



ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



**BC Centre  
for Ability**

*Beyond challenges—the sky's the limit*



# CONTENTS

- 1 Letter from Executives
- 2 Vision, Mission, Values
- 3 Centre Highlights
- 7 Recovery & Rebound Campaign
- 8 Program Overview
- 9 Early Intervention Program
- 10 Supported Child Development
- 11 Community Brain Injury Program for Children & Youth
- 12 Opportunities Fund Program
- 13 THRIVE
- 14 WorkBC
- 15 North Shore School Occupational Therapy Program
- 16 Stepping Stones Program
- 17 Key Worker Support Services
- 18 Family Counselling Support Services
- 19 Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services
- 20 BCCFA Budget
- 21 Donor & Funder Recognition



**Joshua Myers**  
Executive Director



**Albert Chow**  
Association Board President



**Desmond Ng**  
Foundation Board President

## Letter

from Executive Director, Association Board President, Foundation Board President

Despite an unprecedented year of challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are proud to share our key accomplishments and achievements in this year's annual report.

BC Centre for Ability received several awards and recognitions over the last year including an Award of Excellence from the Federation of Community Social Services of BC and being named one of BC's Top Employers. We are honoured and grateful to be recognized in these ways, especially in such a challenging year for our sector.

Last year we continued to deliver safe and high-quality services to clients and families, despite the ongoing and unpredictable challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We adapted our services and developed policies and procedures to ensure that we were providing a safe environment for staff and clients. Despite changes to the delivery of our services, we continued to see high scores in our client experience survey and our employee experience survey, as well as strong clinical outcomes for clients.

Over the last year, we have made significant progress in digitizing internal processes to make our services more convenient and accessible. We implemented a new client record management system for two of our programs, and following a thorough evaluation of this new system, we decided to transition all remaining programs in 2021. We are now well-positioned to keep up with ongoing technological change and support the evolving needs of our clients and families now and into the future.

In a year where raising funds was met with challenges, the Centre surpassed its original fundraising targets. After cancelling our Dining for Dreams gala, we announced our COVID-19 Response: Relief & Resiliency Fund. This campaign launched with a \$50,000 gift from James Family Foundation and Taya James, and we received countless gifts from generous individuals, foundations and corporations to raise over \$430,000. We were able to maintain and expand programs and services such as our Physiotherapy Gross Motor Clinic, our Stepping Stones Psychosocial Program, and launch our new THRIVE Program.

Last year we partnered with several foundations and corporations to expand and create new services. Through partnerships with the United Way and Vancouver Foundation, we expanded our mental health and wellness support for children and youth. Through our partnership with RBC Foundation and Coast Capital Savings, we launched THRIVE, a program that supports youth and young adults transitioning from post-secondary school into the job market. Both programs address issues that have been more pervasive as a result of the pandemic and we are grateful to be able to offer support at a time when it is needed most.

We are appreciative of the commitment of our leadership team and staff to delivering quality services, as well as their adaptability and resiliency in the face of challenges. We thank the Board, as well as our many donors and sponsors, for their ongoing support and for helping us deepen our impact in the community. Finally, thank you to all of our clients and families for your trust and partnership over the last year. The resilience and adaptability of our clients, families and staff is inspiring and we are confident that the Centre is emerging from the pandemic stronger than ever.

## VISION

Inclusive communities where every person thrives at all stages of life.

## MISSION

To lead in the design and delivery of community-based services for persons with diverse abilities.

## VALUES

**Hope:** We help clients and families see hope for the future.

**Kindness:** Kindness and empathy form the basis of every interaction.

**Collaboration:** We work together as staff, clients, members and communities to build on our strengths and achieve the best possible outcomes.

**Innovation:** We are creative risk takers who relentlessly seek to improve and excel.

**Family Centred:** We honour and respect the unique needs and preferences of our clients, celebrate our diversity and ensure that clients, families and caregivers are at the centre of everything we do.



