



01 JULY 2022 2899 DANFORTH MAC 1M3

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services



**BCS:
Helping
People
Help
Themselves
Since
2000**



**BCS
ANNUAL
REPORT
2021**

Say NO to Tobacco

আসুন ধূমপান সহ সকল তামাক দ্রব্যকে না বলি



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Land Acknowledgement

BCS wish to acknowledge this land on which BCS operates- is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat and Anishinaabe, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, it is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land and to serve the community.

We acknowledge that this land we are on - is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, Anishinaabe, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, it is still the home to many Indigenous people across Turtle Island. We value their diversity of cultural worldviews, resiliency, and ties to their communities. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land and to serve the community. We also acknowledge that this area includes land and water routes that were created and used, both historically and presently, by Indigenous peoples as seasonal travel and trade routes. We are all treaty people. Many of us have come here as settlers, immigrants, or newcomers in this generation or generation past. We also want to acknowledge those of us who came here forcibly, mainly due to the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade. Therefore, we honor and pay tribute to the ancestors of African Origin and descent. We are thankful that we can create, collaborate, play, and work here. We support community efforts to sustain relationships with Indigenous peoples based on respect, dignity, trust, and cooperation in advancing truth and reconciliation.





MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

July 28 , 2022

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great honor to welcome you all to the 21st Annual General Meeting of Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS). BCS have assisted thousands of youth, seniors, and volunteers over the past 21 years by developing and delivering programs and services of importance to them. This Annual Report will highlight those programs and services offered by BCS where most successes have been achieved.

Like other non-profits, 2021 was not a very pleasant year for BCS for various reasons. One of them is COVID-19 pandemic, which shook the world by spreading its deadly variants that had devastating impacts on people's livelihood, in addition to significant loss of life. Thus, like in the past, while BCS programs and services have relied on direct, face-to-face interaction with the client have found new ways of doing things for delivering services. COVID-19 has changed the world by bringing in the new "virtual" world called "Zoom" where we found new ways to stay connected with each other and to further reach out to our communities.

I know I speak for the full board when I express my appreciation for the way the board have risen to the new challenge. Thanks to all of our Board of Directors for their hard work in taking on many challenges and steering the course in the right direction.

During the pandemic, we had several projects to implement. These include, Peacemaker Initiative, Assistance to Vulnerable South Asians with Food, COVID 19 Helpline for South Asians in the GTA, Health and Hygiene Preparedness (H2P), South Asian Vaccine Engagement Committee(SAVEC), and Youth Vaccine Engagement Team (YVET), to name a few. We also had weekly safe space drop-in sessions for youth in order to give them the opportunity to share their experiences, both related and unrelated to COVID 19. Additionally, we had Women and Girls Circle Workshop on recognizing violence amid COVID, Fighting Misogyny and Stereotypes against racialized women and girls in Toronto (for details, see Annual Report).

BCS has had a dedicated pool of volunteers. Volunteers help the organization in many ways on a daily basis. We also have some committed new Life Members who work continuously behind the scene. We thank them for their contributions and look forward to working with them in the near future. Building on this strong foundation of the people and the work we have accomplished thus far, we look forward to taking on more challenges in the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our funders for their continued support and sensitivity towards our mission. Our growth and achievements would not have been possible without their support.

Finally, I would like to thank all of our volunteers, staff, and partner agencies for their commitment and collaboration. Special thanks goes to our Executive Director for her hard work and dedication.

Thank you all for attending this meeting and for your unwavering support. Stay safe and stay connected.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kazi Sadrul Hoque, Chair, BCS Board of Directors





MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 28 , 2022

Good evening distinguished guests, partners, community members, BCS members, life members, our staff and volunteers, and most importantly our beloved seniors and youth leaders. I want to extend my best wishes for you and your family's health and safety in these difficult times of LONG COVID situation. I also express my sincere gratitude to all health community services providers, frontline and community ambassadors who have been working so selflessly to increase vaccine coverage and ensure safety for the community.

As we start our AGM today, as of July 28, 2022, the cumulative percent of people who have received at least 1 dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in Canada was 85.03% , who have completed primary series of vaccines was 81.93%, people who have completed primary series and received at least 1 additional dose was 49.28% , and people who have completed primary series and received 2 additional doses vaccine was 10.99%. Our efforts are going to increase the vaccine coverage in our community.

We are on the frontline working tirelessly to help the community and fight the crisis as per our capacity. We had another busy and successful year for BCS, achieving many of the goals we set last year. Through the process, we launched new initiatives for COVID-19 vaccine engagements and continuing safety measures to combat COVID-19 as well as continuing to ensure our other existing programs flourished.

As the second year of COVID-19, we have extended our activities to assist vulnerable South Asian seniors and the community in need amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic primarily impacts seniors' daily life and brings the seniors health challenges. We found that 95% of seniors are homebound and physically inactive during the COVID crisis. They face challenges in getting daily essentials, groceries, uncontrolled chronic diseases due to being homebound, and no physical activities. 76% have no access to health information in Bengali; 80% of seniors are abused in different forms of verbal and physical abuse, which become higher during COVID situations. In addition, there is still a considerable stigma among the South Asian community around seeking support for mental health. Therefore, we have been providing inclusive, culturally appropriate mental health support to seniors & youth. Our objectives are to reduce the stress of our community caused by mental health struggles, lack of social interaction, and food insecurity, and overall offer support in creating a sense of unity in the community.

This year, we have initiated several projects on Vaccine engagement activities to increase vaccine coverage and food security support in Toronto east and SA communities in partnership with EYDV cluster agencies, Vaccine engagement Team with AA, Youth Vaccine Engagement with WG, and SAVEC with CASSA. This year's inter-gen outing, youth beach day, and Summer Sports focused on Vaccine Challenge & awareness. We are continuously working to raise the community awareness and increase vaccine coverage in our community in various ways: PPE distribution, flyers and one in one connection, translation/interpretation, booking the appointment, organizing Townhall and information sessions in Bengali, and many more. Our 25 designated Ambassadors and 15 youth leaders are continuously working to increase vaccine coverage and reduce the risk of virus infections.

Our inter-gen group is organizing weekly mental health & inter-gen engagement sessions every Friday evening to create a safe space for seniors. Adults and youth who are facing mental health challenges during this COVID pandemic and to address long COVID affect.

There are over 400 seniors who participate in the various health support services, recreational activities, weekly exercise, and educational programs we offer. Our different inter-gen projects have provided a platform for the seniors & youth to come together in harmony. Through this, they can practice their empowerment, improve their independence and self-esteem and explore their potential to make a friendly environment for a safer community. These project activities allow seniors and youth to mingle and share their space in capacity building and recreational activities. We have successfully formed an inter-gen volunteer pool for our inter-gen activities. More than 50 seniors and 25 youth volunteered for these initiatives engaging more than 250 seniors and youth regularly.

BCS has been mandated to work with immigrant and racialized women and girls for their socio-economic, political, and economic empowerment. Women & Girls Circle of Safer Stronger grant brought together 60+ women and girls in workshops to discuss & understand the abuses and violence that confront Bangladeshi women and girls during the COVID. It was found that women and girls in South Asian Bangladeshi families faced mental trauma, violence, and abuse. Women faced physical, mental, verbal, and financial abuses and had severe mental traumas. Also, girls experienced physical and psychological abuse and mental trauma. In the families, any abuse was happened by the husband or father. The reasons were losing the job, family financial crisis, patriarchal perception, extramarital relation development during COVID, excessive use of devices, men's inclination towards women's money, parent's conflicts. In 2021, we have initiated another Project, "Fighting Misogyny and Stereotypes against Racialized Women and Girls in Toronto (Fighting Misogyny)". This project is generously funded by the Women & Gender Equity Canada. Project to support the feminist response and recovery from the current impacts of COVID-19 through systemic changes. Project recruited and trained 30 feminist leaders who are now conducting circle meeting with another 300 women in the community to raise their awareness, share resources, and build their capacity.

Our regular virtual youth drop-ins and youth engagement activities are going on as usual though it is now virtual. In addition, our Afterschool Tutoring Program (ASTP) and Summer Sports programs have been well regarded and supported by the community for the last 22 years. The ASTP program has provided volunteer opportunities to 80+ youth and has helped improve the education of over 500 kids throughout the year.

These continuous support & accomplishments could not have been possible without the extraordinary commitment and hard work of our staff, volunteers, and board members. The support of our partner organizations and funders have been significant to our operations. I am proud to be a part of such an excellent team of BCS families! My sincere thanks and appreciation to all our community member, senior, adults, and youth leaders! Your continuous support has brought us what we are today! Thank you indeed for all your supports.

Please get vaccinated & protect your family, your community and the country!

Nasima Akter

Dr. Nasima Akter
Executive Director





INTRODUCTION

THE BCS MISSION: **“HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES”**

BCS MANDATE:

BCS shall provide information, referrals, skill development and settlement services to diverse communities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Services shall be adaptive to the changing community needs and are delivered in partnership with other committees and service providers.

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS) is a non-profit organization serving not only the vast Bangladeshi population here in Toronto but also the local (Taylor-Massey, Crescent Town and adjacent neighborhoods) community since 2000. Our focuses are youth, seniors and newcomers and we now serve over 5000 beneficiaries that rely on the services we provide, with the number increasing every year.

Mission: Helping People Help Themselves.

Vision: Creating a vibrant community and living in harmony.

YOUTH INITIATIVES

Mostly virtually, BCS had many events with youth engagement in 2021. Our youth workers and volunteers while helping organize many of our events, they also had their own events that specifically targets youth. These youth initiatives were made for marginalized and/or racialized community members who are at a younger age so that they can develop healthy lifestyles, habits and stronger community bonds. They also had a safe space to develop their interpersonal skills even though the pandemic era made it very difficult to have interpersonal relationships. While organizing and joining our events, youth practiced leadership, management, communication and technological literacy skills. We ran active youth programs such as After School Tutoring & Cultural Heritage Program (ASTP), Youth Eliminated Smoking (YES), and summer support program so that the youth can stay connected, get learning help, stay happy, healthy and active. We also had weekly safe space drop-in sessions to have a platform for youth in order for them to have the opportunity to share their experiences, both related to and unrelated to covid-19, and have a safe space to interact with their peers in a meaningful way. Recently we have initiated a project namely youth vaccine engagement team (YVET) to raise awareness and increase vaccine coverage among South Asian youth. Over the year, more than 120 youth are engaged in various activities at BCS, giving them the opportunity to learn, network, professional development, mentorship and volunteer opportunities.



SENIOR INITIATIVE

Started with 5 seniors in April 2020 the virtual senior sessions for health & recreational activities have been attended by more than 100 seniors in 2021. Our senior virtual engagement platform had tremendous impact on health & wellness of senior's life during COVID-19. Three days weekly 100s seniors come together online, do various activities and exercise.

BCS successfully created a senior cabinet in 2016 with ten members which has now 15 seniors in the cabinet. They contribute to design and planning activities for seniors and act to bridge the gap between the needs of seniors and the services provided. Through the Cabinet, BCS can offer enhanced programs to fill in seniors' gaps. BCS has supported our senior community in these difficult times in many ways. We have been continuously organizing virtual sessions for senior's exercise, recreation, workshops, networking, technical & emotional support, peer support, inter-gen engagement, and many more. We aim to keep our seniors physically and mentally healthy—our initiative targets individuals who struggle with discrimination in Canadian society. We work with people who experience racism, sexism, ableism, and ageism. Many assume the senior population is incapable of many things, and BCS works hard to prove them wrong. There are many things that the older generations are great at, and most importantly, our community members are excited to learn and improve themselves as much as they can. Every senior enjoys learning something new and improving their knowledge. We have programs for seniors like; senior health and wellness, weekly drop-ins (virtual during covid), Good morning calls, interpretation, basic health information and tips, and resource sharing. More than 500 individual seniors yearly attend our events and benefit from the advantages of our programs that host many professionals. BCS has many possibilities for seniors where they get to talk about their daily problems and communicate with others. BCS's ongoing program of virtual exercise for seniors is giving freedom to our elderly for the comfort and safety of their homes and the opportunity for them to engage in more activities in the community. The virtual exercise occurred four times a week to keep their bodies healthy. However, BCS is running this exercise session three times a week. It gives them a platform to replace the in-person interactions as much as possible. The seniors also practice their technical skills daily and have opportunities to join events to learn how to navigate technology, be safe in online spaces, and stay away from scammers.

INTERGEN INITIATIVE

Every Friday inter-gen safe space drop-in on Zoom is one of our very successful initiatives during COVID-19 to keep seniors and youth busy and happy. They share the space for exchanging their experience, good time, bad time and how to overcome the situations. They were support for each other.

In addition, it also promotes volunteerism in seniors and youth and makes youth and seniors socially responsible and empowered in the Crescent Town Bengali community. The ultimate goal of this project is to identify factors and minimize the 'intergenerational gap' between seniors and youth in the community. Our intergenerational initiatives revolve around getting many people at various stages of life and giving them a safe and fun space to interact. Bringing everyone together in one event and offering them freedom and an excuse to have fun together is the goal of our intergenerational programs. BCS has intergenerational programs, such as inter-gen drama, tour, art and craft, elder abuse, generational exchange, cultural exchange, family relationships, etc. These programs strengthen family relationships,

provide space for healthy cultural exchange, bring people of all ages together with arts and crafts, and encourage conversation between individuals.

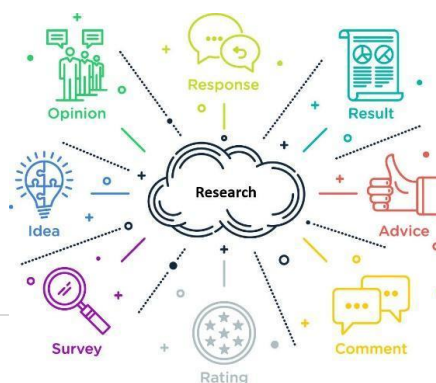
WOMEN/GIRLS INITIATIVES

In 2021, we have initiated our notable project on Women And Gender Equity (WAGE) funded by the Federal Government. We also initiated another project on women & girls circle under Safer , Stronger Grant of Canadian Women Foundation (Skills for Changes as the lead).

BCS has been mandated to work with immigrant and racialized women and girls for their socio-economic, political and economic empowerment. Racialized women and girls from south Asian backgrounds have been facing various oppressions, discriminations and violence at family, community and workplace in Toronto. Based on anti-oppressive and feminist frameworks, BCS has been working with women and girls and their families by organizing discussions, community events, need-based employment and settlement counselling and referrals. BCS utilizes a cultural approach to educate the community on women and girls rights. At BCS women and girls are provided training on peer support and leadership and they are working for community mobilization in order to fight misogyny and gender stereotypes. BCS has many programs targeting only women and girls. In order to support our female community members we had many programs targeting women and girls. BCS has many programs to encourage women to go out there and be the best versions of themselves such as our Peacemaker initiative where we discuss the effects of Islamophobia on women, and our “Women in Stem” (WIS) program to encourage women to pursue a career in a male dominated area. Our Women in Stem program, we were able to include a larger community by engaging with participants across the city and professional speakers across North America because of the virtual format. This was a positive, yet unexpected outcome of switching to virtual events.

