



SCARBOROUGH
CENTRE FOR
HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES

Newsletter

Fall 2025

UMOJA SOCIAL (UNITY) WITH THE EARLYON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

By Kimisha Palmer, Registered Early Childhood Educator – Program Facilitator



SCHC's **EarlyON Child and Family Centre** is proud to encapsulate the essences of our Umoja Social drop-in series. Initiated in the summer of 2023 as an extension of our partnership with a Black affinity literacy program, the EarlyON staff responded to the voices of Black families within the community and created the Umoja Social program. The word Umoja means Unity and just like its definition, this program reflects SCHC EarlyON's ongoing commitment to supporting families through inclusive and meaningful programming. Throughout the year, we remain committed to creating space for connection, cultural appreciation, and unity within the community. This summer we had many highlights, and families had a blast engaging in activities like arts and crafts, African dancing and drumming, and Socasize. We would like to thank Negus (@drumwithnegus) and Leslie (@akoma.arts) for partnering up with us to provide families with captivating movement activities.

As the school year is underway, stay connected with us by joining our sessions hosted on the last Monday of every month! You can reach us by email at earlyon@schcontario.ca or call 416-454-5547.

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September Issue

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SCARBOROUGH
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CEO JEANIE ARGIROPOULOS

VISION

Ignite the strength
of community

MISSION

Providing accessible,
equitable and
transformational health
and social service choices,
for the well-being of
diverse communities.

VALUES

I2CARE
Inclusive
Innovation
Collaboration
Accessibility
Respect
Equity

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

FALL 2025

As fall arrives, we are reminded that change and renewal are part of every season—and of every community. At Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities, this season offers us the chance to reflect on what we've built together and to look ahead with energy and optimism.

This year has been one of growth and impact. We launched new mental health and wellness programs that are reaching more youth and families than ever before. Our food bank has expanded to meet the ongoing needs of our community, supported by the incredible commitment of our volunteers. We have also deepened partnerships across Scarborough's health system, strengthening interprofessional primary care and advancing trauma-informed, culturally responsive services.

At SCHC, our mission is clear: to provide accessible, equitable, and holistic health and social services that uplift individuals and families. Every day, I see our I2CARE values—Integrity, Inclusion, Collaboration, Accountability, Respect, and Excellence—come to life. From physicians and clinicians supporting patients, to staff and volunteers ensuring no one is left behind, your work continues to inspire and remind us of the strength found in community.

This fall, I encourage you to take part in the opportunities around you—whether it's attending our flu shot clinics to stay healthy through the colder months, joining in our seasonal food drives to support families in need, or connecting with one of our community events. These small actions ripple outward, helping to build a Scarborough where everyone belongs and thrives.

I want to thank each of you—clients, staff, volunteers, students, and partners—for your dedication and trust. Together, we are creating not just services, but spaces of dignity, belonging, and opportunity.



STAY CONNECTED WITH US!

@SCHCOntario



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TOGETHER IN TRANSFORMATION: REIMAGINING PRIMARY CARE TEAMS

By Neil Shah, Primary Care Transformation Lead

Transforming primary care starts with a simple truth: our current system isn't working for everyone. For some, primary care works exceptionally well thanks to dedicated, skilled providers who guide people through life's most difficult moments. But we also need a system that supports these professionals—one that attracts new learners, sparks innovation, and opens doors to new ways of practicing. At its heart, primary care is about the personal interaction between clinician and patient, but it also means ensuring people have a safe home, nutritious food, and a sense of belonging in their community.

At SCHC, our commitment to transforming primary care is already in motion—helping people stay healthy where they are, and making sure the care they receive is truly the care they want. This means breaking down barriers, building seamless and team-based systems, and working with providers, organizations, and community partners to bring this vision to life. Transformation is not always a straight path, but every step forward moves us closer to a system where care is available, accessible, and equitable for all. I am genuinely excited about this journey ahead and invite you to be part of it.