# CENTRE HIGHLIGHTS



During the past year, BC Centre for Ability was honoured to achieve the designation of one of BC's Top Employers for 2021. This annual competition recognizes the British Columbia employers that lead their industries in offering exceptional places to work. Employers are evaluated using eight criteria including: physical workspace, work atmosphere & social, health, financial & family benefits, vacation & time off, employee communications, performance management, training & skills development and community involvement.

### Bell Let's Talk Day



I feel incredibly lucky to have a leadership team that genuinely cares for the people that make up this agency. Their ability to skillfully navigate through difficult conversations/topics is much appreciated. I feel constantly acknowledged for the effort and personal investment I put into my work which makes me feel more motivated each day to come to work. We are in the business of helping people and we can only be successful at it if we are able to help ourselves.





### Salesforce Implementation

In early 2020 the Supported Child Development (SCD) and Community Brain Injury Program for Children and Youth (CBIPCY) launched a new Salesforce client record management system and secure online portal for clients and families. Based on the success of this launch, BCCFA will continue to invest in technological infrastructure and by May 2022, Salesforce and accompanying cloud-based technology and automation will be integrated across the centre. The Centre's transition to this new technology has significantly improved administrative work by automating tasks and generating better reports. Additionally, this technology allows the Centre to make data-driven decisions informed by an understanding of current trends, and most importantly, offer a necessary online experience to our clients. Initiating this transformation before the pandemic was critical to the Centre's capacity to continue to provide services to our clients amid times of social distancing.



Director Joshua Myers was a recipient of Business in Vancouver's Forty Under 40 awards in 2020 which recognizes the achievements of BC's young entrepreneurs, executives and professionals with demonstrated excellence in business, judgement, leadership and community contribution.



### Minister's Advisory Council on Children and Youth with Support Needs

Executive Director Joshua Myers was appointed as one of fifteen members to join the Minister's Advisory Council on Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) that was launched in April 2021 by the Honourable Minister Mitzi Dean, Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), and co-chaired with Parliamentary Secretary Dan Coulter. The advisory council will work in partnership with the Minister to provide support and advice in the re-development of MCFD service.

Joshua will work closely alongside the Minister and other senior government staff, as well as fourteen key community stakeholders to develop the new CYSN service framework. It is a significant opportunity to better support children and youth with diverse abilities and ensure their needs inform service improvements now and into the future.



### New Board Directors

The BC Centre for Ability Association and Foundation boards conducted a significant board director recruitment effort and in September welcomed five new directors to the association board and four new directors to the foundation board at the annual general meeting. The new directors joined us from a variety of sectors and are all senior leaders in their professions. They were all carefully recruited based on the alignment between their skills, knowledge and expertise, and BCCFA's priorities, as identified in our strategic plan. Our new directors have backgrounds in health, finance, law, innovation & technology, communication & public relations, government, fundraising and organizational development.

Our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace guided our search for new directors, and we are proud to welcome seven women to the board. This recruitment reflects BCCFA's commitment to health and sustainability and our ability to attract a highly qualified and competent board.



### THRIVE Launch

In a joint partnership between RBC Foundation, Coast Capital Savings and the BCCFA Foundation Board, the Centre launched a new client program in December 2020 called THRIVE. This innovative service for youth and young adults with diverse abilities offers one to one coaching, mentorship, advocacy and direct connections to employers. The goal of THRIVE is to assist young post-secondary graduates (aged 19-29) with diverse abilities in obtaining sustainable employment. The THRIVE approach recognizes the lack of employment and opportunities for gaining work experience available for graduates with diverse abilities. The services are customized to meet the unique needs of each participant and employer. THRIVE works to shift perceptions within the local employment landscape while promoting innovation, diversity and inclusion.



“ I love my role and supporting the children, families and programs. I also love being a part of an organization that has strong leadership, and I like that I feel valued. ”

## Cultural Safety, Humility, Anti-Racism and Trauma Informed Practice

BC Centre for Ability is committed to championing cultural safety and humility and embedding it into all aspects of work. The Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee was initiated in 2020 to foster an inclusive and diverse community for clients, staff and stakeholders. Its goals are to play an advisory role in promoting best practices in diversity and inclusion at BCCFA. D&I supports staff in the design and delivery of community-based services, guides internal hiring practices and ensures communications and programming correctly represent BCCFA's clients and families.

