

SNACKS IN THE STACKS

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LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY

PROBLEM

1 IN 5



CHILDREN IN LONDON, ON EXPERIENCE POVERTY

- According to London's Children and Youth network, 1 in 5 children in London, Ontario experience poverty.
- As frontline service providers at the Sherwood Branch of London Public Library, we saw the effects of hunger firsthand, and it included disruptive behaviour from groups of youths.
- We are faced with limited resources (budgets and staff time) to devote to the improvement of this ongoing issue.

INTERVENTION



HEALTHY SNACKS

GOALS

- Our simple approach was to get healthy snacks in hands at their point of need. In effect, we sought a “guerilla” approach to solving hunger in our immediate community.
- Provide children with their basic needs, so that we can work to address behavioural issues and create a more safe and respectful space for all of our patrons and staff.



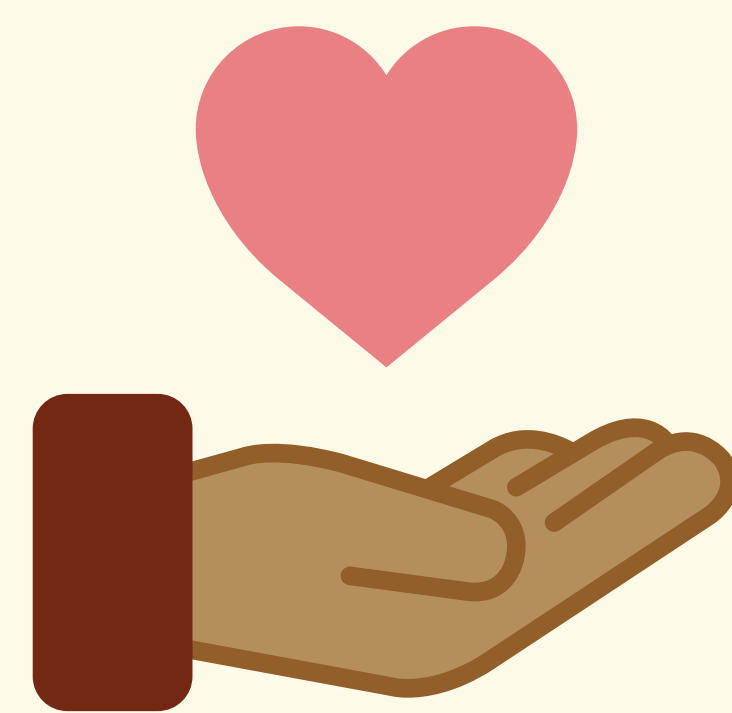
SPECIAL GAMING COMPUTER ACCESS

GOALS

- Eliminate the digital divide that exists between the haves and have-nots in our community with laptop access.
- Provide children with a safe space to be social and enjoy the library without disrupting and alienating other patrons.
- Give youths more opportunity to have responsibility for, and ownership of, the space where they spend so much of their time (the library!).

OUTCOMES

After beginning our own initiative, we learned that our library users also recognized the issue in their community and wanted to make a difference, but didn't know how. Our snack bin is an opportunity for generous library users to make an impactful difference in their neighbourhood.



Better relationships with our tweens!
Reciprocal trust = better behaviour

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- We believe this initiative was so successful because it worked with the youths to create a more hospitable environment.
- While bans and suspensions have their place in maintaining a safe and functional public library ecosystem, they have proved at our branch to be mere band-aid solutions in comparison to this more empathetic approach that enables us to continue to work with, and not against, youths in need.