RESEARCH

We research to have authentic information that is scientifically proven so that our community members can rely on them. Research also helps us find solutions to different social problems and determines the program impacts and evaluations of the activities we organize. Research is a reliable source for us to identify new issues to work on and serve our community better. With the effects of Covid-19, BCS also has made a great effort to find the most updated and reliable information so that we can inform our community members as much as possible. With the vaccine engagement efforts, getting the correct information and being able to answer questions and direct people in the right direction is a priority.



SETTLEMENT SERVICES

BCS has consistently advocated for immigrants, whether about having equal rights or eliminating the discrimination they face. We provide information on how to survive and prosper in Canada, navigate legal procedures and healthcare settings and offer translation services. We assist any individuals and newcomers to find the correct information. We help community people and newcomers to fill out essential government documents and forms. Furthermore, we assist to apply and secure social benefits for community people. Again, we work with the people, newcomers, to receive ODSP, health cards, SIN numbers, and many more services that newcomers might need. Our services aim at newcomers who find settling down in Canada and navigating the Canadian systems difficult. BCS is proud to work with individuals who are brave enough to make a new life for themselves in Canada.



SPECIAL INITIATIVES

BCS makes a great effort to offer services that are relevant to the time and situation that we are in. Covid has affected our community members in more than one way. Many individuals, including elderly, needed tech support and have a welcoming patient method of learning how to navigate the technology that comes with life after Covid-19. Our priority is always to keep people safe so we put great emphasis on getting vaccinated not only for the health of every individual but also the well-being of the entire community. Our goal is to encourage a civic pride around being safe and healthy during a pandemic by social distancing, wearing masks and of course, getting vaccinated. Depending on current issues and community needs, we have taken some special initiative to address the immediate needs, for example hate crime, racism, discrimination, COVID-19 Pandemic, and vaccine engagement. Canada has experienced many events of hate crimes against marginalized communities. In 2021, we witnessed the continuing impact of pandemic that affected marginalized groups heavily. Our programs address these issues directly.

We have several projects to address current social problems such as Peacemaker Initiative, immediate assistance to vulnerable South Asians with Food assistance, COVID-19 Helpline for South Asians in the GTA, Health & Hygiene Preparedness (H2P), South Asian Vaccine Engagement (SAVEC), Vaccine Engagement Team of EYDV (VET) etc . Our society has deep societal issues that needs to be faced such as racism, discrimination based on citizenship status and language and we address these concerns head on.



SOCIOCULTURAL EVENTS

In these difficult times, BCS aimed to have as much human connection as possible. Continuing to have our social programs were an important part of keeping the connection with our community members and protect everyone’s mental health and well-being. BCS celebrated many special days with many community members. In 2021, we do not let the pandemic stop us from having meaningful connections and have happy celebratory moments. BCS recognizes the fact that life in 2020-2021 were already hard enough without giving up on our holidays. In 2021, we celebrated holidays such as Bangla new year, Canada Day, Taste of Taylor Massey food festival, Independence day, IMLD (Ekushey February), World No Tobacco Day, Victory Day of Bangladesh, Women’s day, Truth & reconciliation day etc. Keeping our traditions and still being able to have fun is an important aspect of surviving and thriving.

2021 AT A GLANCE

Knowledge of cultural norms and values has allowed BCS to maximize its potential by providing services targeted at newcomers, youth, and seniors. BCS has over 5000 beneficiaries that rely on the services provided by the organization, with a steady increase in beneficiaries every year. Our achievements in 2021 are given below.

Initiatives for Youth	
Youth Eliminates Smoking (YES)	
World No Tobacco Day Celebrations 2021	60+ Participants (as it was in-person with social distancing)
Anti-Tobacco Pledge Signing/drawings	~25 participants
2021 Summer Sports	
Track & Field Day	20 registered participants plus visitors
Practice Sessions	10-15 Youth
Soccer Tournament Weekend	80 registered participants plus visitors
BCS youth Leadership	
Monthly Leadership Meetings	15-20 Youth
Weekly Board Game Night/ Virtual drop-ins	15-25 Youth

Initiatives for Seniors	
Activity	# of participants per session
Weekly Exercise Sessions (3 days a week)	150 sessions (60-80 Seniors)
Weekly Technology sessions	32 sessions (5-6 Seniors)
Senior Cabinet Meeting	10 meetings (15 members)
Monthly/ weekly issue based and health education workshops	10 issue based workshops (Average 20 participants), 8 mental health and brain workshops (20-25 seniors), 40 weekly basic health workshops
Home Support	200 members (grocery, information drop off, technological support)
Bangladesh Independence Day Celebrations	70 Seniors
Accompaniment Supports (<i>for interpreter, travel assistance, etc.</i>)	152
Senior Outdoor Visits (<i>Aga Khan museum, Guild wood Park, Apple picking and Pacific mall</i>)	150
Coffee and Chat sessions	8-10 per session
Meditation for Seniors	8-10 per session
Barriers to Access, Canadian Health Care Systems	210 Seniors
Barriers to Volunteering and motivations to volunteers	Qualitative study (Sample size n=45)
COVID - 19 : Helpline for South Asians in the GTA	
prevention, government benefits, re-opening, quarantine, food, etc. information	3-5 calls per day
Health & Hygiene Preparedness (H2P)	
monthly digital training sessions on health and hygiene issues related to the pandemic	30-40 participants per session

delivery of health and hygiene protection products and PPE	150 essential workers
10 virtual outreach sessions per week	
After School Tutoring & Heritage Program (ASTP)	
Activity	# of participants
Free weekly tutoring sessions on Zoom	10-15 students joined per session as well as 40 volunteers throughout the year (6-8 volunteers on average per session), one-in-one zoom room for student learning support
Weekly game/online entertainment	Youth & children Session which is half an hour of events such Ka hoot, trivia and half an hour discussion on their weekly activities & events
Settlement Services	
Support Type	# of participants per session
Day-to-day settlement services	40-50 Individuals monthly (cumulative)
Field Trips, Celebrations and more	
Event	# of participants
Bangladeshi New Year's Performance	100 Visitors on zoom joined by even more participants
International Mother Language Day Performance	On zoom 100+
Victory Day Cultural Show	80+ participants
Canada Day event	50 Participants
Taste of Bangladesh/Taylor-Massey	90+ Participants on Zoom
Inter-gen outing	60 youth and seniors
Vaccine Challenge walk & Beach Day	45 + in-person

BCS Programs 2021

Youth Initiatives:

1. Youth Eliminates Smoking (YES)

Since 2009, BCS Youth Eliminates Smoking (YES) is a youth group dedicated to increasing awareness of tobacco use with a focus on tobacco prevention using different techniques every year. After completing Phase 11 with the City funding, we are continuing our activities without funding. Our continuing activities included smoke-free movie nights, trivia, game and celebration of World No Tobacco Day (WNTD). The WNTD Celebration included speeches and presentations from youth leaders and local political figures. The achievements of this program are that the youth walked away gaining a greater appreciation for active healthy lifestyles, and further added signatures to their Say No To Tobacco pledge. By 2021, the pledge reached 300+ signatures from community members, dignitaries and provincial/federal policy makers.

2. Summer Sports

The Annual Summer Sports and Youth Soccer Tournament is one of BCS's most popular events among the youth, and is funded and supported by the Neighbourhood Youth Alliance (NYA). The event has encouraged boys and girls in the community to get active for nearly 18 years and has strengthened the bond of the community through friendly competition and sportsmanship. Practices were held every weekend of August leading up to the event, which took place on August 28th and 29th of 2021. more than 80 players participated in the soccer tournament despite the COVID restrictions. Similar to previous years, the event took place at the Dentonia Park, offering easy accessibility to the local community and extended community through its proximity to the Victoria Park Subway Station. Due to COVID-19, a new event structure was implemented to maintain provincial health guidelines. We operated on a six-team tournament schedule as opposed to the usual roster of four big teams, so that games were spread out throughout the day to avoid large crowds. In addition to the soccer tournament, there were stations for track & field and obstacle courses, as well as a kid's station with hula-hoops, jump ropes and bubbles. MPP Doly Begum attended the award ceremony and helped distribute medals to the winning teams, and participation certificates to all the players. The organization hopes to continue this initiative for the following years as it has effectively engaged youth in sports, provided a positive environment to encourage socialization, and contributed to building a healthier community. This year the summer sports focused on vaccine challenge theme.



3. After School Tutoring Program (ASTP)

For young children and newcomers, our free After School Tutoring Program (ASTP) has provided supplementary education and extracurricular opportunities to children of families that could not otherwise afford paid services. Due to the pandemic, the sessions took place through Zoom starting in March 2020 and still continuing.

The main activities of the program are tutoring services and homework-help, both of which are conducted by youth volunteers. The initiative now also features a children's dance program entitled "Dancing with Peacock dance group", as well as a South Asian Art program where children can learn about traditional and modern dances and South Asian arts & crafts for free. Additionally, students are offered free Bengali singing lessons from a professional singer, where they can use their skills to perform at the many large community cultural events that BCS hosts throughout the year such as International Mother Language Day, Canada Day, Pohela Boishakh, CBON Mela, Bangladesh Independence Day celebration, and many more. Since 2000, one of our most successful and longest-running initiatives, the ASTP program has enabled 50 volunteers to help 500 kids throughout the year. It is not only a platform for education, but it also helps students develop a sense of culture that can allow them to feel more closely connected to their community. All year around, BCS organizes art competitions, cultural celebrations, and many other events where more than 1000 community members get the opportunity to showcase the skills they have acquired through the ASTP program, which allows youth to gain experience in exploring their artistic abilities and talents for free.

4. Youth Game Night / Youth Drop-In (Virtual)

The Youth Recreation Drop-In program provides youth from the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) of Taylor-Massey and Oakridge with an easily accessible weekly recreational drop-in within their community. Virtual sessions even have wider coverage and opportunity for youth to join from other areas also. Preliminary studies conducted in the community found that local youth had a desire to participate in sports and other recreational activities; however, they were limited by a lack of space and safety concerns, in addition to increasing costs. With the weekly drop-ins, youth could participate in leisurely and beneficial recreational activities such as card games, computer games, board games, and table tennis. Special events such as bowling nights and skating nights were also able to engage over a dozen youth. In addition to these activities, dinner or a light snack was also provided. The program provided youth with a safe space to relieve stress and connect with others in the community. This has been proven to be a positive deterrent from risky behaviors, resulting in a more vibrant and healthy community. Additionally, the frequency of the program makes it a great attraction for youth looking to engage with peers while attaining their volunteer hours. In 2021, an average 10-15 youth participants attend the program as well as several volunteers on zoom. Often, many newcomers are able to develop friendships and ease the integration process into the community. Due to its success and traction, BCS hopes to continue this project for the indefinite future.



Senior Programs/Initiatives

1. Weekly Exercise Sessions

The 'Weekly Exercise Sessions' objective is to maintain seniors' physical and mental wellness through various forms of physical exercises offered by BCS. The exercise session includes aerobic, muscle-strengthening, cardio, and stretches instructed by the certified activationist who runs the program. The Weekly Exercise Sessions are three days a week (Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 10 am) for 2 hours on zoom or a virtual program. Every session is full of creative movements, fun activities, and movements to music. Over 180 seniors worldwide, including North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, participate in each session. We have been running the exercise session for more than two years without interruption. The Weekly Exercise Sessions have positively impacted the senior lifestyle and wellness by controlling diabetes and high blood pressure and improving seniors' health and wellbeing.



Zoom Link For Seniors Exercise Program: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83515622543>

Time: Every Tuesday's, Thursday's and Friday's at 10am to 12pm

2. Weekly Technology Sessions

The 'Weekly Technology Sessions' objective is to engage seniors in a workshop to learn technical knowledge (about online accessibility) and improve skills to use computers for communication purposes, search for information online, and connect with the world online. The seniors are taught about MS word, basic computer operations, opening an email, Facebook, Viber applications, etc. Every session includes 10-15 seniors. Currently, we have stopped the session because of the COVID pandemic. However, we keep serving the seniors with technical support at home (in-person), zoom, and on phones to help them access our online programs. We make schedules for in-person service and reach seniors to maintain public health measures to prevent the COVID spread. During the COVID time, we supported more than 50 seniors. Sometimes, we organize cyber safety workshops to teach seniors how to protect their information from fraudulence. More than 250 seniors attended the cyber safety workshops during the pandemic (2020-22).

3. Senior Group and Intergenerational Meeting

BCS has a senior group or senior cabinet of 15 seniors (five men and ten women). The group's main objective is to identify the social problems that affect the seniors' life. The group discusses elder abuse, chronic diseases, healthcare, and psychosocial outcomes of COVID. They also discuss the wellness

strategies for seniors, housing issues, hate crimes, discrimination, age-friendly communities, etc. BCS organized the monthly meeting in the office. It happens on zoom (intergeneration meeting) as there are still COVID exits. We use the meeting outcomes (information) for writing funding proposals.

4. A Series of Health Education Workshops

During the pandemic, we are providing seniors with health information about COVID, hygiene, nutrition, and chronic diseases (like diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol management, chronic pain, dementia, mental health, etc.) virtually (on zoom) weekly. The health workshops aim to help seniors increase their knowledge of managing chronic health conditions. Sometimes, BCS invites organizations such as South Riverdale, Alzheimer’s Society, East End Community Health Centre, Flemingdon Health Centre, Canadian Mental Health Association, and Access Alliance, family physicians, epidemiologists, and experts to conduct the health workshops. We arrange the workshops currently on virtual or on zoom. In addition, we are providing vaccine-related updated information reported by Toronto Public Health and the City of Toronto (with translated version). Before the pandemic, BCS organized workshops in person and provided the seniors with transportation opportunities to attend the workshops. Prior registration is required to ensure a spot in the workshop. 20-25 seniors participate in each health workshop. We post the workshop information on social media, and the seniors phone us for the registration. BCS also assigns certified interpreters to support the seniors to make the workshop effective in communication. Any senior from GTA has access to health workshops.



5. A Series of Elder Abuse Workshops

BCS initiated a series of elder abuse workshops under New Horizon and Seniors Community Grants (MSAA). Without funding, we continue elder abuse workshops for the seniors and family members. We had completed 27 seminars/ workshops/ FGDs in the last two years when the issues were severe during COVID. More than 30-40 seniors attended each session. Most of the participants are women. We gather information about the different forms of abuse that seniors face. We plan to make the report and make recommendations for policymakers to address the issue adequately.



6. Monthly Issue Based Workshops

BCS organizes monthly issue-based workshops or sessions. The main objective is to improve the knowledge about the current social problems and to identify the solutions for other seniors. Around 30 seniors attend the workshop to make it effective. This platform is intergenerational. Youth benefit from the seminars as they know the social problems of seniors and youth. They mainly focus on social issues, such as vaccine engagement challenges, age-friendly community, family relationships, mental health, cultural gap, tutoring challenges, unemployment, etc. It is an ongoing project and is being run on zoom.

