



2021

# Annual Report



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Dear Friends,

What an exciting year! I thank each of you for your time and commitment to supporting Northmen Dens Youth Services and to helping our community's children in need throughout 2021.

In the last two school years, we've overcome extra challenges in reaching our students in need as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact operations at each school. We have desperately missed our in-person interactions with the students, but remain committed to providing food each week delivered to the schools for student pickup.

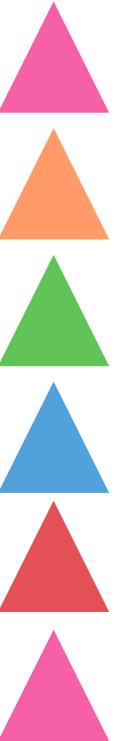
I personally am so moved by every student and every story that walks through our doors. We are now eight pantries strong and have expanded our tutoring and mentorship programs.

As we look to 2022, we see our programs continuing to grow. **Your support allows our work to continue, thank you.** Please enjoy our annual report and see the impact we are having, together, in our community.

In kindness and gratitude,

*Kathy Peterson*

Kathy Peterson, Executive Director  
Northmen Dens Youth Services, INC.





# The Importance of a Healthy Lunch



In November, we added our sixth school-based youth pantry to help students eligible for free/reduced lunch, Concord Academy of Petosky. Concord Academy has chosen Concord Corner for the name of their pantry.

Concord Academy is a tuition-free charter school. At Concord, all students must bring their own lunches daily as they do not have facilities for a lunch program. With many students qualifying for free/reduced lunch, staff often provides food and supplies to make sandwiches. This is where our Concord Corner Sandwich Lunch Brigade program comes in to provide students in need with healthy lunches.

**“Although we have only been collaborating for such a short time – the impact of your donated resources and time has been huge!”** said Dr. Joelle Drader, a school counselor at Concord Academy.

A sample menu includes: Turkey or ham, provolone or cheddar cheese Slices; pickle spear; fresh- baked bread; bag of chopped fresh carrots; mandarin orange or other fresh fruit; and a homemade chocolate cookie.

We are very excited to be partnering with Parkside Deli, Therapy Solutions, and Monarch Workforce to bring healthy lunches to these most vulnerable children. Fletch’s GMC Buick Audi of Petosky, MI, is also a supporting sponsor.

[READ MORE](#)

# 35%

of students at Petoskey and Harbor Springs middle and high school are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches, as determined by family income.

# 1 out of 3

teens in our two communities are dealing daily with hunger.

*\*according to MISchoolData.org*

“Nutrition and food are my loves. When I heard 60% of students at Concord Academy were eligible for free/reduced lunch, it broke my heart. I wanted to **step in and help feed these students.**”

~Chef Sarah of Parkside Deli.





## A Boost of Confidence: AIM Tutoring Taking Students to the Next Level

Middle and high school years come with all sorts of pressures, and academic performance can hinge on a lot of variables. Add to this the fact that **1 in 5 kids in Michigan struggle in poverty** - a statistic that climbs in rural areas - and it can be expected that kids will need extra assistance.

**Enter: the AIM Tutoring program, Northmen Den's free after school program for 1v1 attention with a trained tutor.** The AIM program launched in Fall 2021, and to date hosts about 24 tutoring sessions with 12 students on a weekly basis - a number that is steadily growing.

*"A lot of the students have a little tougher time at home, and don't really get the attention they need,"* said Adele, a tutor with Northmen Den's AIM tutoring program. *"Here you sit 1v1 and give them the attention they need for an hour. They may feel like, 'nobody likes me, my friends are the bad kids at school.' I don't have any preconceived notions about the kids, I really need to learn about them myself. Let's just find out where you are and this is what you need to work on."*

So far, all tutors agree that a major benefit so far of the program has been increased confidence for the students.

**"It seems like a lot of it is just dealing with their confidence more than it is just dealing with the material,"** Robert said. *"They are applying themselves in an environment where it is not time sensitive. It's just to work with them, when they're getting stuff wrong, when they're missing details - and that's a lot of what it is. To say, 'slow down, let's look at it again,' rather than 'I need to hurry up to the next question, because I need to get done here.'"*

Joyce Riordan is the AIM program coordinator who is in charge of hiring and training tutors, and matching tutors with students. She has a background in speech pathology and strategic and organizational planning, alongside a passion for helping children - which all comes into play in this role.

She said Northmen Den's AIM tutoring program is unique in that it considers various student needs for a full circle experience, such as access to a free food pantry and other basic needs items right at the tutoring site.

*"Students that come from economically disadvantaged families, we don't want them to go home hungry - and also know that kids come to our program (hungry) after school all day,"* Joyce said. This also creates an atmosphere of caring and loving, nothing does that better than food."