In addition to launching the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the dedicated recruitment initiative to diversify boards, BCCFA also facilitated an organizational review of policies and practices through the lens of cultural safety, humility, anti-racism and trauma. The review was conducted by an Indigenous Human Rights Lawyer to explore the ways that our systems, structures, language, practices and policies within the organization could be improved in order to support clinical services and create a work environment that is truly safe and inclusive. Following that review the Centre, including our Board, sought out additional training for staff to engage with topics of racism, cultural safety (from an Indigenous perspective) and trauma informed practice. This work will continue throughout 2021 and beyond.

## Organizational Culture at BC Centre for Ability

Since 2018, we have strengthened our focus on people and culture, and identified it as a key part of the strategic plan. As a result, BCCFA has committed to open and consistent communication, engaging staff in decision-making, recognition, leadership development and ensuring that staff have opportunities to work collaboratively with leadership on key priorities. Over the last three years, there has been significant improvement in staff engagement, satisfaction and pride in their work and in the organization.

2020 was significant in the history of BC Centre for Ability as it saw the launch of the new strategic plan, implementation of Salesforce and the management of the global pandemic. Through thoughtful engagement, planning and execution BCCFA was able to sustain or increase annual service scores in almost every domain. Despite the challenges of 2020, staff continue to feel a strong positive connection to the organization and feel supported during this unprecedented time.



81.16%

feel that systems and processes support them in getting their work done effectively

32% INCREASE  
OVER 2019

95.70%

understand the strategic goals of the organization

24% INCREASE  
OVER 2019

# Recovery & Rebound Fund

For the second year in a row, BC Centre for Ability was unable to host its annual Dining for Dreams Gala, where the strength and courage of our Heroes of Ability are celebrated and critical funds are raised for those with diverse abilities. For many years, our Hero of Ability awards have continued to recognize the determination and courage of our hero families and community. Our client heroes continue to inspire us every year with their personal stories of resiliency and hope; never have their stories of strength and determination been more relevant than now. As leaders in the design and delivery of community-based services for persons with diverse abilities, BC Centre for Ability has been working hard to ensure our community continues to have access to all of our services during this challenging global pandemic.

With the generous support from our community, our first campaign, COVID-19 Response: Relief & Resiliency Fund raised over **\$430,000** to support the urgent and ongoing needs facing BC Centre for Ability's clients, families and caregivers.

Your support of our new **Recovery & Rebound Fund** provides hope that we will emerge from this experience stronger, more connected to each other, and prepared to thrive in the post-pandemic world.

Despite our best efforts though, many British Columbians with disabilities continue to wrestle with fear, loneliness and insecurity; they continue to struggle on the verge of a crisis. For well over a year, they were asked to do even more, and families were being challenged by the unrealistic demands for an indefinite period of time, with very limited resources and assistance. We need to ensure that our clients and families continue to be offered excellence in care and support.

The **Recovery & Rebound Fund** is an opportunity to continue supporting our clients and families facing adversity and to help ensure the best possible outcomes in their ongoing, unique and diverse situation.