7. Weekly Recreational Activities

BCS has weekly recreational activities for seniors. The recreational activities connect seniors, support seniors, and break the social isolation of seniors. The recreational activities use six domains such as physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and vocational while designing the activities for seniors. The recreational activities include trivia, singing along, art and color sessions, quizzes, travel shows, documentaries, art, crafting, etc. BCS had recreational activities in two different places: the BCS office and Dentonia park Clubhouse. Currently, BCS is running all recreational activities virtually or on zoom.

8. Home Support

Before COVID, BCS had regular home support services. BCS sent volunteers to seniors' homes to chat with them and engage them in board game activities. The volunteers cooked light meals like soups, cleaned their homes, etc. Currently, we are not providing home services because of the safety of seniors during this pandemic time. However, we phone the seniors to spend time talking or chatting, sharing emotional issues, and reminding them to have medicines.

9. Accompaniment Supports (for interpreter, travel assistance, etc.)

BCS had the accompaniment services before the COVID. The service helped the seniors bring them to healthcare systems like hospitals, doctors, dental care, and physiotherapists. The volunteers made an appointment with the seniors and identified a convenient place to meet the seniors (usually the nearest point of seniors' residents). The volunteers placed a disclaimer form, and seniors signed it. Then they went together to the healthcare places. The volunteers also acted as interpreters between the seniors and doctors. During this pandemic, we have this service, but in a limited way.

10. Senior Outdoor Visits

The Intergenerational team creates Outdoor Visits that happen all along the year. The primary purposes are to bring all the family members, including seniors and children around the community, together to have meaningful and lasting memories and relationships with others in the open spaces. These Outdoor Visits allow individuals to socialize and experience places they may have never been. BCS organizes a visit to national parks, national libraries, museums, monuments, architectural buildings, movie theaters, shopping malls, restaurants, and beaches. Seniors enjoy these experiences and look forward to the next ones. during the pandemic, we arrange the visits to maintain the Toronto Public Health policy.

11. Meditation for Seniors

Before COVID, BCS facilitated meditation (mindful) sessions to make seniors relaxed and comfortable. The session included Tibetan, mountainous, instrumental, and natural music and healed internal emotional erosion that affects health and wellness. The session is half an hour duration. It happened on Thursday at 4:30 pm at Dentonia Park Clubhouse. We also do it o zoom (but it is infrequent). BCS plans to start it soon when we begin our in-person activities essentially. Meditation significantly improves an individual's mental health, such as stress, anxiety, and challenges with them.

12. Volunteer Opportunity for Seniors

The BCS's different projects provide seniors with an excellent opportunity to work for BCS and the community as volunteers for implementing the senior activities. It is an ongoing process, and the aim is to empower seniors to run senior activities in the community and neighborhood. The volunteers work at three levels in the community: the seniors working in the senior cabinet/or ambassador group, for disease advocacy groups, and as door-to-door workers. To be a volunteer, the senior must fill out the application form. More than 60 senior volunteers provided services during 2020-2022 towards senior projects. Any interested senior in volunteering, contact the BCS office.



Bangladeshi Senior Aid Fundraiser

We have collaborated with the Bangladeshi Student Association of Ryerson University (BSAR) for the senior aid fundraiser and to help out the ones most affected by the Covid 19 pandemic this last year. BSAR raised funds for the Bangladeshi seniors in our community, and BCS bought them one week's worth of groceries or gift cards. The campaign went out for two weeks and raised around \$700. That amount was used for cultural food distribution to the seniors.



Inter-gen Initiatives:

1. Pathways to Wellness of South Asian Seniors on Virtual World

The project's main goal was to increase homebound seniors' social inclusion, health, and wellness through a virtual program. The project was funded by WoodGreen community Services. BCS has been receiving funding from WoodGreen for senior activities for 11 years. This project (the year 2021-22) included seniors engaging actively in the virtual activities (priority one), intergenerational project- accomplishments, such as outreach, meetings, communication materials development, and technological support to make the online easier to access. The project engaged the seniors in virtual activities like recreational activities, such as music, fun fitness, social discussion, reminiscing, etc., that promoted physical and mental wellness. Also, the project built the seniors and youth's capacity and leadership skills by forming an inter-gen committee (youth & seniors). They shared ideas about recreational activities and contributed to designing an implementation for the activities in the project. The seniors and youth worked together to reach seniors (outreach) and create communication materials. The youths helped seniors support technical issues, such as remote and in-person (setting up the apps on phones and computers, etc.) to join the virtual program. The project was successful because we reached out to 120 seniors (beyond our estimation or targets), and they attended more than 46 session activity sessions.

Second phase (2021) of the project's main goal was to increase homebound seniors' social inclusion, health, and wellness through virtual programs. At least 80% of project participants (out of 100- seniors) will express being more conscious of active living and wellness after participating. At least 80% of seniors will say being busy and well after attending the project. At least 80 % of seniors are more conscious of convenient ways to maintain a healthy life and stay active. At least 80% of seniors will attend a minimum of 30 sessions out of 40 sessions. This is to reduce social isolation from each senior who is connected with five seniors through virtual media (100% of seniors). At least 60% of seniors are more physically active each week than before. At least 40% of senior participants will be more willing to pursue leadership opportunities (known from other seniors) in the community than before).



Moreover, the project organized workshops on mental health issues of youth and seniors during the pandemic time. The youths and seniors organized 16 workshops. Around 20 seniors and ten youths regularly attended the sessions. They came up with ideas and strategies to cope with mental health issues.

2. Senior's Virtual Active Club (SVAC)

COVID took away seniors' social and family life. Our experience from the South Asian community is that during COVID period, the Bangladeshi Canadian seniors were homebound (95%), physically inactive (> 90%), and anxious about the Coronavirus. Social isolation, inactiveness, and anxiety deteriorated the health of 80 % of seniors (sources: seniors and family members). The Bangladeshi Canadian seniors needed a social connection and physical exercise that could be the best non-drug approach to maintain a quality of life and make them active and cheerful (from anxiety) during this COVID period.

We received funding from the New Horizons, Government of Canada, to connect seniors (to break social isolation) and bring health benefits through physical movements/activities on the virtual or online platform. Thus the project included online physical activities (zoom activities) and social networks for the seniors throughout the project period (if COVID continues). Furthermore, the project had an intergenerational meeting every month to discuss some social issues to connect and create a strong bonding between the seniors and youth. The project successfully formed the intergenerational team (five youth and ten seniors). The team worked together to complete eight intergenerational sessions and organized 96 physical exercise and recreational activities virtually (the target was 72), and also conducted eight issues-based workshops related to social problems. The participants were more than 25, expected 10 participants in each session. In the proposal, our target was to reach out to 50 seniors. However, we served 100 seniors and 20 youth.



3. Cultural Community Support Program (CCSP)

The pandemic primarily impacts seniors' daily life and brings the seniors health challenges. We found that 95% of seniors are homebound and physically inactive during the COVID crisis. They face challenges in getting daily essentials, groceries, uncontrolled chronic diseases due to being homebound, and no physical activities. 76% have no access to health information in Bengali; 80% of seniors are abused in different forms of verbal and physical abuse, which become higher during COVID situations. In addition, there is still a considerable stigma among the South Asian community around seeking support for mental health. Therefore, there is a need for inclusive, culturally appropriate mental health initiatives.

The project's objective was to reduce the stress of our community caused by mental health struggles, lack of social interaction, and food insecurity, and overall offer support in creating a sense of unity in the community. United Way funded the project. The project included bi-weekly virtual mental health drop-ins and intergenerational engagement initiatives where youth and seniors socialized and formed relationships with each other. Also, it had a monthly food/grocery delivery program (serving culturally appropriate food/groceries) for low-income families in Crescent Town and the surrounding area. We reached out to more than 56 seniors with a month of groceries (basic essential) and completed 26 bi-weekly sessions (intergen drop-in), and more than 750 (cumulative) participants joined. The seniors and

youths discussed coping strategies to overcome loneliness, isolation, mental anxiety, depression, and mental erosion.



4. Danforth Intergenerational Group (DIG)

The Danforth Intergenerational Group (DIG) was funded by the New Horizons for Seniors Program, and was formed to narrow the intergenerational gap between youth and seniors in our community. An intergenerational group of ten seniors and five youths was formed to run meetings where both groups could learn about social issues from each other, particularly elder abuse. This was done through group discussions, plays and short films, demonstrations, etc. to create recommendations on how to handle elder abuse in South Asian communities. Additionally, six elder abuse workshops were held in which 100 seniors and 20 youth volunteers attended, which was more than our expected results. After all the meetings and workshops, the intergenerational group developed a module about elder abuse in order to be able to educate others in the community. Aside from the educational activities, the program provided many bonding opportunities for the youth and seniors such as the 12 arts and crafts sessions. About five youth and 12 seniors participated in designing memory boxes and other art pieces that were shared in December 2020 to an audience of 100 people. The memory boxes were a legacy activity that could hold information and materials in the boxes that could be passed down to younger generations. Due to the pandemic, an important activity that was implemented was teaching seniors computer skills in order to be able to attend our virtual programs. Seniors were taught through over-the-phone and socially-distanced in-person lessons that followed all Public Health Guidelines. On September 4th, 2020, BCS hosted an inter-gen outing that was attended by the respected seniors, adults, youth, and kids in our community. The purpose of this event was to give seniors a chance to interact with others in the community as they had been isolated at home due to COVID-19. The event was a success, as many seniors expressed their enjoyment, and everyone was maintaining social-distancing and following public health guidelines while at the park. To evaluate the project, five case studies and a mini survey were done to see what was learned and what was achieved. It was reported that all senior participants improved their knowledge on elder abuse and had learned about government policies they should know to protect themselves. The target for our project was to reach 50 seniors, but through a snowball technique, we ended up reaching 100 new seniors who had never participated in events prior to these, as well as 20 youths. To add, 16 seniors, four adults and seven youths achieved volunteer experience by outreaching to peers, making flyers, attending intergen meetings and planning events. The DIG has helped to grow the network of seniors for BCS, as well as connect other seniors to each other. Not to mention youth, adults and seniors alike were able to gain volunteer experiences and useful skills, all while building connections



and bonding with each other. In 2021 we have continued support to the seniors to stay safe at home by providing virtual sessions, emotional & technical supports.

Women/Girls Initiatives

BCS has been mandated to work with immigrant and racialized women and girls for their socio-economic, political and economic empowerment. Racialized women and girls from south Asian backgrounds have been facing various oppressions, discriminations and violence at family, community and workplace in Toronto. Based on anti-oppressive and feminist frameworks, BCS has been working with women and girls and their families by organizing discussions, community events, need-based employment and settlement counselling and referrals. BCS utilizes a cultural approach to educate the community on women and girls rights. At BCS women and girls are provided training on peer support and leadership and they are working for community mobilization in order to fight misogyny and gender stereotypes. BCS has many programs targeting only women and girls. In order to support our female community members we had many programs targeting women and girls. BCS has many programs to encourage women to go out there and be the best versions of themselves such as our Peacemaker initiative where we discuss the effects of Islamophobia on women, and our "Women in STEM" (WIS) program to encourage women to pursue a career in a male dominated area. Our "Combating Islamophobia and Racism" event was over zoom where we brought together many participants and 5 special speakers alongside many peacemaker initiative ambassadors to share their views on Islamophobia as a whole and in connection with their communities. Our Women in Stem program, we were able to include a larger community by engaging with participants across the city and professional speakers across North America because of the virtual format. This was a positive, yet unexpected outcome of switching to virtual events.

In 2021, we have initiated our notable project on Women And Gender Equity (WAGE) funded by the Federal Government. We also initiated another project on women & girls circle under Safer, Stronger Grant of Canadian Women Foundation (Skills for Changes as the lead).

1. Women in STEM (WIS)

Women in STEM (WIS) was founded in 2019 through the Identify N' Impact grant from the City of Toronto. WIS aims to support underserved female youth between the ages of 15-25 across Toronto and is committed to investing in and inspiring the next generation to explore STEM fields. Many youth, especially female youth, face societal and familial pressures and do not feel they have a safe space to connect. Our main goal is to provide a safe space for youth and families to gather and explore their interests in STEM, while also engaging them in discussions on how to build resilient communities.



The initial project consisted of:

- Speakers Series: 9 virtual speakers series with 1-3 professional speakers each
 - Past speakers can be found here: <https://www.wistoronto.com/meet-the-team>
- Participant series: WIS participants researched their own STEM topics of interest and presented to peers
- Field Trip(s): Participants attended virtual field trips in lieu of in-person ones due to pandemic
- Professional Development Workshops: Offered 4 resume/CV and Cover Letter review and provided workshops before speaker series events
- Mental Health Workshops: Conducted 2 online mental health workshops incorporating ways to deal with COVID-19 and/or discrimination
- STEM Fair and End of Year Event: participants presented their STEM Fair projects at the Annual STEM Fair and End of Year Event
- Social Media: WIS team built online social media presence on Instagram, LinkedIn and through our personalized website
- Anti-Discrimination Campaigns: WIS Created the "Speak Up*" campaign, which was an anon submission series for women to share their experiences of discrimination in STEM fields. The Anti-Racism in STEM blogs/Instagram posts was developed to raise awareness on historical racism in academia/STEM fields and create discussions on dismantling systemic racism within STEM

Program Outcomes:

Overall, all youth expressed having a positive experience with this project. Our midterm survey was conducted among 10 participants. There, when asked to rate how much their knowledge on STEM fields improved compared to the start of the program, we scored an average of 4.5 out of 5. In our final feedback survey conducted, 100% of participants were very satisfied with the program arrangement/organization. When asked to rate how much their knowledge on STEM fields improved compared to the start of the program, we scored an average of 4.43 out of 5.

One individual success story includes one of our youth who started off as a regular participant and through her active involvement and Interest in our project, she joined the core volunteer team as the Community Engagement Assistant. She attended nearly every workshop we conducted, placed 2nd place on our STEM Fair, wrote multiple blogs, took a leadership role for our anti-discrimination and racism campaigns, and was responsible for managing our presence on Instagram. When prompted to share some skills she learned or improved through this program the following was stated: *“I learned presentation and digital marketing skills (through social media management). I also picked up a lot of great advice on work-life balance from the speakers Q&A sessions.”*

Others stated learning the following skills:

- Advocating for under-represented populations in STEM
- Networking
- Communication and social skills
- Confidence
- Planning
- Organization
- Critical thinking

Participants also learned more about the STEM fields, which either reaffirmed their interests in certain fields or exposed them to new ones. For example, one participant stated the following: *“Being a part of the WiS program has got me more inclined towards the Engineering aspect of STEM than anything related to medicine. I really enjoyed The Mechatronics and Engineering workshop sessions provided by this program, it gave me greater insight on the field and drew me towards those careers.”*

Some other participants noted their positive experiences and what they learned during the WiS program, as commented below:

“You’ve really got to immerse yourself in something if you want to get a feel for what you enjoy. Even if it doesn’t always work out you’ve gained at least something from that experience. Through this program I was introduced to so many aspects of STEM I would’ve never known about otherwise, and this has opened so many opportunities for trying new things and narrowing down a path of where I’d like to see myself in the future with STEM.”

“[I learned] keep your options open; you don’t have to stick to one thing. It will help you find new opportunities and get you out of your comfort zone.”

