



THANK YOU TO OUR MARVELLOUS VOLUNTEERS

Every year, Peel Children's Centre (PCC) counts on the efforts of more than 100 specially trained volunteers. As mentors, tutors, drivers, childcare workers, respite providers and fundraising assistants, our volunteers are critical to the success of our programs.

From April 6th to 12th, we join with the rest of Canada's volunteer sector to celebrate and thank our volunteers during National Volunteer Week.



PCC is very grateful to all our volunteers who have donated their time to help children and youth with mental health challenges. Read on for stories about how our volunteers are making a difference and growing from their experiences.

If you are interested in becoming a part of our volunteer programs at PCC, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Linda Buchanan, at 905-795-3500 ext. 2260 or use the [online form](#) available on our [website](#).

Adam's Story

It was a simple Google search that led Adam to PCC's Volunteer Program. A former lifeguard who had enjoyed teaching kids how to swim and play safely in water, Adam was looking for a new opportunity to mentor young people and give back to his community. As an aspiring police officer, he was particularly interested in having a positive impact on the life of a young man who might otherwise fall through the cracks without guidance and attention from an older male role model.

Adam joined PCC's team of volunteers as a Mentor in August of 2013 when he was paired up with a 12-year-old boy who had recently experienced a devastating loss – the death of his father. Initially, Adam's Mentee seemed understandably closed off and reluctant to talk about anything too personal, but as time passed, Adam began to notice a change in his Mentee's outlook on the future, and a greater willingness to open up to him.



Today, Adam and his Mentee meet for a few hours every Saturday to work together on homework, play basketball, and talk. Lately, many of their conversations have centred on Adam's Mentee's hopes and dreams for the future. After seeing all the hard work and creativity his Mentee put into building a city within the game Minecraft, Adam couldn't help mentioning architecture as a potential career to consider. Since that initial conversation, Adam's Mentee has done more research on becoming an



architect and has broached the subject with his mom as well, and Adam is happy to see that his influence is helping his Mentee to think positively about and plan for his future.

Participating in the Mentorship program has had a positive impact on Adam, too. "It's rewarding knowing I'm helping and motivating an at-risk youth to pursue positive things," he says of his experience in the program. He's not shy about encouraging others to get out and volunteer as well. "When considering volunteering, it's not a matter of why you should volunteer, but why not," says Adam. "Most people cannot think of a legitimate reason why they shouldn't volunteer. If you have the ability to volunteer and give back, then I think you have a duty to do so. If you have the ability to have a positive impact on someone's life, there is no reason why you shouldn't do it."

Jon's Story

University student Jon* is one of PCC's newest volunteers. He works part-time as a hospital security guard where he often sees at-risk youth entering the hospital in the care of the police, youth who might not be in that situation had they been engaged in a healthy mentoring relationship with someone they could trust and look up to. Jon wanted to move from the role of a bystander observing this sequence of events to that of someone who could make a positive difference in another young man's life, before it was too late. This is what led Jon to PCC's Mentor Volunteer Program in January 2014.



Jon meets with his 14-year-old Mentee every other week to play sports, go out for coffee and shoot pool. Together, they're working on mastering how to change a tire, which is one of the many practical life skills Jon is happy to be teaching his Mentee how to do.

Currently, Jon is also helping his Mentee find a part-time job and encouraging him to think about what he wants to do with his life after high school. It's taken a bit of time, but together they're building a trusting relationship. "I know he cares what I think," Jon says. "He understands that whatever he wants to talk about with me, he can."

Jon's experience so far in the Mentorship program has been, in a word, "eye-opening." "I'm less ignorant about other walks of life," he says. "I am aware of the different problems people face every day." Jon also feels good about the impact he's having on his Mentee's life, knowing that the time they spend together is helping to deter him from making poor choices. He encourages anyone who has the time to mentor a young person to get involved – it can change their future.

** Name changed*



Jessica's Story

Acting Sergeant (22 Division) Jessica Roselli became a police officer 19 years ago because she wanted to give back to the community. "Being a police officer is about more than fighting crime," she says. "It's about giving back, too." She first heard about PCC when she was working in the Special Victims Unit and worked closely with members of PCC's Child Witness team. PCC's commitment to helping children tugged at Jessica's heart and she knew this was an organization she wanted to be involved with.



Jessica is holding the bowling ball

For the past five years, Jessica has advocated for PCC in a variety of ways. She bowls annually in our major fundraiser, Cosmic Bowl, each May, and until recently was involved in our Mentorship program for over a year, meeting weekly with an 8-year-old girl to work on self-esteem, social skills and homework. Today, alongside Constable Lee Whidden, Jessica co-chairs Peel Regional Police's Mother's Day Brunch fundraiser. All of the proceeds from this event are donated to PCC.

Over the years, Jessica has gained an even greater appreciation for the relationship between mental health service providers like PCC and law enforcement, and she continues to play a big role in my making her fellow officers aware of the services PCC offers by conducting training sessions and presentations. Jessica is an example of truly generous spirit, and her willingness to jump in wherever and whenever she can to help further PCC's mission is greatly appreciated.

Want To Get Involved?

Do you want to make a difference in the life of a child of youth, while gaining valuable skills and experience? PCC's volunteer options include mentor, tutor, childcare, respite, driver and fundraising. Our Volunteer Coordinator provides orientation, training and support. For more information, call 905-795-3500 ext. 2260 to reach our Volunteer Coordinator, Linda Buchanan; or use the [online form](#) available on our [website](#).