Joyce described seven components of the program that the team works to enact for a positive tutoring experience.

Professional, energetic tutors: Students have low energy, they are coming in to get help - and that is hard. These tutors have the passion and energy to lift each person up and the knowledge to take them where they need to go academically.

- 1. Face-to-face:** These are in-person interactions with a very dedicated individual, not distracted but rather focused 1-on-1 with the student.
- 2. Safe environment:** The tutors are kind and patient, and non-judgemental. Students can feel safe in a space where they are free of common peer pressures. The food pantry
- 3. offers a second level to this loving environment.**
- 4. Team approach:** The tutors work with the teachers and parents and students - its a full circle effort to achieve the change the student needs.
- 5. Ongoing program development:** We are listening to parents, teachers and students about what they need and developing programs that match those needs. An example is a recent launch of a group study skills session based on a noticeable gap by teachers and kids.
- 6. Evaluation:** We're developing key measurement tools to understand the impact of our program, and will be working with students and teachers to ensure we are creating meaningful outcomes.
- 7. Dosage:** How much tutoring does a student need? If they need help in more than one subject, can we provide it? We evaluate the intensity of the services and the needs to get the dosage right for each student.

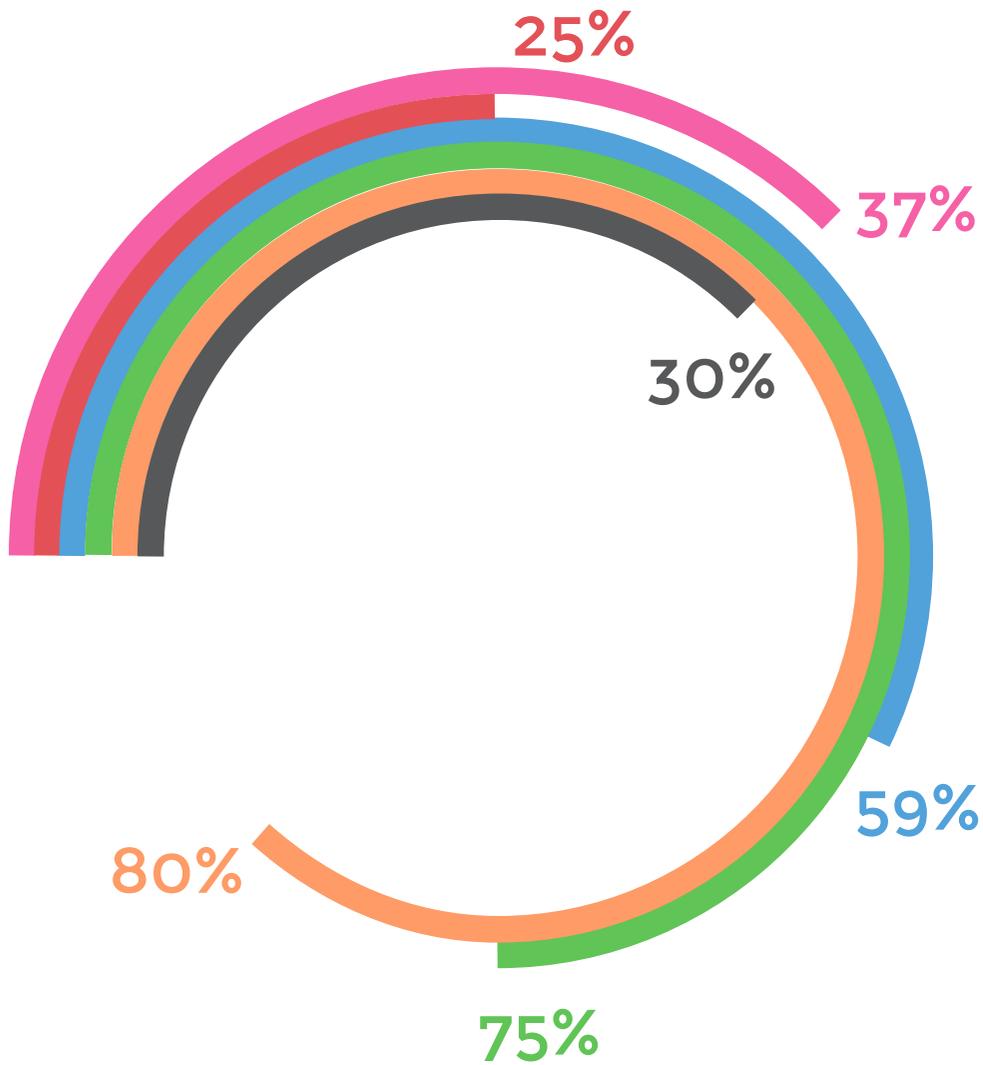
The tutors echo the uniqueness and comprehensiveness of the program.