“[I learned that] networking can get you really far. Not only are you getting the best tips from people who have already reached the goals you want to reach, but it also gives a contact that you can maybe refer back to in the future.”

“(I learned) the importance of having a mentor in your field.”



“One valuable information I have learned from the WIS program (specifically from the speaker's presentations) is that high school students can partake in research programs and research opportunities. This was very helpful as I can take my passion another step further.”

“I'm aware that a degree is just one minor part of being career-ready but many of the speakers gave concrete examples of resources [such as scholarships, mentors, volunteer opportunities, etc.] they had personally used etc. which was so useful in my opinion.”

“One valuable information I have learned about from all the speakers is that they all had a goal, they all worked very hard, made themselves stand out, and continuously worked towards their goal. They also gave tips on how you can do that and create opportunities for yourself (such as networking).”

In summary, participants were satisfied with the quality of the project and content and learned new skills as well.

Challenges For Participants:

When participants joined the program, the majority of the participants noted in the intake survey that they had an interest in exploring and pursuing STEM careers. However, they did not have the necessary skills/resources to successfully get into their fields of interest.

In our intake survey, participants expressed the following barriers to pursuing STEM:

- Lack of female role models
- Not encouraged to pursue STEM from an early age
- Believed they were less likely to succeed in STEM
- Believed women were in general less interested in STEM than men
- Faced discrimination in recruitment, hiring, and promotion in STEM
- Difficulty to maintain a work-life balance

Furthermore, participants hoped to learn programming, robotics, leadership, fields in STEM, coding, public speaking, networking, and presentation skills. All soft skills were addressed in our programming (eg, individual presentations, networking opportunities, etc.). However, hard skills such as coding and robotics were changed to adapt to a virtual format. Instead, we provided participants with insights from individuals in those fields as well as online resources to develop the skills on their own time at home.

During our WIS program, we provided monthly Speakers Sessions with STEM professionals, virtual field trips, and STEM Fair, which helped to give insight into different STEM careers. During the midterm survey, while participants expressed a positive experience with the project, they requested professional development and mental health workshops in the second half, which were implemented.

Participants became aware of jobs and careers they were previously unaware about, as displayed through their comments below:

“The exposure to a range of professions that exist within STEM that I'd never even heard of until recently. Students are often familiar with the Engineer, Researcher, etc, roles and what they entail as opposed to being a product designer, or how one would prep for said career”

“I have realized that many people had to work very hard to get where they are, and how their previous career altered as they went on with their life and they chose to work in an environment that they enjoy. With that information it helps me with sorting out my life as well.

“During one of the virtual conferences, a speaker retold her experience of how her gender impacted the value of her ideas that she brought to the table, and her boss wasn't being fair. Then, she continued on saying how she acknowledged the situation respectfully and stood to her point. From her experience, I've learnt to never ignore STEM workplace inequalities especially if it had something related to gender.”

Some participants noted the WIS program had inspired them to consider changing their future/career plans:

“... the presentations encouraged me to take other programs into consideration when applying to (undergraduate programs at) universities that I wouldn't have applied to if I hadn't been part of WIS.”

"WiS has definitely opened my eyes to the possibilities that STEM has to offer. Although I do not plan on changing my immediate plans/field of study after highschool, I am more inclined to go into a career that works closely with STEM in facilities such as hospitals.”

“WiS challenged me to see beyond the goals I had initially set for myself through exposure to stories of (esp. minority) women in fields that are pretty much white/male dominated. I do feel very confident with changing paths in the future given the advice received in the workshops.”

"Being a part of the WiS program has got me more inclined towards the Engineering aspect of STEM than anything related to medicine. I really enjoyed The Mechatronics and Engineering workshop sessions provided by this program. It gave me greater insight on the field and drew me towards those careers.”

“Participating in WIS has made me even more interested in pursuing a career in STEM fields - it has made me feel empowered as I was able to listen and talk to other female leaders in the industry.”

In summary, participants gained insights, resources/supports, and mentors through their involvement in the WIS program.

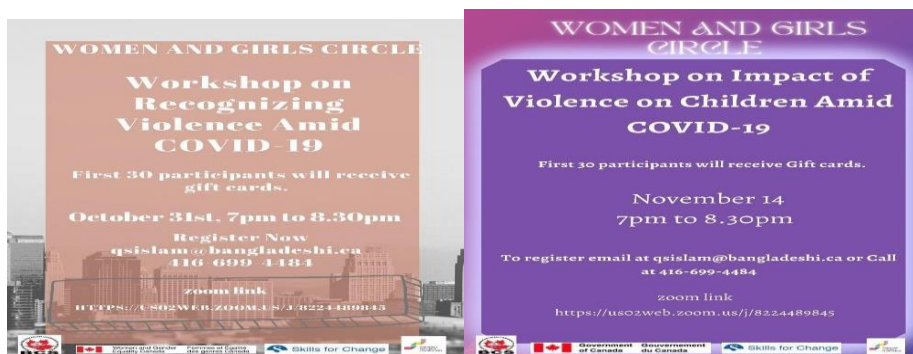
2. Women and Girls Circle – Workshop on Recognizing violence Amid Covid-19

With Safer Stronger Grant of Canadian Women Foundation, Skill for Changes as the lead we have conducted 2 FGDs and workshops for understanding the abuses and violence that confront Bangladeshi women and girls during the COVID.

BCS organized Women and Girls Circle discussion sessions. During COVID, people stayed home and engaged in conflicts. Internal and external factors-initiated conflicts and resulted in different forms of family acts of violence. Women and girls were commonly affected by the violence. Information about family violence and abuse in South Asian Bangladeshi families is lacking. Project objectives were: to conduct workshops for understanding the abuses and violence that confront Bangladeshi women and girls during COVID.

BCS conducted two workshops (October 31, 2021, and November 14, 2021) with community women and girls aged 15+ to understand their mental health, abuse, and violence. 66 participants over 15 years joined two workshops and shared stories about mental health violence and its impacts. The facilitator presented COVID and some facts, so the participants understood its consequences deeply and spoke comfortably. Before starting the workshops, we read the objectives and purposes of the workshops; the participants were aware of them. We also informed them that we used the audio recording to capture the information, and we would use their answers in the report, but we would not use their names there, so it was anonymous. Two workshops were online or zoom, and participants had the right not to respond to questions if they were uncomfortable and turned off the camera. We also engaged two note-takers in the workshops. The note-taker compiled the information from the notes and audio recording. Later, the researcher interpreted the data and developed the report. **Brief findings:** Women and girls in South Asian Bangladeshi families faced mental trauma, violence, and abuse. Women faced physical, mental, verbal, and financial abuse and severe mental traumas. Also, girls experienced physical and psychological abuse and mental trauma. In the families, any abuse happened by the husband or father. The reasons were losing the job, family financial crisis, patriarchal perception, extramarital relation development during COVID, excessive use of devices, men's inclination toward women's money, and parental conflicts.

Policy implications: Policymakers, community organizations, and social workers work together to address these issues.



3. Fighting Misogyny and Stereotypes against Racialized Women and Girls in Toronto

An initiative of BCS funded by the Government of Canada. Fighting Misogyny and Stereotypes against Racialized Women and Girls in Toronto is a project by BCS and Women and Gender Equality Canada. This 18-month project and campaign (Oct 2021 – March 2023) will support a feminist response and recovery from the current impacts of COVID-19 through systemic change. This has been achieving by creating safe spaces to empower 30 racialized women and girls, located in Toronto east neighborhoods, who have been impacted by COVID-19.

Why Fight Misogyny project

BCS youth leaders and women participants identified misogyny and gender stereotypes preventing their full participation in Canada’s economic, social, and political life. Consultations with racialized youth, women and seniors about the impact of COVID19 and identified increases of gender based violence and discriminations in their families & workplaces. Meanwhile CBC News reported that domestic, intimate partner violence continue to rise during pandemic (Feb 15, 2021). Therefore, Fight Misogyny project aims to support and guide the group on their journey to become feminist leaders while raising public awareness on the impact of misogyny and gender stereotypes on women’s rights through forum meetings with participants, community leaders, and policymakers along with a media and social media campaign. The campaign will also hold organized dialogues with local members of Parliament, Members of Provincial Parliament, City Councillors, and School Trustees.



Project update:

BCS kicked off “Fight Misogyny Achieve, Gender Equality” project with over 80 participants on Nov. 16, 2021 which included one Member of Parliament, two Members of Provincial Parliament, one project funder, two project partners along seven community partners, youth, and community leaders.

Recruitment of Feminist Leaders (FL):

BCS conducted extensive outreach in Toronto east and various educational institutions and conducted two information sessions to recruit 30 feminist leaders from October to December 2021. The Fight Misogyny project core team designed leadership training framework and modules. BCS conducted training needs assessments with participants.

Training:

Team conducted nine workshops as a part of the leadership training. Eminent academicians, professors, women activists, journalists, and social workers conducted this training series. The project team also conducted training on community organizing, peer support, and various concepts such as gender, misogyny, and oppression. According to survey data, over 90 participants rated these training/workshops as highly practical for them.

Women and Gender Equality Canada
Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada

Join us!
Fighting Misogyny Project Kickoff
Tuesday, November 16, 2021
From 7pm to 8pm on Zoom

Register Here:
<https://forms.gle/dSLwGUA4JANF3CtX7>
Or email: genderequity@bangladeshi.ca
Join Our Movement!

"Fighting Misogyny and Stereotypes against Racialized Women and Girls in Toronto", an initiative of BCS funded by the Government of Canada.

Learn More!

- Project overview
- Project schedule
- Meet Project stakeholders

Women and Gender Equality Canada
Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada

Fighting Misogyny Information & Recruitment Session
Wednesday, November 24, 2021
from 6.30 pm to 8 pm via Zoom

Fighting Misogyny project, an initiative of BCS funded by government of Canada, will support a feminist response and recovery from the current impacts of COVID-19 through systemic change.

We are inviting racialized women & Youth (age 13-29) from Toronto to Join our Movement!

Are you committed to...

- Gender equality
- Support your community impacted by COVID19
- Fight misogyny and discrimination at community, school and workplace

Enhance your Leadership skills...

- Group facilitation and peer support
- Community organizing
- Gender analysis and actions
- Anti-oppression, Anti-racist, Indigenous and Women rights frameworks
- Advocacy & Social media campaign

Get...

- Experience working with the community
- Appreciation and network
- Certificate and volunteering hours
- Gift card and honorarium

Register today for information session!
For more information, contact today!
nakter@bangladeshi.ca, 416-699-4484
www.bangladeshi.ca

Events:

Feminist leaders organized a rally from the BCS office, marched to International Language Monuments on Feb 21st, and offered respect to the language martyrs of 1952. Project team also celebrated the International Women’s Day Event. At least a hundred people from diverse backgrounds and different Toronto organizations joined BCS on March 8 for an International Women’s Day for a virtual event. Event had Keynote speaker, speech from the policymakers and community leaders and FLs.

Resource Development



Resource creation:

BCS created Resources for fighting misogyny, gender-based discrimination, or violence in the community, school, and workplace. The BCS team created this community resource guide and Feminist Leaders provided orientation on this resource guide and how to disseminate its message and share it with community members, especially women and girls, during community education sessions/circle meetings.

Community Education through Circle meeting:

After receiving leadership training, the Feminist Leaders have been forming circles since May 2022. They will organize 300 racialized women and girls from May to July 2022. Already 17 Feminist Leaders conducted their processes by engaging 160 women and girls. The rest of the Feminist Leaders will conduct their circle meetings by July 2022.

Women and Gender Equality Canada

Fighting Misogyny and Stereotypes against Racialized Women and Girls in Toronto

FIGHT MISOGYNY; ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY

JOIN CIRCLE DISCUSSIONS TO SPREAD GENDER EQUALITY

3 SESSIONS SCHEDULED
\$10 HONORARIUM PER SESSION TO BE AWARDED

DATE & TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED BY FACILITATOR

Social Media Campaign:

BCS created a website <https://fightmisogyny.ca/>. The website includes campaign information, Blogs/stories of Feminist Leaders, and resources on understanding gender inequality, misogyny, and how to fight against these gender-based discriminations and violence. A Facebook page created for the [Fight Misogyny Campaign](#). This social media page has shared stories of Feminist Leaders, resources, news, and events. So far, over 2800 audiences have viewed this page and engaged with this page.

Media partnership

BCS organized a meeting with the media on June 6, 2022, at its Danforth office. Mr. Shohidul Islam Mintu and Abdul Halim Mia from NRB TV & Bangla Mail, M.R. Jahangir from Bangla Kagoj, Mr. Shaughat Ali Sagor from Notun Desh, Mr. Khurshid Alam from Probashi Konto, Mr. Emamul Haque from The Radio Metro Mail and Mr. Mahbub Osmani from CBN attended this meeting. The Founder of BCS Mr. Mustaq Ahmed also attended this event.



RESEARCH

We do research to have authentic information that is scientifically proven and that our community members can rely on. It also helps us find solutions to different social problems. It also helps us figure out the program impacts and evaluations for the activities we organize. Research is the reliable source for us to identify new issues to work on and serve our community better. With the effects of Covid-19, BCS also has made great efforts to find the most updated and reliable information so that we are able to inform our community members as much as we can. With the vaccine engagement efforts, getting the right information and being able to answer questions and direct people in the right direction was a priority. We shared our research publications with the stakeholders, partners and the community.


Research Dissemination Seminar of BCS

Date and time: Tuesday, December 14, 2021, @ 1 pm

You are invited to join a research findings presentation done by BCS about ["Psychosocial Issues of South Asian Bangladeshi seniors living in Toronto during COVID-19"](#). The study aimed to explore the description of COVID-19 from the experience of the South Asian Bangladeshi seniors and to understand the perceived psychosocial issues of COVID-19 on them. This paper has been published in the *Asian Journal of Medicine and Health*, 2021-Vol 19 [Issue 10], Nov 20, 2021, pg.133-145. Please join us and share your feedback.

Please register: [Research Dissemination Tickets](#), Tue, 14 Dec 2021 at 1:00 PM | [Eventbrite](#)

Zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86836320603>



Recent Research publications:

1. **A Qualitative Study about the Psychosocial Issues of COVID-19 Perceived by the South Asian Bangladeshi Senior Immigrants Living in Toronto, Ontario.**

Islam, Q. S., & Akter, N. (2021). A Qualitative Study about the Psychosocial Issues of COVID-19 Perceived by the South Asian Bangladeshi Senior Immigrants Living in Toronto, Ontario. *Asian Journal of Medicine and Health*, 19(10), 133-145. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajmah/2021/v19i1030389>

Abstract

People stayed home and got isolated during the pandemic time (COVID-19). The pandemic passed more than a year, and it is still ongoing. There is not enough information about the psychological and social issues of the COVID-19 on the South Asian senior immigrants living in Toronto. The study aimed to explore the description of COVID-19 from the experience of the South Asian seniors and to understand the perceived psychosocial issues of COVID-19 on them. It helps policymakers develop adequate policies and initiatives for the South Asian Bangladeshi senior immigrants during and after the pandemic. The study applied open-ended questions for the phone interview with 52 seniors (>55 years). It used thematic analysis for the interpretation of qualitative data. Each interview took 45-60 minutes to complete. The seniors described COVID-19 in medical, mental, and social aspects. They described COVID-19 as 'viral and pandemic infections,' 'health problems,' 'lack of treatment,' and 'death.' They also described COVID-19 as 'worrying,' 'dangerous,' 'isolated society,' 'lack of recreation,' 'staying home like a prison,' and 'shut down everywhere.' Many seniors felt lonely as the pandemic disconnected them from the family members and the outdoor activities. They were also scared to get infected, were worried about seeing deaths and the shortage of vaccines worldwide and were sad as they could not meet people in person. Many seniors stayed home for months. They could not go outside for worship, doctors, shopping malls, and they felt that they had an unusual lifestyle. Based on findings, adequate information, mental health supports, and virtual programs are needed to address the psychological and social issues of COVID-19.