# Program Overview

BC CENTRE FOR ABILITY PROGRAMS	SERVICES OFFERED	
<b>Supported Child Development Program</b> (Burnaby and Vancouver)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Extra staffing support</li> <li>• School transition support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Toy lending library</li> </ul>
<b>Early Intervention Program</b> (Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Therapy and Social Work Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intervention</li> <li>• Group therapy</li> <li>• Educational workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment lending</li> <li>• Resource library</li> <li>• Toy lending library</li> </ul>
<b>North Shore School Occupational Therapy Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Equipment lending library</li> <li>• Educational workshops</li> </ul>	
<b>Stepping Stones Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group programs for children and youth up to 19 years of age</li> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• Social emotional development</li> <li>• Parent networking opportunities</li> </ul>	
<b>FASD &amp; Key Support Worker Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• Group therapy and social-emotional support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Family networking</li> </ul>
<b>Vocational &amp; Employment Services THRIVE Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocational skills training for employment</li> <li>• Work experience</li> <li>• Financial assistance for self-employment</li> <li>• Case management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported and customized employment placement</li> <li>• Vocational counselling</li> <li>• Career planning</li> <li>• Funding for courses and employment supports and accommodations</li> </ul>
<b>Community Brain Injury Program for Children &amp; Youth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term acute rehabilitation therapy intervention</li> <li>• Neuropsychological assessment</li> <li>• Counselling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition planning</li> <li>• Service coordination</li> <li>• Education and resources on brain injuries</li> </ul>
<b>Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respite care</li> <li>• Summer camp program</li> </ul>	
<b>Family Counselling Support Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling for families, siblings and children/youth</li> <li>• Resource information</li> <li>• Information and educational workshops</li> <li>• Social emotional support</li> </ul>	

## Early Intervention Program

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) is a community-based service for children with diverse abilities from birth to age five. The program supports children and their families living in the Vancouver, Burnaby, Richmond and North Shore regions. The EIP includes Occupational Therapy (OT), Physiotherapy (PT), Speech-Language Pathology (SLP), and Social Work (SW) services that enhance each child's development and promotes participation in all aspects of their lives.

### Highlights

- EIP services were offered throughout the COVID-19 pandemic using a coaching approach. Traditional in-person coaching sessions were adapted to safely meet the needs of children and families by including virtual, and when safe and appropriate, in-person services.
- All in-person group workshops were modified to a virtual format. 100% of families surveyed agreed that they learned new skills and knowledge from these virtual sessions. Virtual workshops will continue to be offered as they have increased access by removing travel and childcare barriers for families.
- An online referral form was created for EIP that can now be accessed by community partners and families on the BCCFA website, making the referral process easier for direct referrals. There was a 51% increase in parent referrals compared to the same time last year.
- EIP's first client feedback sessions were hosted where families were asked to provide input on the development of the new EIP parent portal. The online sessions were conducted with translators in each of the families' first language.
- The Physiotherapy department launched a new service delivery model. The Gross Motor Clinic helped meet the therapy needs of 81 children this year and helped decrease the average wait time for physiotherapy services by 8 months.



**Abby** is a happy, social and active little girl who approaches life with determination and a big smile. Her genuine love for the people around her creates a lasting impact on everyone she meets. Born with a rare genetic condition called KAT6A Syndrome, Abby has experienced many challenges over the last few years.

Since starting with the Early Intervention Program at 3 months old, Abby and her family have accessed physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and social work services that have had a great impact not only on Abby and her development, but on the family as a whole.

Abby continues to surprise everyone around her with her determination and recently has started to use assistive technology to communicate her wishes. With help from her occupational therapist and speech therapist, she is now able to use an adaptive switch installed in her crib to call out for her family when she is awake. Her sister, Sophie, loved lending her voice to the recording and Abby takes great joy in her new-found independence. She has taken to this alternative form of communication with ease and enthusiasm, and has everyone around her excited to see what her next steps will be.

# Supported Child Development

**Gabriel** was born at 27 weeks gestation and, weighing 335 grams, he is one of the smallest premature babies to survive in BC. Gabriel had a number of postnatal issues including being born with a patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) and retinopathy of prematurity (treated with laser surgery). He requires a continuous supply of oxygen for pulmonary hypertension and has a G-tube for eating. Despite all of these challenges, Gabriel has flourished. He has received physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and services from the Supported Child Development program. Gabriel started walking independently at just over 4 years of age, and has also started speaking in longer sentences.

Gabriel's family is very determined and has shown unwavering courage and commitment despite the challenges their son has faced. During this time, each service provider was met with a smile from his mother, Grace, and a positive "we can do this" attitude. The family has always been realistic about the areas that Gabriel would require support in, however, they have always been positive and confident that he would achieve his childhood milestones. It is, without a doubt, because of the love and support from his family that Gabriel exudes every characteristic of a Hero of Ability.