*"I've worked with a number of tutoring programs even in college, this is by far the best one,"* said tutor Stasha. *"They meet all the different layers that a child needs to be successful and that is absolutely cool. The kids get snacks, they get a meal to take home, they have school supplies. They get everything you possibly need, and what they don't have they will find."*

While the AIM tutoring program just started in fall, the team is working diligently to implement a survey system that measures impact and ensures the best results for students. Yet we've already heard from students and parents enjoying the help, such as one 6th grader getting help with math, who excitedly said, "Guess What - I am getting As!"



▶▶▶▶▶ **Impact Report**



**Percentage of Students that are Eligible for Free Lunch & Reduced Cost**

- Northmen Dens - 600 students
- Harbor Hut - 121 students
- Concord Corner & Sandwich Lunch Brigade - 88 students
- Viking Vault - 157 students
- Crooked Tree Culinary Kitchen - 20 students
- Lakeview Locker - 5 students

2360

Den students were served in 2021.

4600

number of meals provided in 2021

2160

number of volunteers that help in pantries



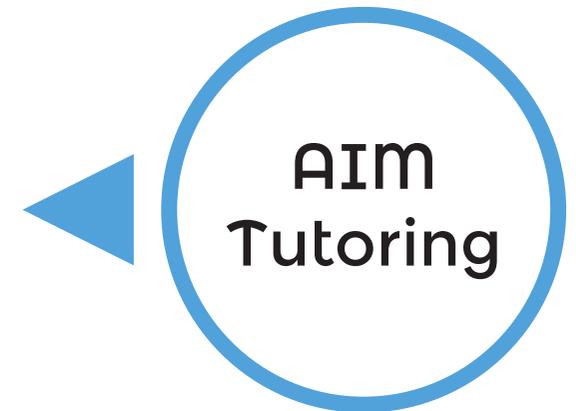
24

students that recieved tutoring

90

hour of tutoring support

Math, English, & Science  
outcomes from students attending tutoring



800

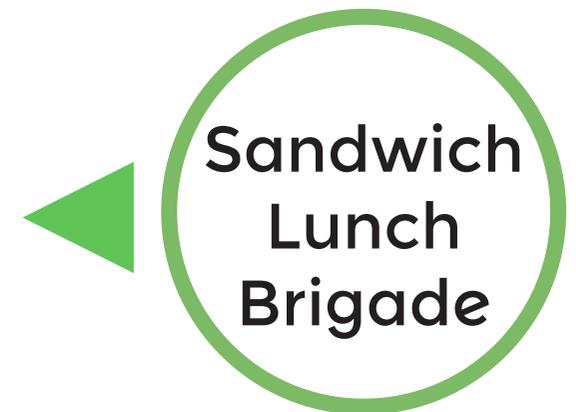
number of students that served in 2021

800

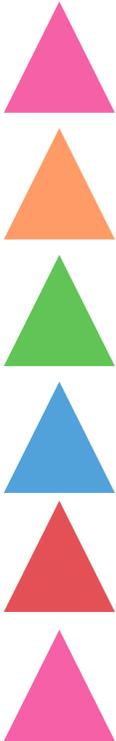
number of sandwiches made

3,600

volunteers hours in 2021



# Looking Forward



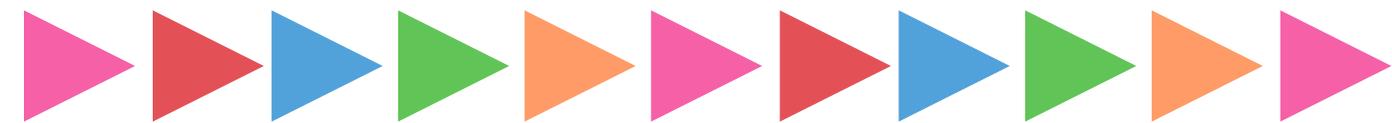
As we look to the nex year, we are grateful for the support of you, our community members. We look forward to reaching more students in need of our services and hope that we are able to have an even greater impact on the lives of students who are most in need.

**“The kids who use it appreciate it, and aren’t embarrassed,”**

said Katie Frentz, Petoskey High School School Counselor.

**“They have pride, they get to go pick out their groceries and help their families.”**





# Stay Involved



## Donate

to support students in need  
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## Sign up

for our email newsletter  
[northmendens.org](https://northmendens.org)

## Follow us

on social media  
[@northmendens](https://twitter.com/northmendens)

## Volunteer

to make a difference in the life of  
our underserved youth  
[northmendens.org/volunteering](https://northmendens.org/volunteering)

## Attend an event

to learn more about us, show your  
support, and have fun!  
[northmendens.org](https://northmendens.org)



northmendens.org