2. **Intervention is Urgently Needed to Address Poor Awareness of South Asian Family Caregivers for Dementia Care: A Qualitative Study.**

Islam, Q. S., & Akter, N. (2021). Intervention is Urgently Needed to Address Poor Awareness of South Asian Family Caregivers for Dementia Care: A Qualitative Study. *Asian Journal of Medicine and Health*, 19(12), 70-81. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajmah/2021/v19i1230418>

Abstract

"The National Dementia Strategies" in Canada emphasizes improving the knowledge of formal and informal caregivers for better care for the person living with dementia. This study aimed at exploring awareness and the attitudes of South Asian Bangladeshi family caregivers towards dementia care. It was purposive sampling and a qualitative study. The study included 45 family caregivers (>55 years) for

the face-to-face interviews in Toronto, Ontario. The study used semi-structured questions. The duration of the data collection was between February and March 2020. The study included the three areas related to dementia, such as a) the awareness of dementia, b) awareness of prevention and treatment as well as the awareness of caregivers about what is needed for better dementia care, and c) attitudes of caregivers towards dementia care. Many caregivers described dementia as memory loss and forgetfulness. According to the caregivers, anxiety, depression, and aging were the risk factors of dementia. The caregivers commonly perceived dementia as an unpreventable and incurable disease. Moreover, many caregivers did not know about the appropriate health providers who diagnosed and treated dementia, and they were not aware of non-pharmacological care of dementia. The caregivers perceived dementia as a shameful disease. They would not go for diagnosis if they had risks for dementia and would hide their dementia after diagnosis. Many caregivers confessed that training was essential to improve knowledge about dementia, but they did not want to be a caregiver for the person living with dementia. The South Asian Bangladeshi family caregivers had not enough awareness about dementia, prevention, and treatment. Dementia was associated with shame, and they had less interest in dementia care. Urgent educational training is needed in their language to improve knowledge, reduce stigma, engage them in dementia care, and achieve the goals of the National Dementia Strategies.

3. Barriers of Local Organizations for Providing Free Food Support in the Priority Neighborhood, Toronto: What We Need Further

Islam, Q. S., & Akter, N. (2022). Barriers of Local Organizations for Providing Free Food Support in the Priority Neighborhood, Toronto: What We Need Further. *European Journal of Nutrition & Food Safety*, 14(6), 11-21. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ejnfs/2022/v14i630505>

Abstract

The provincial and federal governments provided emergency funding to local community organizations for free food support to people affected by COVID-19. The study's goals were to explore the barriers of the people and the organizations while receiving and providing free food support and what further was needed to give the people food support in the priority neighborhood.: Nine representatives of the local community organizations and 15 volunteers participated in the community conversation or the extensive group discussion. They shared their experiences about barriers and what we further needed to provide food support for the priority neighborhood like Taylor Massey. Two note-takers obtained data from the community conversation. This is a qualitative study. It used a thematic approach to analyze the data and interpretation. Information lacking about free food, language barriers, the social stigma associated with free food support, and fear of COVID-19 were the barriers of community people to receiving food support. On the other hand, the community organizations lacked information about who needed real food support, lacked enough transportation support to distribute the food, enough empty spaces to store food, and enough numbers of committed and trained volunteers to help with the food distribution. Also, the community organizations had limited funding to meet people's food needs. The local community organizations needed an assessment to understand the available resources so that local organizations could use the resources for an effective food program. Furthermore, the organizations required coordination and extended food funding to affected families. In addition, the local organizations needed to work with community gardens, community kitchens, and food banks to support and meet the

community's demands. People and local organizations had information and communication, social, structural and systemic, and financial barriers while receiving and providing food in the priority neighborhood. The study indicated what were needed to make the food support program effective.

Upcoming research:

BCS continues research activities at its own capacity to learn and understand community needs, and find probable recommendations for policy implications as well as to improve the quality of our programs. In 2022, BCS joined with Access Alliance as a community organization partner for research on “HEAL - Hubs for Expressive Arts for Life”. Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services (Access Alliance) will work with peer researchers, community members as well as academic and community organization partners (project team) to implement HEAL, an inter-sectoral, creative, culturally safe, multi-pronged capacity enriching project. This co-design, mixed method, community based participation action research is focused on vulnerable newcomer populations who are survivors or at risk of domestic violence in the City of Toronto.



SETTLEMENT SERVICES

BCS has always been an advocate for immigrants whether it is about having equal rights or eliminating the discrimination that they face. We provide information on how to survive and prosper in Canada, how to navigate legal procedures, healthcare settings and offer translation services. We also assist at least 4000 individuals and newcomers find the correct information, help in filing forms, apply and secure social benefits, receive ODSP, get their health cards and their SIN numbers and many more services that newcomers might need. Our services are aimed at newcomers who find it difficult to settle down in Canada and navigate the Canadian systems. BCS is proud to work with individuals who are brave enough to make a new life for themselves in Canada.

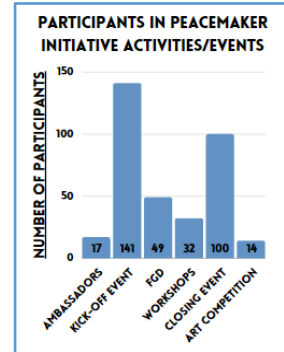
Special Initiatives

Our special initiatives are meant to address current issues and situations such as COVID-19, racism, Islamophobia, etc. We take on such initiatives because there is an urgent need in the community to address these concerns, and our objective as an organization is to provide resources and support for our community members who are facing these adversities.

1.The Peacemaker Initiative (PI)

The Peacemaker Initiative (PI) is a new project that launched in 2019 and is funded by the Government of Canada until March 2021. It strives to combat Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism targeted towards women and girls in the Crescent Town and Oakridge communities through knowledge gaining and awareness activities. We also wish to reduce the knowledge gap rooted from misinformation to help everyone gain a sense of empathy and understanding of those who are different from them. Phase 1 of the initiative primarily focused on knowledge gathering and planning, whereas Phase 2, which began in

January 2020, focused on implementation and awareness through activities such as community discussions, focus groups, awareness campaigns, and blogs. A team of 17 Peacemaker Ambassadors made up of mostly youth, but adults and seniors as well, worked to implement these activities, and launched a training module to further recruit ambassadors. This training module will also help our Ambassadors have a structured document to refer to when helping others understand their rights when dealing with discriminatory situations. The project's documented real experiences shared by community members and recommendations will be taken into account when updating the training module in the future. In 2020, the PI conducted two focus groups discussions involving youth and adults. Combined with the two focus groups from 2019, all four had approximately 60 participants in attendance. In 2020 and 2021, we held art competitions with the theme being Islamophobia and Racism, and we received many beautiful pieces from children and families. Another activity that was coordinated by the Ambassadors was a blog, which will extend our reach beyond the local communities BCS supports. Blogs were posted on a bi-weekly basis in order to explore Islamophobia in depth and use these written pieces to encourage rapport, ultimately hoping to build bridges. It explored a variety of topics related to addressing Islamophobia and xenophobia in our communities and around the world. These topics may include discussion points from our focus groups, personal stories shared by our community members or Peacemaker Ambassadors, current events, and everything in between. The objective of the blog was to reduce the knowledge gap that exists between Muslims and non-Muslims, racialized and non-racialized individuals, and immigrant and non-immigrant populations by promoting dialogue and learning, with a focus on women and girls as they are generally more visible when wearing religious and cultural clothing. Lastly, awareness materials such as brochures, t-shirts, buttons, or other merchandise were made to help spread knowledge about our cause in an impactful way based on the research gathered.



Along with the plethora of activities the PI has implemented, many successful and informative events took place in 2020-2021. The first was an inaugural event in which we invited 20 speakers from different religions and nationalities to speak. We had 141 people in attendance.

In June 2020, the "Combating Islamophobia and Racism" event was held over Zoom where we brought together 140+ participants and five guest speakers alongside many peacemaker initiative ambassadors to share their views on Islamophobia as a whole and in connection with their communities. These speakers were from diverse backgrounds from religious leaders, professionals, community leaders, to politicians who were all able to connect with participants in the audience, encouraging discussions and dialogue. Overall, all our events and activities in 2020-2-21 were very successful as we were able to increase awareness about racism, Islamophobia, and xenophobia within our community and Canada as a whole. In fact, 93.7% of participants in our workshops think that the BCS peacemaker initiative workshop has done well or very well in addressing how they understand Islamophobia/hate crime and increased knowledge many folds to handle the issues. Additionally, 85.7% of participants felt that they could use the knowledge and training they learned through the workshops to protect themselves from discrimination and racism. More than 5,000 Facebook followers were aware of the Peacemaker Initiative, and due to the pandemic, it has been easier for community members to participate in our initiatives online, or learn about activities through social media. Through this project we hope to give our community their voice so they do not feel isolated in the adversity they face as a result of their faith.

2. Immediate assistance to vulnerable South Asian seniors amid COVID-19 pandemic

The project titled "Immediate assistance to vulnerable South Asian seniors amid COVID-19 pandemic" aimed to provide support to the community, particularly vulnerable seniors, in order to reduce isolation, anxiety and depression. One of the ways this was done was through on-the-phone training on how to use Zoom, which benefitted around 25 seniors. Alternatively, training had been done through video calls and demonstrated on tablets for 15 seniors. Through Zoom, over 18 sessions were conducted to address and meet needs of physical exercise, recreational activities, and social connections. In addition to these needs, seniors in the community have also expressed a need for emotional support. Many have been feeling isolated and lonely, so through our program we called 30 seniors twice a week in order to talk about their wellbeing, understand challenges seniors face, give information about government resources, connect them to social workers and food providers, and help them with medical prescription management and doctors appointments. Another part of the helpline was distribution, as we had handed out PPE to 55 members of the community, and given 30 members groceries. This was because many of them did not often leave the house, so these items would be useful to them.

In total, our project helped 800+ people develop their skills so that they may learn to adjust to life in a pandemic.



3. COVID - 19 : Helpline for South Asians in the GTA

From 2020 to 2021, the main objective of the helpline project was to connect vulnerable South Asian seniors with comprehensive information and resources regarding COVID-19, such as prevention,



government benefits, re-opening, quarantine, food, etc., in the context of this pandemic. The project was a joint initiative involving five other South Asian organizations: CASSA, Tamil Civic Action, PCHS, SAWRO and SLACO. Through the project's activities, the seniors were updated with the latest government information relating to COVID-19, and were aided in grocery delivery, as many seniors were homebound out of fear for their health. The helpline offered services in six different languages (English, Tamil, Urdu, Hindi, Panjabi, and Bengali) so as to make it as accessible as possible. The information given through the helpline such as health and hygiene tips, government benefits related to COVID-19, quarantine information, the stages of reopening, etc., had come from reliable government resources. The way the helpline operated was that anyone from the community could dial the helpline number and the information would be pre-recorded in the language of their choice. For example, in order to be provided services in Bengali, the seniors would press 4. BCS assigned one staff member to record and update all the information to put into the pre-recorded message system. Thus the seniors were updated with all the recent information regarding COVID-19 and associated information. Additionally, if any seniors faced challenges when buying groceries, they could leave a message on the helpline and our staff call them back to register them for a food basket service. In case any seniors still needed clarification for a question, a member of our staff (intake specialist) was assigned to receive live calls on Wednesdays and Sundays.

4. Health & Hygiene Preparedness (H2P)

Health & Hygiene Preparedness (H2P) of 2020-2021 is a program that aims to provide digital health and hygiene workshops to our community, as well as incite preparedness for the re-opening of socially-distanced activities at our community center. The project began in July 2020 as we recruited three dedicated staff and seven project volunteers to aid in the implementation of activities. H2P held eight monthly digital training sessions on health and hygiene issues related to the pandemic, as well as delivery of health and hygiene protection products and PPE (box of masks, box of gloves, hand sanitizer, face shield, goggles, fabric spray) to 150 adults who are essential workers. Additionally we provided a food and grocery delivery service. We also developed 100 resource pamphlets on staying safe outdoors from the virus in English and Bengali, and had 10 virtual outreach sessions per week from Monday to Friday at 10:00am to 4:00pm. In order to stay safe and hygienic ourselves, we had the office cleaned weekly in addition to following and enforcing adequate social distancing and protection measures. Some achievements of H2P is that we have helped some of the most marginalized populations get access to useful and correct health and hygiene information. Also, we found that from our participants, 80% reported that COVID-19 had an impact on their mental health. This program provided them with a virtual platform in order to stay connected, and this demand is still a very large one in our community, which is why the initiative was continued in 2021. Moreover, we managed to partner with some new community service agencies and were able to connect with all levels of government service providers.

5. Community Food Accessibility and Security: What Resources We Have and What You Need

During the pandemic time, the demand for food programs increases many folds. The community organizations were involved in providing the community with food (raw) and food products. However, each organization experienced different stories while delivering food at home, and each organization delivered food discretely. There was a lack of coordination between the organizations. It was the time to sit to learn together (organizations and community members) about food security, demands, and challenges. Community consultation was done on zoom on July 29, 2021, to address the community demands for food programs, and challenges that organizations faced while implementing the food

security program. The organizations also discussed what resources we had and needed further to run the food program activities in Taylor Massey Neighbourhood. It was a joint community consultation involving four organizations such as Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS), Bangladesh Centre and Community Services (BCCS), Holistic Sustainable Development Network (HSDN), and South Asian Womens’ Rights Organization (SAWRO). Moreover, the representatives from other organizations like TNO, Baitul Mukarram Mosque, DVCLS, TNG, Bradford Office, and 35 community members attended the community consultation.

Based on the consultation findings, BCS engaged the conveyor, students, and volunteers to go through the consultation results to identify the needs to address for the community. They set a priority with BCS’ resources and make implementation plans to move forwards. BCS has done so far (given below) to achieve the goals like Community food accessibility and security.

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN A COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ON...

Community Food Accessibility and Security:
What Resources We Have and What You Need



Table: Priorities and action to improve the food accessibility and security in the Taylor Massey neighbourhood at the current moment

Recommendations	Action taken by BCS
Need assessments	- We talked to more than 100 community members (on the phones, in group discussions, and face-to-face) to understand the amount of food available at home to meet their nutrition requirements. They had a lack of nutrition knowledge. Also, they could not buy different food types (fewer choices) because the price of food was hiked during the pandemic.