The Supported Child Development (SCD) consultants help families with children who need extra support to access inclusive childcare. The consultants work with families to design support for children's individual needs, and consult with daycare, preschool, and out of school care programs to help develop inclusive principles and practices that enrich all children's experiences. The Ministry of Children and Family Development funds this program.

## Highlights

- Pivoted child care community training to a virtual format. All training materials were updated and new workshops were created based on the new needs of child care staff.
- Virtual training began in September 2020 giving only 7 months for the SCD team to exceed yearly targets.
- The SCD team actively engaged in learning and development to better serve the child care community: Classroom Facilitator & Master Course Training, How Compassion Can Solve Challenging Behaviour in Child Care, Fostering Trauma Sensitive Professional Practice in Turbulent Times, The Neuroscience of Connection: Understanding Regulation of Ourselves and Others and a 4-part series on designing and delivering training on a virtual platform.

"Thank you very much. It is a very fantastic workshop. Thanks for providing us this good opportunity and very helpful information, which is beneficial for ourselves, our children and workplace as well"

*An Early Childhood Educator*

# Community Brain Injury Program for Children & Youth

Our Community Brain Injury Program for Children and Youth (CBIPCY) provides short term, home and community-based rehabilitation services to children and youth with an acquired brain injury in BC, who do not have third-party funding. We offer individualized acute rehabilitation support including occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech language pathology, counselling, and service coordination to help children and youth regain as much functionality as possible to participate in school, home and their community. This program is funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

## Highlights

- Implemented Salesforce, a client record management system that reduces reliance on paper and postage and automates many administrative tasks.
- Launched the online parent portal, which provides families secure access to their child's documents, improving the way data is collected and families are engaged.
- Updated website resources with an online referral option to improve accessibility and navigation for families.

 **131** CLIENTS SERVED

"I am very grateful for the service my child received. He has greatly benefited from this program. It helped him to regain his physical strength and coordination, make a smooth transition to high school, and protected his self-esteem. To all the people who arranged this program, all the therapists who worked with my child, thank you so much for your work!"

**Aaliyah** and her family moved to Canada in 2018. When they arrived, they had no idea that Aaliyah had sickle cell disease. Aaliyah began a program



of transfusions when she developed a complication. Aaliyah had two strokes in mid-March 2020. Aaliyah's hospitalization was complicated by additional health crises related to her sickle cell anemia, leading to surgeries and a 6-week hospitalization. During the time Aaliyah was hospitalized, her baby sister was born in the same hospital.

Aaliyah was referred to the Community Brain Injury Program for Children and Youth in BC in May 2020, for community-based rehabilitation following her acquired brain injury. Back at home, Aaliyah began physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy with the goal of starting Kindergarten in September 2020. Aaliyah made excellent progress in her rehabilitation and achieved all her communication and occupational therapy goals and worked extremely hard in her gross motor development. Aaliyah's therapists describe her as a truly kind, happy, positive, and highly motivated young girl.

Aaliyah settled into her kindergarten class nicely and is attending school full-time. She loves making friends, playing outside, drawing, coloring, and playing with dolls. Aaliyah loves playing with her big sister and cousin, and loves being a big sister to Mya.

# Opportunities Fund Program

**Doug** is an experienced entrepreneur who has launched and succeeded in running his own business for many years. A major health issue halted his career, and Doug had to start from square one once again. He experienced challenging moments filled with depression and anxiety.

One of Doug's most admirable qualities is his resilience and he has worked his health back to where he could return to work. The Opportunities Fund team provided a wage subsidy to the employer and was able to help him secure a job as one of the administrative officers at a health and safety apparel company.