Read the full article to learn about how SCHC is shaping the future of primary care:
<https://schcontario.ca/together-in-transformation-reimagining-primary-care-teams/>



COMPASSIONATE 1:1 BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING AVAILABLE

By Leeann Samuel, Psychotherapist

Losing someone you love can be one of life's most difficult experiences. Grief can feel overwhelming, and everyone's journey through it is unique. To help support individuals during this challenging time, we are offering one-on-one bereavement care counselling.

Our trained psychotherapist provides a safe and compassionate space to talk, process emotions, and find ways to cope with loss. If you know someone who is struggling with recent grief or continuing to navigate their healing journey, individualized support can make a meaningful difference.

If you or someone you know could benefit from this service, please contact our central intake line (416-642-9445 ext. 4111) for more information or to make a referral. You don't have to go through this alone—support is here for you.



ACTIVE MINDS CLUB AT THE BLUFFS

By Prerna Mehta, Community Health and Support Services Manager



On Monday, August 18th, our **Active Minds Club Day Program** members enjoyed a refreshing outing to the Scarborough Bluffs. The day began with a relaxing yoga session in the park, followed by a scenic hike to the bluffs where everyone took in the beautiful views. The outing wrapped up with a fun and social pizza lunch. It was a wonderful opportunity for connection, activity, and enjoying the outdoors together. A special thank you goes out to the Adult Day Centre and Transportation departments for organizing this memorable outing for the Active Minds Club. This program is proudly delivered in partnership with the Alzheimer Society Toronto and the Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities.

WHY IS FALL “VACCINE SEASON”?

By Rukmi Jayasinghe, Community Health Ambassador

In Ontario, the arrival of fall signals more than cooler days and colourful leaves. It also marks the beginning of ‘vaccine season’. Each year, as temperature drops, respiratory illnesses such as influenza, COVID-19, and RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) begin to rise. As people spend more time indoors, these viruses spread more readily, placing added demands on Ontario’s health system.



Vaccines are one of the best ways to keep others and ourselves safe. By keeping more people healthy, vaccines help reduce the number of hospital visits, ease the burden on emergency rooms, and support schools and workplaces to run smoothly with fewer disruptions.

The fall season also coincides with the return to school and work routines, making it a timely reminder for families to ensure their vaccinations are up to date. This may include getting a flu shot or a COVID-19 booster at your local pharmacy or community clinic, as well as RSV protection for those most at risk, including everyone aged 75 and older.

This autumn, consider making vaccination part of your seasonal routine, just like putting on a warmer coat or enjoying a walk on lively trails. Together, we can help safeguard our communities and ensure a healthier season for everyone.

For more information about your health, connect with a physician at **HealthFacts+**.



BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

YOUR VOICE CAN HELP SHAPE THE HEALTH OF SCARBOROUGH.

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Free membership
- Invitation to attend the SCHC Annual General Meeting
- Have voting privileges
- Become better informed by receiving the SCHC quarterly newsletter



<https://schcontario.ca/about-us/membership/>

A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY AND SAFETY

By Laura Mckim, Hub Coordinator

The **Community Wellness & Engagement team** is excited to invite you to Hub Fest 2025 — our most anticipated community celebration of the year!

Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025

Time: 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Location: 2660 Eglinton Ave East

This vibrant, family-friendly festival brings together Scarborough residents for an afternoon of connection, culture, and community safety. You can look forward to live performances and music, free food and local vendors, raffle prizes, games and activities for all ages, community resources and safety education, and so much more!

If you would like to register for the event, become a vendor, or donate, scan the QR codes to your right.

Let's come together to celebrate Scarborough and build a safer, stronger community. Bring your family, friends, and neighbours — we can't wait to see you there!