<p>Food distribution in the community</p>	<p>-We immediately listed 50 community members (about 20% were non-Bangladeshi) from the Taylor Massey neighborhood and distributed cultural food (each received groceries worth \$ 70) (in October).-We also listed 60 community members that needed cultural food and distributed food that was worth \$ 25</p> <p>-We raised the funding with the help of the University of Toronto (Bangladeshi Student Association) for distributing groceries to 25 community members.</p>
<p>Food Banks for Halal and cultural food</p>	<p>-We had a local dialogue with community partners about the food banks and chalked out the ways to proceed. In January, we planned to talk to media, community leaders, local councilors, MP, and MPP. We informed and placed the demands in front of them that our community demands more food Bank.</p>
<p>Vehicle supports to distribute food</p>	<p>-We got two volunteers with cars in the Taylor Massey neighborhood to distribute food. They are helping us to drop off the food</p>
<p>Affordable food (or low price)</p>	<p>-We worked with a grocery shop in Danforth (Sarkar food) and agreed that referred customers by BCS would get the food at a low price.</p>
<p>Volunteers' training</p>	<p>-BCS engaged ten volunteers (five adults and five youths). They received a free training course from the Toronto Public Health website and helped BCS distribute the food. We have ten community members who received food handler certificates.</p>
<p>Distribution places, like for packaging, delivering, storage</p>	<p>-The grocery shop (Sarkar food) gives us a place in the basement to keep food for storage and packaging. We are using the space now.</p>
<p>Need more community gardens</p>	<p>We went through the process of community garden application. We talked to two persons who had community garden experience. So far, we understood that at this point, BCS could not meet the requirements of eligibility criteria (land location, etc.). However, we encourage seniors to have a balcony garden. Twelve community members received balcony garden staff and grew vegetables on the balcony.</p>



6. Vaccine Community Innovation Challenge - For You. For Them. Vaccinate.

Funded by the Government of Canada, this campaign was designed to convince people in the community to realize that getting vaccinated against COVID is a personal responsibility that protects you and the people you love. Main objective of the campaign was to encourage eligible person to get vaccinated for themselves and their families living in Crescent Town and Taylor Massey neighbourhood and Scarborough area.

The campaign recruited 15 youth and adult volunteers to administer the activities and to act as ambassadors and outreach our target groups.

Activities included developing poster & flyers using various messages, organised community events, sports activities, and engaged young people, parents, extended families, faith, cultural and business groups. We used consistent clear messages, illustrations and simple design, and use a variety of materials and social media platforms, and private and public-facing activities (within public health guidelines.).

Through this campaign we reached out to the South-Asian, newcomer, seniors in multi-generational homes, and other vulnerable populations who face higher risk from front-line work or living in dense, high-rise neighbourhoods. We implemented several ways to influence those who may have vaccine hesitancy or who face other barriers like language, technology, mobility and time constraint due to multiple jobs.

Our main message that is “For You. For Them. Get Vaccinated” reached more than 12,000 individuals with social media and in person engagements. Our volunteer dropped off flyers in mailbox, on the park, road side, business area, and at the apartment buildings. We distributed flyers with PPE (masks, hand sanitizer, wipes to 1920 people). Hosted an outdoor event with 80 inter-gen participants on vaccine challenge information event. Another vaccine outdoor outreach event for youth (community walk & beach day) attended by 25 participants, Vaccine challenge sports outreach event attended by 110 players plus 30 volunteers and audiences around 150 audiences. Our social media post reached around 9000 viewers.

All these activities helped to increase the vaccine coverage in our area and reduced vaccine hesitancy.

Achievements: Our goal was to reduce community transmission, increase COVID vaccination rates and reduce illness, hospitalization and deaths in the Danforth East and South Asian community. Following the objectives, our achievements are as follows:

1. Recruited dedicated 15 ambassadors and they were given extensive training on outreach, communication & public health aspects of COVID-19
2. Volunteers spent more than 2000 hours in creating awareness materials, developing messages, and outreaching.
3. Successfully reached more than 12,000 individuals with social media and in person engagements.
4. Increased community awareness through outdoor activities like community outdoor event, sports, beach event, community walk, demonstration, social interaction, flyer & PPE distribution.
5. Community consultation talked about vaccines challenges and identified the barriers and have taken action to overcome.
6. Received call from the community (5-10 calls every day)



Vaccine Engagement Initiatives

1. Vaccine engagement as Vaccine Ambassadors with East Toronto Health Partners

The main objectives of this project were to raise awareness in the community about vaccination accessibility, to assist in pop-up clinics to ensure all activities run smoothly, and to engage community ambassadors and volunteers along with other partnering organizations to implement the project in different pockets of East York and Scarborough.

One of the most important steps to ending the pandemic is vaccine engagement. With the help of the City of Toronto, WoodGreen Community Services, Access Alliance, and The Neighbourhood Organization (TNO), BCS has made great efforts to help the pop-up clinics in terms of registering people on laptops, directing people to vaccination sites, directing people to stand in line, and giving away PPE (personal protective equipment) to make sure our neighbourhood is safe and healthy. Our staff members and volunteers also offered translation services to people who were finding it challenging to navigate the information given at pop-up clinics. Based on information from weekly reports from BCS’s Vaccine Ambassadors, such as how many people are engaged with weekly, it is evident that the work they have been doing has truly been making a difference in our community.

2. Outreach

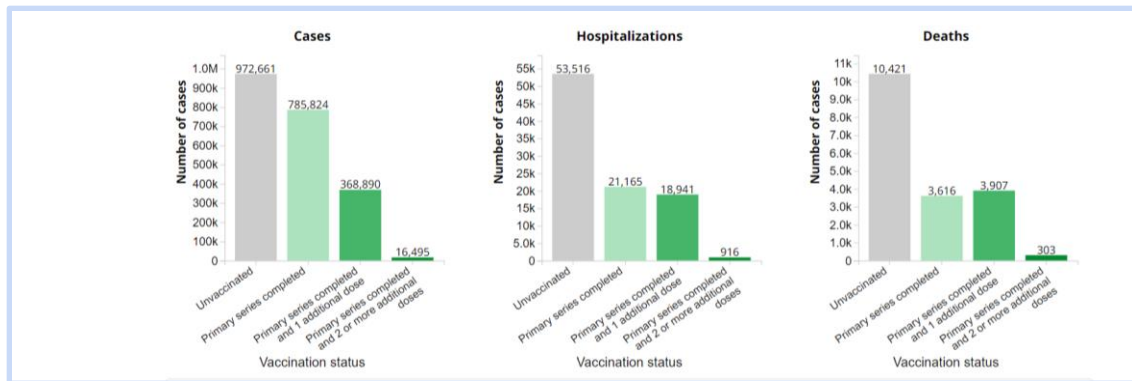
Outreach has been a big part of our work this year, as it is crucial that we get as many people vaccinated as possible in order to stop the spread of COVID-19. To do this, we held various town halls and information sessions where we highlighted the importance and safety of receiving vaccines. Thanks to our efforts, most of the BCS members are fully vaccinated. With the help of our other community partners like Woodgreen Community Services, Access Alliance, and The Neighbourhood Organization (TNO), we still continue our efforts in bringing vaccination opportunities to priority neighbourhoods. We have also handed out flyers and masks during our other events, gone door-to-door in priority neighbourhoods, and had volunteers and staff call in community members to provide information and offer support in these difficult times. This is an ongoing project, as our goal is to engage the religious communities and create a sense of duty and civic pride around getting vaccinated.

3. Registration

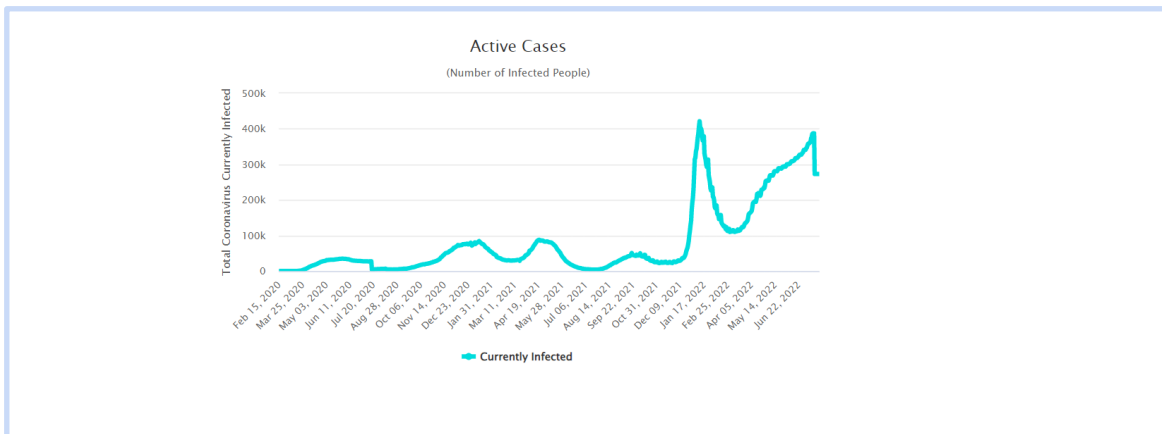
Some community members wish to get vaccinated, but either do not have the time or find the registration process a hassle. Along with our community service partners, BCS has been making efforts to ensure that the registration aspect of getting vaccinated is easy and more accessible by going door-to-door to offer help in booking vaccine appointments, or walking/standing around priority neighborhoods and offering help to book tickets for local pop-up clinics. BCS alongside other community service volunteers, both created stronger alliances with service providers and service users.

Covid & Vaccine Information update July 2022:

Covid cases, hospitalizations and deaths



Active cases in Canada



Vaccine coverage as of July 2022

At least 1 dose		
Total population	5 years and older	5 to 11 years
85.03% (32,517,306)	89.42% (32,513,134)	55.69% (1,603,138)

Primary series completed		
Total population	5 years and older	5 to 11 years
81.93% (31,333,339)	86.16% (31,330,755)	42.44% (1,221,816)

Primary series completed and at least 1 additional dose		Primary series completed and 2 additional doses ^a	
Total population	12 years and older	Total population	70 years and older
49.28% (18,846,312)	56.28% (18,844,178)	10.99% (3,623,229)	52.03% (2,241,724)

Ongoing Vaccine Engagement Projects

1. South Asian Vaccine Engagement Committee (SAVEC)

BCS, with the support from the City of Toronto and CASSA, has worked with 11 organizations who have formed the South Asian Vaccine Engagement Collaborative (SAVEC). Above all, SAVEC develops culturally specific messaging to inform Toronto-based South Asians on vaccine-related information. The goal here is to work alongside ethnic media, local influencers, and community leaders to educate individuals and dispel misinformation – a task most effectively done by meaningfully connecting with communities and responding to their demands. The South Asian Vaccine Engagement Committee (SAVEC) is a committee including BCS, CASSA and other South Asian Organizations who target South Asian groups, specifically Bengali residents in the community such as Scarborough and Taylor Massey as well as extending in the GTA too. This is to help engage them with the Covid-19 vaccine. SAVEC offers info sessions such as zoom call, town halls and FGD in order to educate those who are unsure about the vaccine and hesitant about receiving the vaccine. SAVEC attempts to answer questions and concerns individuals may have and correct any misunderstandings people have heard, through flyers and social media posts so it can be accessible for all. Our goal is to outreach to as many people as we can including those who have language barriers.

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2. Vaccine Engagement Team (VET)- with Access Alliance

The Vaccine Engagement Committee of EYDV Cluster in Crescent Town and Taylor Massey area helps to outreach residents in that area to receive their Covid-19 vaccine. The Vaccine Engagement Committee supports the community by going door to door to inform residents about nearby pop up clinics, helping register people, giving out PPE such as masks and hand sanitizers around the community and assisting at the pop up clinics by handing out water bottles, directing people and answering questions people may have. Our goal is to increase the number of vaccinations in those communities. Our vaccine ambassadors dropped off flyers in mailboxes in the houses, called people, held weekly information sessions, and distributed flyers with masks. We are able to distribute about 100/day flyers with 3-5 volunteer ambassadors.

In 2021, we supported at least 30 pop-up clinics including pop-up support, distribution flyers, registration door to door, guiding people to the clinics, outreaching through local businesses, etc. We sometimes had 2 ambassadors in one pop-up clinic support work. We also did pop-up support with the partners, we also separately distributed bottles of hand sanitizer, wipes packets, masks packets, pop-up flyers, and vaccine promotion flyers in Bengali and English. We had many vaccine outreach events both indoor and outdoor. BCS still continues its vaccine engagement efforts.

3. Youth Vaccine Engagement Team- With WoodGreen Community Services

We have successfully started a Youth Vaccine Engagement initiative in collaboration with WoodGreen Community Services. This is to raise awareness and engage South Asian youth to increase vaccine coverage among the youth. Our youth ambassadors spend 4 hours every week doing outreach by distributing flyers, masks, hand sanitizers, and face shields. In total, we have distributed about 1040 flyers. This team of ambassadors also does meetings that are for strategic planning for events and brainstorming more ways to engage the community. We also held 3 fun events. We had a carnival-themed event at Dentonia Park – engages 144 youth, a game night event at Crescent Town club - engaged 56 youth, and a vaccine engagement march in which we engaged 15 youth. With this we also had two information sessions & trivia during two of our main events, Say No to Tobacco Day and the Taste of Tayer-Massey event. 13 people were engaged through our session during the Say No to Tobacco Day event and 77+ people were engaged through our session during the Taste of Tayer-Massey event.

BCS has hosted various events in 2022 for its Youth Vaccine Engagement Initiative. One of the major events hosted by the Youth Vaccine Engagement Team ambassadors was a carnival-themed event for youth and children. We engaged a total of 144 people through this event. We had many games, music, refreshments, and prizes to keep this age group engaged. We focused on spreading COVID-19 vaccine-related information through fun games such as trivia. We also had a vaccine clinic during this event and our youth ambassadors were able to help eight people get their vaccines. They were able to provide information and answers to almost all the parents that attended the event with their children.





Distributing Masks, hand sanitizers

BCS youth Ambassadors are in action. Distributing masks, hand sanitizers, wipes, pop-up flyers, and vaccine challenge flyers at Danforth Ave at least 2-3 times per week as a continued effort for the last several months to increase vaccine coverage in our community. Majority of the days our youth ambassadors are able to deliver 100/day vaccine information flyers to all age groups while giving incentives with it. A lot of the people really appreciate our youths' efforts and are grateful for their service as they get updated information and get their questions answered. Aside from distributing masks and hand sanitizers during the week, our youth ambassadors also give out these incentives to everyone that attends our vaccine engagement events.



Vaccine pop up clinic support

In 2022, a total of three vaccine clinics were supported by BCS Youth Vaccine Engagement Team in 2022 and 25 pop-up clinics were supported throughout the year for the general Vaccine Engagement Initiative. We held various vaccine engagement planning meetings throughout the year to plan out engagement strategies, events, and information sessions. A separate Youth Vaccine Engagement Team has been created this year that has successfully worked on creating activities and information sessions for Youth and children in the community since May 2022.