*"You have been a huge help to me in many ways. Your wisdom, your ability to listen and understand, and then guide me, all the while with a genuine interest in helping me and caring enough to be candid and real enough, that there is never a doubt that you are always coming from a caring place. You have helped me more than words can express. I count myself very lucky to have you and the Opportunities Fund team on my side. You are a great person and you inspire me to give to others. Thank you for being such a wonderful mentor."*

– Gordon Douglas Squarebriggs



Opportunities Fund (Opps Fund) is a program that assists persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain and maintain employment. It provides financial assistance for training, self-employment and wage-subsidized employment and adaptive equipment. With greater emphasis on work experience, the Opportunities Fund works with clients, community partners and employers to hire, train and retain persons with disabilities. Being part of the workforce is a major factor in contributing to improving clients' disability management, well-being and quality of life.

The program supports eligible participants in the Lower Mainland, Sunshine Coast and Sea to Sky corridor as far as Pemberton, and the Fraser Valley as far as Boston Bar and Hope. This program is funded by Service Canada.

### Highlights:

- 80% of Opps Fund participants enhanced their employability through work experience, and in most cases, skills upgrading.
- 62% of Opps Fund participants who were in work experience, skills upgrading or self-employment intervention were successful in securing employment, exceeding targets in all 3 categories of performance measures.

# THRIVE: Transforming Hiring Relationships; Inspiring Vocational Experiences

THRIVE is a new, innovative service for youth aged 19- 29 with diverse abilities who have completed, or are enrolled in, post-secondary education. THRIVE was developed in response to an identified community need to support students and graduates with diverse abilities in building vocational and employability skills. The program incorporates one-to-one coaching, mentorship, advocacy and direct connections to employers. Emphasis is also given to assisting employers to harness the talent of these individuals. The services are customized to meet the unique needs of each participant and employer.

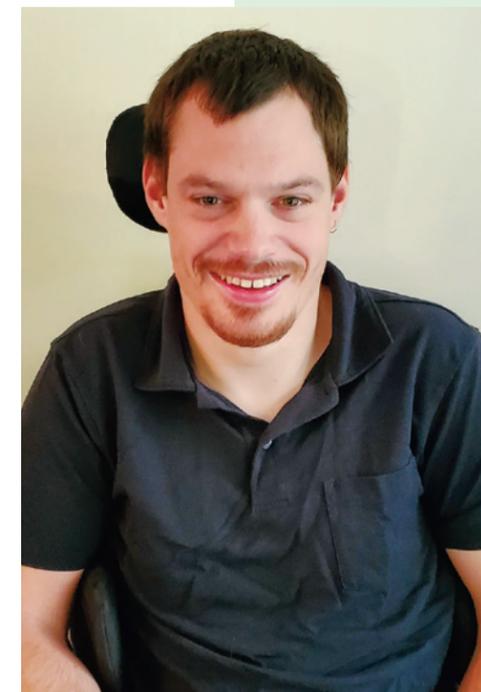
2020/21 was THRIVE's first year of operations. In this short period of time, the program has connected with numerous community stakeholders to create links between the worlds of education and employment. Unique to the program is THRIVE's Youth Advisory Committee, comprised of three dynamic individuals who are past clients of the Centre, have overcome personal challenges and developed fulfilling careers and lives. Currently, the committee is creating a series of podcasts to highlight key learning areas in developing employability skills.

THRIVE is supported by RBC Foundation, Coast Capital Savings and the BC Centre for Ability Foundation.

**Shayne** DeWildt is a client of the THRIVE program. From a very early age, Shayne De Wildt has been interested in technology and how it works. Shayne has cerebral palsy and, although he has an Associate Certificate from the Network Administrator Technician program at BCIT, he has had very few opportunities to gain meaningful employment. Mark Gruenheid, Senior Leader of Vocational and Adult Services at BCCFA, introduced Shayne to the THRIVE program and how it might be able to assist him in securing a role in the Information Technology sector. Through the assistance of THRIVE, and the help of a grant from the Government of BC, Shayne was hired by the IT department at BC Centre for Ability in a 3-month internship role, providing him with valuable first-hand experience in networking and user support, areas of much interest for him. THRIVE is a crucial program for people with disabilities and it will continue to support Shayne's career in IT.

