** ★

LIVE MUSIC: JESSIE T.
LINE DANCING: URBAN COWBOY LINE DANCING
FULL SOUTHERN BBQ: O'CONNOR CATERING
FAMILY GAMES & HAT BRANDING
& BOUNCY CASTLE

SUNDAY, JUNE 14th
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM
AT THE RANCH IN OAKVILLE

REWARD OFFERED: A BOOT-SCOOTIN' GOOD TIME!



HIGH TEA DELIVERED FOR HSH



A NOTE FROM KATELYN

*Thank you so much for joining us May 21 for **High Tea for Hope**. Your presence, generosity, and enthusiasm helped create such a beautiful and meaningful evening in support of the families we serve.*

It has been incredibly special to witness the growth of this event — from first introducing a variation of the event in 2024 to seeing it evolve into the sold-out evening it has become today. Watching this community continue to rally around Home Suite Hope year after year is something we're deeply grateful for, and it's always so wonderful to see familiar faces returning each year alongside new supporters joining us for the first time.

Whether you attended, sponsored, donated, volunteered, or helped spread the word, thank you for being part of what made the evening such a success. From the lively bingo games and beautiful atmosphere to the heartfelt conversations and shared moments of community, the night was a true reflection of the compassion and generosity that surrounds Home Suite Hope. I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our sponsors, donors, prize contributors, volunteers, performers, and community partners whose support helped bring the evening to life. Events like this are only possible because of individuals like you.

Thank you again for making High Tea for Hope such a memorable evening. We hope to welcome you back again next



HIGH TEA HIGHLIGHTS



STAFF NEWS

A UNITED EFFORT FOR MOTHER'S DAY



Just in time for Mother's Day, **HSH Executive Director Sara Cumming** joined the **United Way Golden Horseshoe** to share her story and the work that HSH does to support moms and families in the community. The United Way donated flowers and volunteers fashioned them into bouquets, with cards, as Sara spoke to the group.



Then Sara was assisted by yet other volunteers recruited by HSH to deliver the flowers to our participant mothers.

"Thank you for helping us deliver the flowers and heartfelt cards, it meant so much to have you be part of that moment of connection and care. We hope that each floral arrangement brings a smile and helps brighten a mom's day, reminding her that she is seen, supported, and not alone. We



are so grateful for your presence, your work, and your continued commitment to strengthening our community," noted **Nathalie Gallo Development Officer, Philanthropy, United Way Golden Horseshoe**.

Thanks to a donation of sugar cookies from **Karen McKenzie** (pictured at top right with **HSH Program Coordinator/Content Creator Madison Apold**) the Mother's Day deliveries were indeed a sweet treat.



HOME DEPOT SUPPORTS HSH

Don't miss out on your chance to support Home Suite Hope at Home Depot.

The **Trafalgar Village Home Depot** is trying to raise \$8,000 for HSH after selecting us as its charity partner recipient for the spring edition of the **Home Depot Canada Foundation's Orange Door Project**.

The campaign is happening across all 182 Home Depot stores in Canada. The Orange Door Project supports local charities across Canada to combat youth homelessness by providing housing and life skills programs. Customers can donate at checkout in-store or online.



The Foundation has a goal to invest \$125 million by 2030, to prevent and end youth homelessness in Canada. Its commitment focuses on enabling systemic change through investing in expanding stable housing for youth, providing quality wrap-around community supports, and increasing youth employment readiness. Despite ongoing community efforts, youth homelessness continues to be on the rise in Canada. Homeless youth make up approximately 20% of the homeless population in Canada, meaning each year at least 35,000-40,000 young Canadians have no place to call home. They need a safe place to live. They need access to support services that will help them develop positive life outcomes.

HSH Fundraising & Events Coordinator Katelyn Zaoral and **Administrative Assistant Angela** were at the Cross Avenue store May 23 for **Double Impact Day**. We are grateful to those who donated and stopped by to visit our information table - despite torrential rain. A big shout-out to Home Depot greeter **Mike** who, along with the friendly cashiers, helped spread awareness of HSH and its work. Hopefully, there will be sunny skies as HSH visits the store again on **June 6**. Look for **Caseworkers Haley Weber** and **Dayna Ramawad**.



STAFF NEWS

HSH ED SHARES PERSONAL STORY WITH CDH

This post to the Community Development Halton (CDH) website is part of a larger CDH Member Story Project. The intent is to share the depth of our non-profit sector, name how community can support and imagine together what is possible through the non-profit sector to ensure Halton is a health, inclusive, and resilient place to live. HSH is a member of CDH.