Sociocultural Events

1. BANGLA NEW YEAR

The Bangla New Year was a wonderful and entertaining celebration with fun activities and performances such as art competition, dancing, singing and drama for all community members to enjoy. BCS was fortunate to see over 300 visitors attend the event. It continues to celebrate and share our culture with the community. We have included art competitions, cultural dances and food to share with everyone. This event displayed the bengali culture and heritage to the community in order for more people to be more familiar with their beautiful tradition. As well as the bengali group to feel more accepted within their community.



2. CANADA DAY

BCS celebrates Canada Day every year in July to show gratitude towards our Country. This year BCS Celebrated Canada day by showing solidarity with indigenous people and communities. With the tragic events of finding bodies of children buried in many residential schools, Canada was in grief. So BCS decided to stand in solidarity with indigenous people and talk about the micro and macro level issues and problems of indigenous people. For this tragic event, BCS had a zoom meeting and encouraged people to learn and give support to indigenous lives. This allowed BCS to spread awareness on these issues and the importance of understanding the history of the indigenous people to those who joined the event.



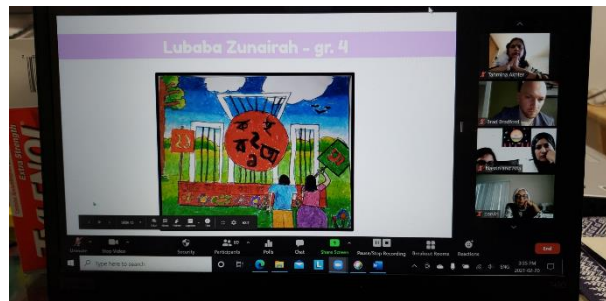
3. WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

World No Tobacco Day is an event that is coordinated annually by Youth Eliminates Smoking. This event allows to spread awareness on the taboo subject on smoking tobacco and the negative effects. It is held annually in the community since 2019. Held at Access Point Danforth, WNTD is a day where the community brings awareness against the dangers of tobacco use. This year 60+ community members attended including our esteemed councilor, along with having the youth and kids participate in the competitions and interactive activities. World No Tobacco Day inspired others to inform those who may know someone who deals with Tobacco and advise them the negative impact Tobacco has on their health and their loved ones.



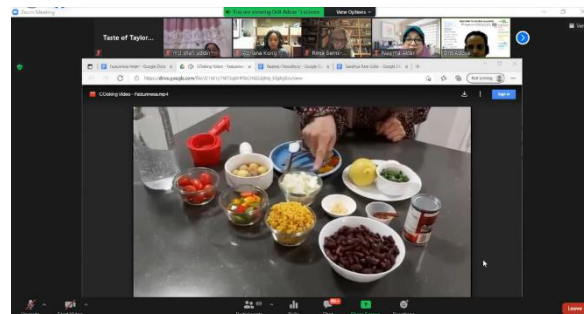
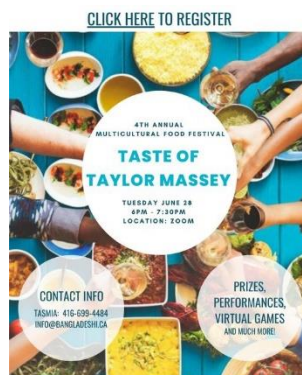
4. IMLD (International Mothers Language Day)

International Mother Language Day events seek to celebrate the Bengali language movement. The event hosted a series of beautiful performances that included dances, poetry recitation and singing for all community members to enjoy. The event also hosted an art competition where many kids created a piece representing the Bengali language. BCS was fortunate to have over 400 visitors attend the event. IMLD urged others to be more confident about their culture and heritage they come from which made individuals a lot more comfortable about their unique differences in this western society.



5. The Taste of Taylor Massey – Multicultural Food Fest

The Taste of Taylor Massey is a multicultural food festival BCS, and Access Alliance hosts every year. This event's goal is to showcase a variety of food and meals from around the world to their community. Although, this year's event had to be altered and held online due to covid gathering restrictions. The team developed creative and fun activities that could be delivered through an online statue that can be enjoyable for all, even though a screen. Over 70 individuals joined the zoom event for this memorable, exciting experience. The Taste of Taylor Massey encouraged others to try new foods and experience other ethnic cultures they may not be familiar with, as well as bringing more diversity into the community.



6. Walk Against Hate

The Walk Against Hate was held by BCS to have a peaceful walk along the Danforth to show solidarity with #OurLondonFamily and the community, and to stay visible and confident walking in public in Toronto on Friday June 11. The Walk Against Hate was done to spread awareness on the hate issue that happens to the Muslim Community and the importance to stand against islamophobia. Fortunately, many political leaders, organizations, and newscasts came to support the Walk Against Hate. The Walk started from the BCS office at 2899 Danforth Street, took a pitstop at the Danforth Park to talk about the hate crimes against Muslims, the London family that was murdered by a terrorist man as well as the next steps to ensure the safety of all Muslims in Toronto and what the citizens can do to help. Lastly, the walk ended in Baitul Aman Mosque where everyone came to support the lives that were lost due to Islamophobia. This walk had over 300 supporters to show their condolence and to honor the Muslim community while still maintaining Covid restriction guidelines.



7. National Day for Truth & Reconciliation on 30th September 2021

With a message of “Let's Stand Together” we organized a community awareness march on National Day for Truth & Reconciliation to show the solidarity with the indigenous community and the victim of residential schools. MPP Doly and South Asian Women Rights Organization (SAWRO) and Bangladesh Center & community Services (BCCS) also joined us for this event. There are people of colors, white and indigenous participants express their feelings and asked government to take action.



8. Bangladesh Independence Day & Victory day of Bangladesh:

Every year BCS celebrates Bangladesh independence day & victory day with the community. We have discussion on the liberation war, sharing memories by freedom fighters, feelings of new generations,

cultural performances etc. to pay tribute to the freedom fighters and show our respect and solidarity to our motherland Bangladesh. For the last 2 years we have celebrated the day virtually.



9. International women's day celebration

Every year we celebrate International Women's day with other community partners. 7 to 8 partners agencies organize this event with invited speakers speech and discussion by community leaders and performances.



New initiatives in 2022

1. My Home is my Peace during COVID-19 Pandemic

This project aims to address anxiety, depression as well as dementia, and help seniors manage these issues at home and make their homes peaceful. The project was initiated in April, 2022. The objectives of the projects are i) to engage seniors in virtual activities to ensure social inclusion and participation; ii) to engage the seniors in workshops/ role play/ demonstrations to understand anxiety, depression and dementia; and iii) to learn coping strategies and maintain well being. New Horizons for Senior program, Government of Canada funded this project. To implement the activities, the project created an intergenerational group consisting of ten seniors and five youths. We have regular recreational activities on Thursday and Friday at 9:15 am. The seniors do fun activities like Sina Along, dance, storytelling activities, social chat. Youth will join seniors in recreational activities in July. We started our mental workshop (dementia) and over the project period we have different mental health workshops. Interested seniors and youth can contact with BCS office to join the project.

2. Youth Well-Being: Art, Cultures, and Wellness

This three years project funded by the United Way Greater Toronto was initiated in June, 2022. The program supports South Asian youth, mainly Tamil and Bangladeshi communities. The program aims to offer social and emotional well-being support and schedule for the child through arts, language, and culture. We plan to provide support for youth to help them build their self-esteem and confidence. It will help address inter-generational conflict as it will allow both generations to come together with a common purpose of celebrating their roots. The program will increase access to mental health support for the youth as healing through arts/art therapy will be part of the ongoing program. Project recruited ten youth ambassadors from BCS and ten youth ambassadors from Tamil Canadian Centre for Civic Action (TCCCA). Weekly sessions are running at both BCS and TCCCA. Interested youth participants can contact BCS office.

Youth Well-Being: Art, Culture, and Wellness

- Interested youth 13-24 years are eligible to apply.
- The project duration is 3 years.
- Monthly 4 hours commitment for this project
- The project activities include youth drop-in consisted of art, culture, and wellness.
- Ambassadors need to work with other South Asian ethnic group.

Interested applicant contacts Nasima Akter (nakter@bangladeshi.ca) or Qazi Islam (qsislam@bangladeshi.ca) for making an appointment for an interview

United Way Greater Toronto

Youth Well-Being: Arts, Culture, and Wellness

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS) invites any interested youth to join the Youth Well-Being: Arts, Culture, and Wellness!

Join **every Friday @ 6 pm** for weekly drop-ins of fun activities like **arts, colouring, games, discussions, and more!**

If interested, please contact BCS: 416-699-4484, 2899 Danforth Avenue, Toronto, M4C1M2 or email qsislam@bangladeshi.ca

3. Community Coordination Plan For Food Security

BCS is a partner of East York Don Valley Cluster for this initiative. The Purpose of this initiative was to conduct community consultation to address the community demands for food programs, challenges that organizations face while implementing the food security program, what resources we had, and what we needed further to run the food program activities in Taylor Massey Neighbourhood. In this phase we have trained selected residents on balcony gardening, distributed materials for balcony gardening initiative and giveaway ethnic grocery gift cards for these 12 residents.

We are collecting weekly information/data on various indicators of gardening that are related to recreational, mental, and physical wellness.



Event calendar 2021-22

Event	Date
International Mother Language Day Event	February 21, 2022
Bengali New Year's Event	April 14, 2022
World No Tobacco Day Event	May 31, 2022
Multiculturalism Day (Taste of Taylor Massey)	June 27, 2022
Canada Day Celebrations	July 1, 2022
BCS Annual General Meeting for 2021	July 28 , 2022
Annual Sports & Soccer Tournament	27 & 28 August 2022
Bangladesh Victory Day Celebrations	December 16, 2022
BCS Volunteer's Dinner	TBA



Announcement: Volunteer opportunity

Volunteer Opportunities

We are also looking for volunteers! Contact information is below.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the BCS Office at 416-699-4484 between the hours of 11 am and 4 pm (Mon-Fri) or text/email Nasima Akter at Tel. 416-699-4484, Fax: 416-698-8127, E-mail: nakter@bangladeshi.ca. Whether you need hours for high school or a professional reference, contact us and we can help. BCS volunteer trainee shall serve for a period of minimum 3 (three) months.

YOU CAN ALSO GO TO <https://www.bangladeshi.ca/donate>.

Minimum one day per week with a minimum of 10 hours per month as scheduled by the organization. Volunteers only eligible to an Official certificate after serving a minimum of 30 hours in 3 months. Ask for supporting letter of reference for admission or job applications 3-5 days ahead you need. The volunteer should maintain health and safety measures prescribed by the Toronto Public health (for COVID). Always maintain social distancing and wear masks and other PPE as required while on duty and in office.

Donation link

Without donations from people like you, we could not offer the many free projects, programs and services to the community.

Donating to BCS is very simple. You can donate right now by completing the form in our website.

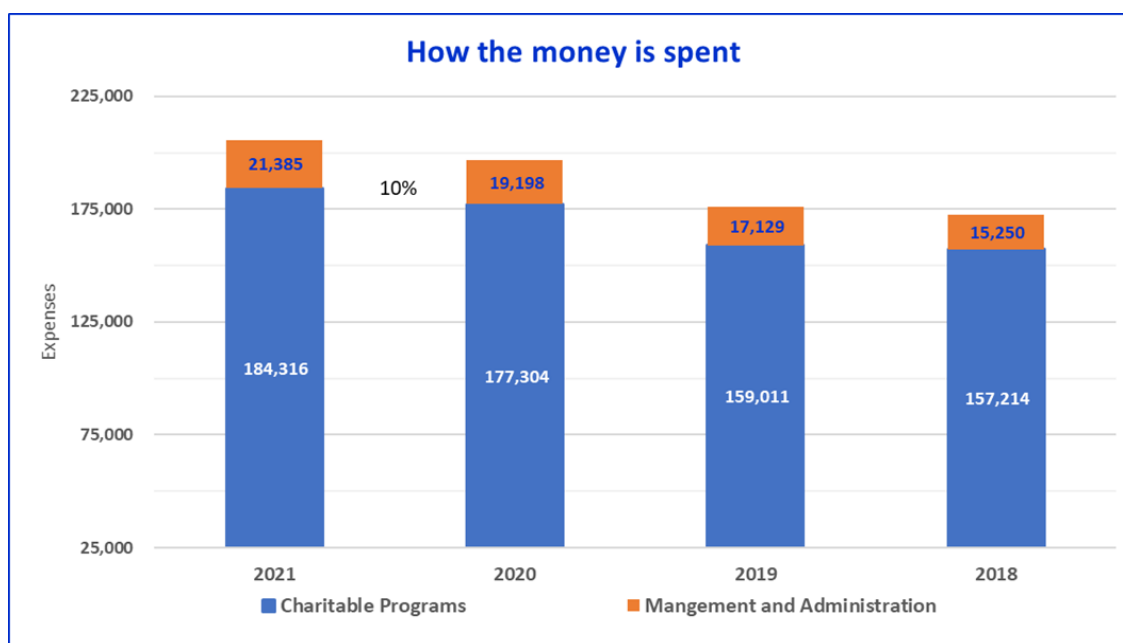
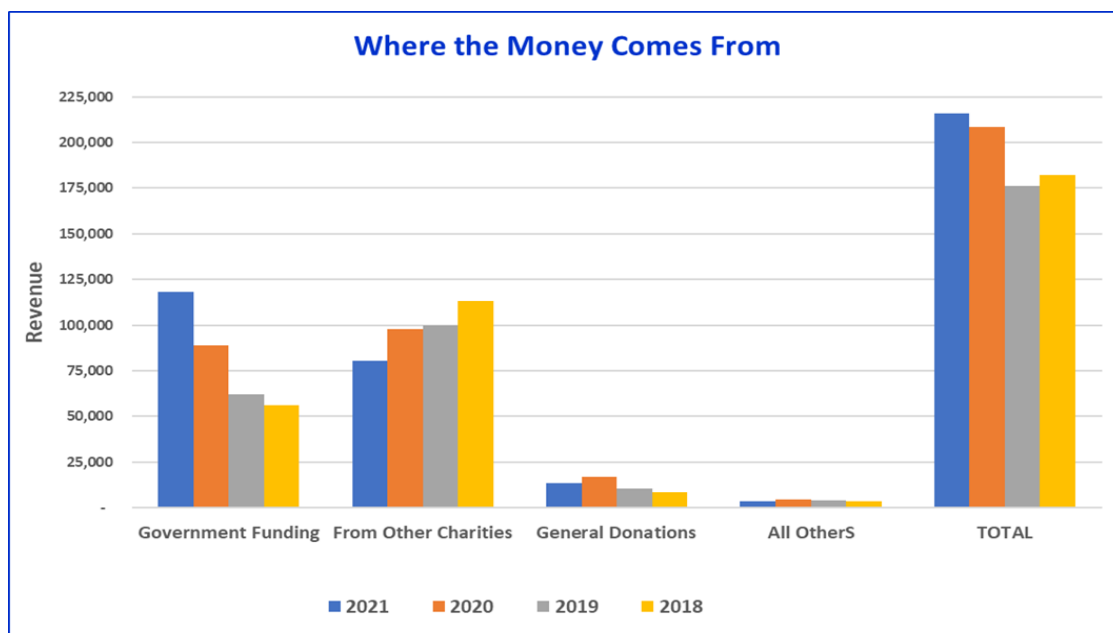
<https://www.bangladeshi.ca/donate>

Or you can send a cheque, made payable to "Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services", to our office at 2899 Danforth Ave, Toronto, ON, M4C 1M3.