**DONATE TO
YOUTH
PROGRAMS**



**BECOME A
VENDOR AT
OUR EVENT**



**GENERAL
ADMISSION
REGISTRATION**

GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS EVENT

By Rashme Nandakumar, Youth Network Ambassador

Thank you to all the youth in the community that attended MIC Check, the FootPrintz Project, and Youth Link's commemorated **National Gun Violence Awareness Day** on Thursday, June 19th, 2025, at the Mid-Scarborough Hub. Over 35 youth residing in the Eglinton East area attended the event to show support for the movement. The event invited a youth guest speaker who shared their experience of being a survivor of gun violence. With the goal of using their voice to inspire, and prevent other youth from engaging in gun violence, the youth guest speaker dedicated their time to the space and cause. With the support of volunteers and staff, the event was a success and attendees left with motivation to enact change.

GROW SUMMER CAMP 2025

By Rashme Nandakumar, Youth Network Ambassador



This summer 2025, the SCHC Child and Youth Programming as well as the Healing Roots Project collaborated to deliver the **Growing Leadership 5-week Youth Summer Camp**. Together, staff and volunteers facilitated leadership activities and mental health workshops for 26 youth from diverse communities. Among the leadership building activities and fun games, a major component of this year's youth summer camp was the Healing Roots mental health and wellness workshops. In these workshops, participants were being taught how to recognize, express, and take care of their own mental health needs. The leadership component of the camp support youth in building leadership skills and provides a safe space to practice those acquired skills through activity facilitation opportunities. We look forward to future opportunities to equip and engage our youth meaningfully to be young community leaders of Scarborough.

GLO SUMMER CAMP 2025

By Carlos Almeida Marcillo, Project Coordinator



This summer, Healing Roots partnered with the Mind & Spirit Youth Leadership (MSYL) Program to successfully plan and deliver the 5-week GLO Children's Summer Camp. Together, staff and volunteers from both teams created a vibrant and engaging experience for 25 children from diverse communities, offering exciting games, weekly local excursions, and hands-on activities. Highlights from this year's camp included a refreshing trip to Thompson Park's splash pad, interactive health and wellness workshops led by Healing Roots, and a fun-filled Pizza Making workshop—among many other memorable moments. We're proud of what we accomplished and look forward to future opportunities to connect with children from Scarborough communities in fun, meaningful, and impactful ways.

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S FOOD FIGHT

By Srishti Ratnu, Fund Development Coordinator

As the crisp air of fall settles in and the season of giving begins, SCHC is proud to celebrate the success of our month-long Board of Directors Food Fight campaign, which ran from June 21st to July 24th. This initiative brought together the compassion and generosity of our community, resulting in over 30 important and generous donations. Together, we exceeded our fundraising goal by raising \$8,738 and collecting 367 lbs of non-perishable food, enough to provide over 4,000 balanced meals to individuals in Scarborough. Our food bank currently feeds over 600 families every week, and with food insecurity growing at an alarming rate, this crisis is becoming an epidemic. Your support is not just appreciated, it is essential.



Our Board of Directors led the charge, inspiring donors to come forward and support our food bank through online contributions and personal food drives. Their leadership reminded us of all that caring for one another is the true spirit of the season. The impact was deeply felt by our clients within the community, who shared heartfelt messages like: "Thank you so much for giving us the food... we very much appreciate it from the bottom of our hearts." and "Thank you donors for your service and generosity." This fall, let's continue to ignite the strength of our community by showing care, sharing abundance, and supporting those in need.

DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

By Maria Borgai, Social Worker (Diabetes Program)



November is Diabetes Awareness Month. This year, we're proud to highlight SCHC's **Diabetes Education Program**, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Since 2005, the program has played a vital role in supporting clients living with or at risk of diabetes by providing the knowledge and tools needed for effective self-management. Through education, prevention, and ongoing support, the program helps improve health outcomes and quality of life. Stay tuned for more updates regarding our Diabetes program.

For more information or referrals, call 416-847-4160.

THANK YOU!



If you wish to help support our programs and services, go to our website to [DONATE NOW](#) through our secure webpage.



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