By Sara Cumming, PhD.

In my own life, I was raised by a teenage single mother, and I became a single mother myself at 22. Through a mentor, I eventually found my way into university—and in a surprising turn of events, I went on to earn a PhD, becoming an expert in helping single mothers move from social assistance to self-sufficiency.

That's how I was introduced to the organization. When you think about it, it's remarkable how those two paths aligned. I began volunteering in a variety of ways, and eventually I was asked to step into a leadership role. At the time, I laughed—I was a full-time professor and didn't plan to leave academia. But through collaboration between both organizations, we found a way to make it work. I've now been with Home Suite Hope for eight years, and this is my seventh year as Executive Director. I have the extraordinary privilege of combining lived experience with academic expertise in gender, social policy, and employment. Our work focuses on supporting single mothers who are navigating housing instability and complex life circumstances.

Safe housing creates the foundation for everything else. When people know they have a place to live, they are better able to focus on education, employment, and building healthy relationships. We provide rental subsidies, but housing alone isn't enough. Without life skills support, people may struggle to maintain that housing. Homelessness is not just about a lack of money—many of the mothers we work with are already employed. Right now, we are supporting 50 single mothers in Halton who are transitioning out of homelessness.

One of the most meaningful parts of this work is watching women transform their lives—becoming self-assured, confident, and independent. When I first came into the organization, I spent time researching other non-profits in the area. What I noticed was that many organizations were trying to be everything to everyone, and as a result, people were falling through the cracks. We made a strategic shift toward collaboration, building partnerships across organizations. Today, we have developed over 30 partnerships, which has significantly improved how we serve the community. Another key area of growth has been life skills development. I remember sitting in on a financial literacy session where participants were being told to save for their children's education. But many of them were struggling to meet their basic needs—they couldn't feed themselves that day.

That moment highlighted a gap. Life skills need to be practical, relevant, and responsive to real circumstances. So we co-developed a client-centered life skills curriculum in partnership with others. Participants help shape what is taught, ensuring it reflects their actual needs.



STAFF NEWS

HSH ED SHARES PERSONAL STORY WITH CDH

Today, we have a robust and accessible life skills program that organizations can adopt for a small licensing fee. It's a model rooted in dignity, collaboration, and real-world application. We have developed strong wraparound supports that help move single mothers from poverty to self-sufficiency—housing subsidies, free college tuition, life skills training, professional development, and onsite psychotherapy.

However, many people still don't know we exist or how to refer individuals to our programs. Increasing awareness is critical. I also believe there is tremendous opportunity for deeper collaboration across organizations. For example, we've successfully partnered with other non-profits to share resources, such as a grant writer. By working together, we've increased funding and reduced duplication of effort. There is no shortage of resources—we simply need to use them more effectively. When organizations collaborate, share space, and align efforts, we can create far greater impact without significantly increasing costs.

One of our biggest challenges right now is access to housing. Finding affordable units in Halton has become increasingly difficult. We are actively working to secure housing partnerships, including a current collaboration with a developer to create 28 units in Oakville. However, progress can be slowed by public resistance at the municipal level. Expanding affordable housing requires community support and advocacy. We also want to continue expanding innovative programs like our life skills curriculum—ensuring they remain accessible, flexible, and responsive to participant needs.

Looking ahead, strengthening partnerships across sectors will be essential. By working together, we can better respond to the complex realities that single mothers are navigating. To make our next steps successful awareness and visibility are key. I am continually surprised by how many people—even those who could benefit from our services—have never heard of organizations like ours. When people don't know support exists, they struggle alone in ways they don't have to. In many cases, we can prevent homelessness before it happens.

We also need stronger community advocacy. When organizations speak individually, it's easy to overlook the scale of need. But when we come together with a unified voice, we can drive meaningful change. Support for affordable housing initiatives and partnerships that prioritize access—such as first right of refusal for units—would make a significant difference.

Ultimately, this work requires collaboration across organizations, community members, and systems willing to invest in long-term solutions. We would see a more connected and effective system of care—where non-profits and private industry work together to close gaps and ensure no one falls through. When organizations understand each other's roles and actively refer within a shared network, people receive more comprehensive and timely support. With expanded housing and integrated services, more single mothers would be able to move beyond crisis and into long-term stability. The vision is a community where individuals are not defined by their circumstances, but by the opportunities available to them. With the right supports in place, people can build stable, hopeful futures—for themselves and their families.