We are a registered charity and will provide a receipt for tax purposes.

Our Charity Registration No: 86691 4013 RR0001 Thank you for your generosity!

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW: Year ended 31 Dec 2021





Bangladeshi - Canadian Community Services (BCS)

Statement of revenues and expenses
year ended December 31, 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Revenues		
City of Toronto	5,547	12,801
Trillium Foundation	2,946	31,135
United Way of Greater Toronto	28,062	32,975
Contributions from other charities	49,702	33,896
Provincial and Federal Government grants	112,684	76,205
General donations	13,699	17,015
Other income	3,168	4,002
Membership fee	305	530
	216,113	208,559
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	145,453	138,518
Materials and supplies	28,488	23,619
Rental expenses	17,681	20,361
Travel and transportation	2,233	3,319
Professional fees	3,673	3,673
Advertisement and promotion	2,819	3,028
Insurance	1,555	1,510
Telephone and internet	3,467	2,004
Bank charges	20	351
Other expenses	300	105
Amortization	11	15
	205,700	196,503
Excess of revenues over expenses	10,413	12,056

Auditor: GVP Chartered Accountants

OFFICE EXECUTIVES

Executive Director	Dr. Nasima Akter
Project Coordinator	Qazi Shafayetul Islam
ASTP Coordinator	Shaira Tasnia & Zara Karim
Youth Coordinator	Areeba Islam
Senior Outreach Worker	Mohammad Sohel
Technical & Web Coordinator	Fariha Bakht
Program Adviser	Dr. Mahbub Hasan
Admin Assistant	Daneen Asraf
Outreach coordinator	Tasmia Khan
Vaccine Lead Ambassador	Nimra Khan
FL Admin	Kaniz Fatema
Volunteer Coordinator	Mohammad Sohel
Placement student	Mohammad Sahedul Islam
	Krishna Sharma
	Shamsul Alam
	Sadia Rahman
	Alice Ahsen Ayan
	Syeda Zamila Hasan Laila

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

Jahanara Khanam	Rafika Hakim
Farid Uddin Ahmed	Rina Sen Gupta
Rezaul Haque	Khorsheda Ahmed
Kamil Hossain	Monowara Begum
Anthony Gomes	Lutfunnesa
Sraboni Sarker	Tahmina Akter
Mohammad Mufazzal Hossain	Rani Haque
Feroza Aziz	Shilpi Bhatta Charjee
Parvin Rokeya	Nazma A. Khanam
Sultana Ahmed	Aleya Begum
Akter Ahmed	Shamsun Nahar Abedin
Sultana Jesmin	Nawajish Ara
Salina Khan	Rabiul Islam
Gulnaz Azad	Rokeya Begum
Parul Malik	Sawkat Ara
Lutfunnesa	Shila Halder
Taslima Hasan	Halima Hasan
Nargis A Begum	Hasina Talukdar
Md Moyeen Chowdhury	Rehana Akter

ADULT VOLUNTEERS

Nahil Nazala	Kamrun Nahar
Sarmila Taz	Rehana Islam
Naeem Hassan	Rabeya Akter
Azad Kalam	Kaniz Fatema
Mohammad Soheli	Rozina Bhuiyan
Seema Akter	Theslema Poly
Pia Roy	Mirza R Rahman
Bilkis Begum	

SENIOR AMBASSADORS

Jahanara Khanam	Shamima Nargis
Nadira Tabassum	Rahat Zaman
Samshul Arefin	Rezaful Hoque
Sraboni Sarkar	Bidyut Sarkar
Rokeya Begum	Moinu A Siddique
Akhter Ahmed	Sutana Ahmed
Anthony Gomes	Ashraf Hussain
Gias Uddin Ahmed	Shahara Banu

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

Shamail Rahman	Tasnuba Tabassum
Sumaiya Datta	Arvan Kaya
Shelly Niles	Sammy
Ramis Khan	Samin Siddque
Victoria Huang	Safwan Khan
Nuha Talukdar	Krishna
Rafeed Nazmul	Reanna Chowdhury
Samiha Ahsan	Juris Ahmed
Afia Semonty	Sakib Tania
Mohammed Raian Zaman	Refah Nanziba
Raiyan	Sumaiya Rahman
Sharia Hoque	Md Nafes Zawad
Laiba Chatha	Nureen
Nazifa Tasnim	Arman Mohummad
Nafisa Tasneem	Abrar Sarash
Tahmid Hassan	Anam Mohammad
Saad. R.	Syed Tawsif Ahmed
Wasti	Many more names.....

Vaccine Ambassadors

Rabeya Akter Pinky Shamsul Alam Arion Tarik Reanna Chowdhury Qazi Shafayetul Islam Sofiya Khatun Sadman Mahbub Mohammad Sahedul Islam Tanvee Rumana Mohammad Sohel Samiha Ahsan Youth	Shamima Ahmed Alice Ahsen Ayan Ayan, Qazi Ahmed Kaniz Admin Mohammad A Kaiyyum Maisha Mahbub Mahbub Maisha Md. Mayhedi Hasan Naeem Sadia Rahman Shaira Tasnia Kamrun Nahar
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Youth Volunteer List

Afia Ahnaf Rashid Inara Akbar Irina Anam Arion Tarik Laiba Chata Zayed Chowdhury Sharia Hoque Irinaanam	Afria Musarrat Ahmedareta Alam Tamima Anuva Hasan Ayan, Qazi Ahmed Reanna Chowdhury Fairoze Maisha Kaniz Admin Huq, Maheer
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<p>Areeba Islam Janat Khan Khulood Islam Sadman Mahbub Maisha Mahbub Nusaiba Mahdia Arishi Maisara Maysha Imroze Kashifa Nahar Naheed Akhter Nuren Rahil Anwar Shaira Tasnia Suha Tabassum, Tasnuba Tahmid Hassan Tasneem, Nafisa Nabiha Yousha Tahsin Yusha Hossain Zahin Oishy</p>	<p>Jubayed Alam Jahin Mohammad A Kaiyyum Kabi Karim, Zara Kazi, Nabila Mohammad Hossain Lutfun Naher Mahbub, Maisha Tasmeena Mahmood Nibras Mansu Nuha Momen Rayn Mahdi siddique Sumyya Rahman Amreen Houque Tawsif Mirza Nashwan Ashraf Sazid Youth Samiha Ahsan Youth Sonali Youth Aushesh Alam</p>
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Inter-gen Youth Leaders

<p>Afia Sharia Hoque Areeba Islam Mohammad A Kaiyyum Kabi Karim, Zara Khulood Islam Tasneem, Nafisa Kashifa Nahar</p>	<p>Reanna Chowdhury Karim, Zara Mahbub, Maisha Maisha Mahbub Mahbub, Maisha Nusaiba Mahdia Rahil Anwar Shaira Tasnia</p>
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Senior member list:

Razia Rashed	Akhter Ahmed	Alfaz Ahmed
Giasuddin Ahmed	HosneAra	Sultana Ahmed Ila
Zubayda Akter	Ashraf Ali	Aforza Begum
Anthony Gomes	Anwara Begum	Fatema Begum
Hasina Begum	Hosney Begum	Rabiul Islam
Rajia Ahsan	Shireen Ahsan	Raushan Akter
Moyeen Choudhury	Nuzhat Choudhury	D Khelna
J Hamid	MM Hossain	Sabera Hossain
Nasima Begum	Rokeya Begum	D Chanda
Nusrat Huq	Zubaida Iqbal	Shafiul Islam
A Jalil	NM Jahir	Shamsul Karim
Mohiuddin Shah Golam	Nitya Gopal	Guha
Hasan Kabir	Kafil Uddin Bhuiyan	Na Karim
Asma Khatun	Zahid Khan	Sofiya Khatun
Masuda	Swamina Khatun	Khelna
Maksuda Munmun	Nessa Babli	Nashid Haque
Monowara	Nargis	Maksuda Munmun
Shila Halder	Malekparul	Rokeya Parvin
Rashida Newaz	Newzee	Razia Rashed
Afruza	Ratna	Raziuddin Ahmad
Saniya Haque	Shamima Nargis	Sanya
Sadiya Hoque	Shamsul Arifin	Sharifa Jahan
Shawkat Ara	Shaharamulla	Jasmin Sultana
Jesmin Sultana	Nadira Tabassum	QA Tamanna
Malik Syeda	Muntashir Tarafder	Yasmin Ashraf
Rahat Zaman	Rina Sen Gupta	Bidyut Sarker
Sraboni Sarker	Madhury Roy	Sraboni Sarker
Siddiqma	Sathey Ahmed	Suporna
Shibli Nomani	Amena Khatun	Zahera Begum
Hasina Khatun	Nargis Begum	Nazma Begum

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (AS OF July 29, 2022)



Kazi Haque, Chair



Syed Bakht, Treasurer



Nasima Akter,
Executive Director



Rokhsana Reza, Director



Janet Davis, Director



Saklain Jaigridar,
Director



Israt Ahmed, Director



Sourì Zaman, Secretary



Shahidul Islam Mintu,
Director



Abdul Wahid, Director

LIFE MEMBERS:

BCS Thanks all life members for all their continuous support.

Abid Choudhury



Shakila Choudhury



Syed D. Bakht



Benu Bakht



Dewan Shuaib Afzal



Farhat Khan



Mustaq Ahmed



Hamida Choudhury



Jahanara Khanam



Kazi S Hoque



Khandaker Iqbal Hossain



Mahfuz Khalili



Mirza Rahman



Moyeen Uddin Choudhury



Mohammed
Khaliqzaman



Mohsin Bhuiyan



Nasima Akter



Preety Ahmed



Quazi Waliul Islam



Qazi Shafayetul Islam



Rezaul Haque



Rokhsana Reza



Saklain Jaigirdar



Shahidul Islam Mintu



Souri Zaman



Towhid Noman

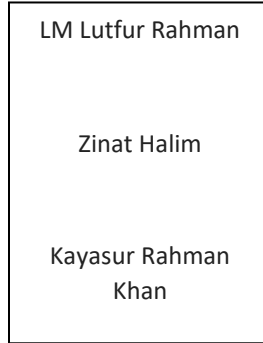


Abdul Wahid



Jyotirmay Datta





FUNDING AGENCIES
Government of Canada
Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)
City of Toronto
Toronto Public Health
Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
OCASI
LaidLaw Foundation
Wood Green
Canadian Heritage
United Way Toronto
Public Health Agency of Canada

PARTNER AGENCIES/AFFILIATIONS WITH OTHERS

Access Alliance Multi-Cultural Health and Community Services (AAMHCS)	Opening Doors Project, CMHA
Association of Bangladeshi Professionals in Accounting & Finance	Flemingdon Community Health Center
Bangladesh Center and Community Services (BCCS)	Young Diplomats
Bangladeshi Students Association – Universities: McMaster/ Ryerson / UTSG/UTSC/York/ Waterloo	Settlement Assistance and Family Support Services (SAFSS)
Birchmount Bluffs Neighborhood Centre	Toronto District School Board (TDSB)
Bloor Information and Life Skills Centre (BILS)	South Riverdale Community Health Centre
Children's Peace Theatre	Fairlawn Avenue United Church
City of Toronto, Parks, Forestry & Recreation	Harmony Hall Center for Seniors
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)	Heart & Stroke Foundation
Crescent Town Club	Neighborhood Link Support Services (NLSS)
Crescent Town Youth Support Network (CT-YSN)	East Toronto Health Link
Danforth Islamic society	Heart & Stroke Foundation
Dixon Hall Neighborhood Services	Teesdale Support Network
Family Service, Toronto	The Neighborhood Organization (TNO)
Hindu Society	Skills for Changes
Neighborhood Link	Young Bangladeshi-Canadian Professionals
Regent Park tenant association	Youth-In-Action
West Scarborough Neighborhood Community Centre	Danforth Village Community Association (DVCA)
Sunshine Centre For Seniors	Toronto Community Housing (TCHC)
South Asian Women Right Organization (SAWRO) Holistic & Sustainable Development Network, International	WoodGreen Community Services & More

Contact Us:

BCS (Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services)

2899 Danforth Ave, Toronto, ON M4C 1M3

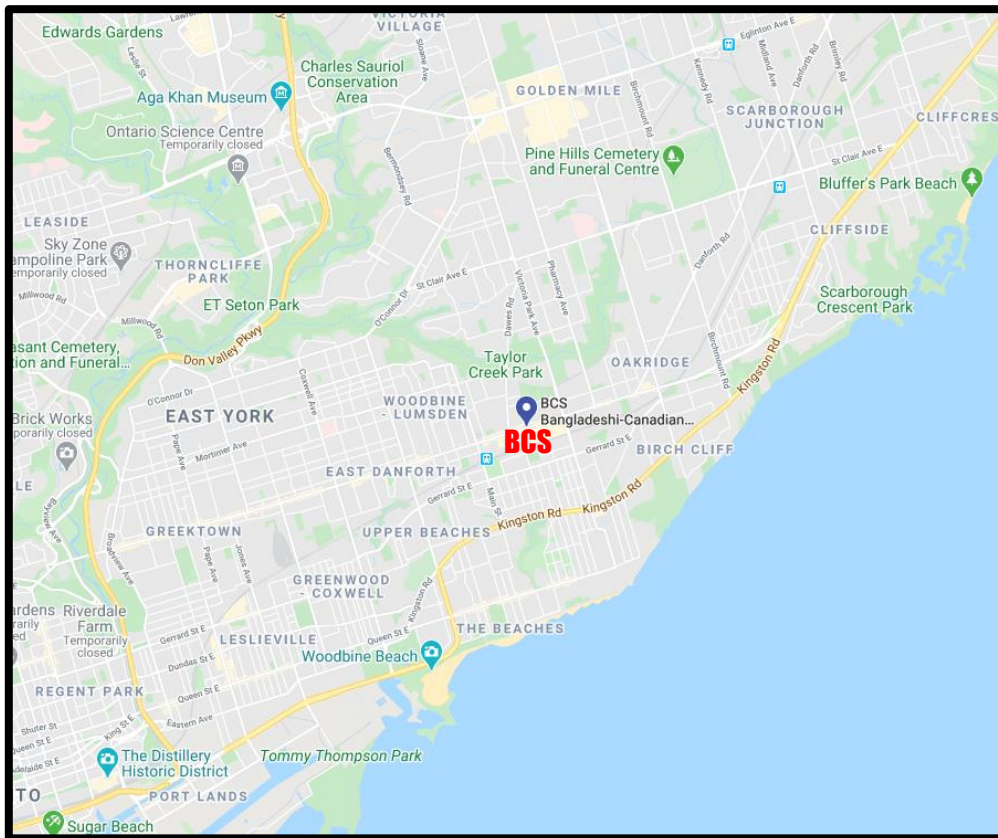
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BCS: Helping People Help Themselves since 2000

Say **N to Tobacco**

আসুন ধূমপান সহ সকল তামাক দ্রব্যকে **না** বলি