[Read Sara's blog post for CDH](#)

STAFF NEWS

MATERNAL HEALTH IN ACTION SHOWCASE

Home Suite Hope was proud to attend the **Maternal Mental Health in Action Showcase**, hosted by **EarlyON** and **Oakville Parent-Child Centre** in recognition of **Maternal Mental Health Awareness Day**. The event brought together community organizations dedicated to supporting families during the postpartum journey through accessible programs, resources and connections.

Our team members, **Caseworker Haley Weber** and **Program Coordinator/Content Creator Madison Apold**, enjoyed connecting with families and community partners, sharing information about Home Suite Hope's programs and supports for single-parent families experiencing housing instability. We are grateful to have been part of such an important community initiative focused on maternal mental health, wellness, and strengthening supports for parents and caregivers.



BLUEBERRY FIELDS SET TO CELEBRATE



To celebrate its 10th Anniversary, **Blueberry Fields - Home Suite Hope's Community Garden** - which operates at the **Upper Oakville Shopping Centre**, is hosting a celebration and picnic on Saturday, June 20 from noon to 4 p.m.

HSH staff will be present at the celebration with an information booth to help raise awareness of the garden in the community, thank volunteers and recruit more volunteers. There will be food, free seedling and seed giveaways, an activity table for children, garden tours and gardening advice.

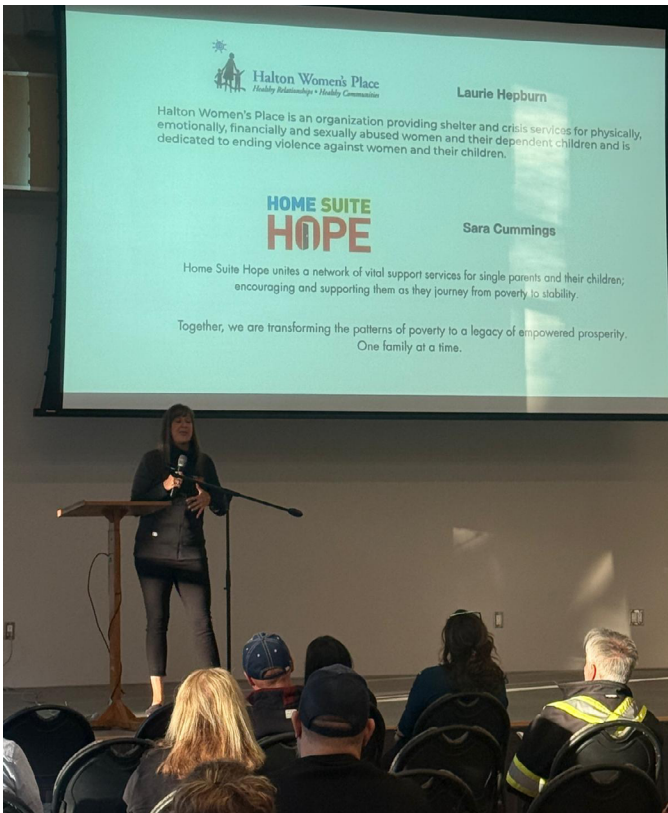
We hope to see you there!

HOUSING UPDATE

ADDITIONAL RENTAL UNITS (ADUs)

Home Suite Hope was at **Port Nelson Church in Burlington** May 11 for a community forum on Additional Residential Units (ADUs) on property in Burlington.

Bylaws in Burlington and throughout Halton are evolving to allow more housing on existing residential properties and faith properties.



Such housing is urgently needed by organizations like HSH and Halton Women's Shelter, who work as partners in the Haven to Home program which houses and stabilizes women and their children affected by domestic violence. Funded by the Ontario provincial government, Haven to Home assists families stabilize in housing after crisis. Often it is not upgrading education or life skills that are needed in these situations but an ability to reestablish a home.

HSH Executive Director Sara Cumming spoke to those attending the information meeting to explain more about HSH and Haven to Home. **Caseworker Kennedy Apold** was there staffing an HSH information booth.

For more information, contact HaltonFaithNetwork@gmail.com or call 416-459-2730.



CHANGING THE PATTERNS OF POVERTY TO A LEGACY OF PROSPERITY