*"I am so thankful for THRIVE and what the program has done for me in such a short period of time."*

– Shayne DeWildt



THRIVE

**Colin** was referred to WorkBC's Customized Employment Services in 2019. He has faced challenges due to his cerebral palsy but has strived to persevere in his search for a meaningful career and long-term employment. Through his senior years at high school and the first few years since graduating, Colin has earned short term seasonal employment experience and selflessly dedicated his time and efforts to training children in sledge hockey and volunteering with the BC Wheelchair Basketball Society.

Despite Colin's efforts to obtain a sustainable and meaningful career, he faced challenges securing employment. Due to negative experiences with high school learning, Colin was hesitant to enroll in post secondary training.

Colin began working closely with his career coach, exploring pathways that would allow him to reach his personal goals. Despite some pushback, he chose to return to school and enroll in a Business Fundamentals Diploma program. Through hard work and incredible commitment, as well as community support, he was able to successfully complete his studies and earned his Business Administration diploma this past April.

Together with his career coach, Colin continued to apply and interview for various related positions and has now successfully obtained a full time Sales Representative role with Kaymenta Inc.



BC Centre for Ability works closely with many community partners in Metro Vancouver. One of the most significant partnerships is with WorkBC Employment Service Centres operated by Douglas College and MOSAIC.

WorkBC assists individuals in accessing job search resources, employment planning, skills assessment, training, work experience opportunities and more. BCCFA employs 6 specialist employment counsellors serving clients with diverse abilities in the Vancouver northeast, Delta, Maple Ridge and Langley WorkBC locations. These specialists work in conjunction with other WorkBC team members to facilitate positive experiences and outcomes for clients seeking employment.

Areas of expertise include assessment, career coaching, customized employment placement and case management. Employment counsellors also have access to BCCFA resources including medical consultation and connection to services offered through the Opportunities Fund and THRIVE.

*"Thanks to the Opps Fund I have been given the opportunity to progress my education in a substantial way."*

*- Colin*

# North Shore School Occupational Therapy Program

The North Shore School Occupational Therapy Program supports students with diverse abilities from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in the North and West Vancouver school districts. They work in consultation with students, families, teachers and support staff to support inclusion, participation and independence in the school and community. The program is funded by the North and West Vancouver school districts and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).



## Highlights:

- Supported students that were children of essential workers who returned to school early, prior to the re-opening of schools to the general population. This included training staff on equipment use at a school other than the student's home school.
- Collaborated with SET-BC to implement new technology that supports student's participation. SET-BC is a Ministry of Education provincial outreach program that lends assistive technologies like reading, writing and communication tools to ensure students' access to educational programs.
- Participated as a collaborator with Can Assist through the University of Victoria on the development of the Inclusive Child Care Toileting Initiative for MCFD.

*"I also wanted to let you know how grateful I am for all your help over the last few years. You really went above and beyond and I couldn't have wished for better support!!"*

*From a West Van Parent*

 **137** STUDENTS SERVED

# Stepping Stones Program



**West** is a happy and loving 7-year-old boy who lives in North Vancouver. He was previously supported by BCCFA's Early Intervention Program (EIP) and then transferred to Stepping Stones when he started Kindergarten in 2018. West was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder just before entering Kindergarten. The EIP social worker and Stepping Stones social worker collaborated to make sure West and his family were well supported after the diagnosis and during the transition to Kindergarten.

Over the past three school years, the Stepping Stones Program has supported West and his family to ensure his success at school and home. West's mother often consults with Stepping Stones staff about his social emotional development, community resources, and inclusion at school and in the community. With the support of Stepping Stones staff attending school meetings, West's mother has become an excellent advocate for her son. Each school year, West grows and develops and continues to impress everyone around him with his successes. With most of their family out of town, West's mother said she appreciates the support, advice, and suggestions that Stepping Stones staff provide.

The Stepping Stones Program provides support to children with neurodevelopmental conditions up to 19 years of age and their families. The social workers collaborate with the families to develop and strengthen children's social and emotional knowledge and skills such as emotional regulation, stress management and maintaining self-confidence. Consultation and training workshops are offered to parents, caregivers and community service providers to build skills around facilitating social emotional development of children with extra needs. Brief individualized intervention is also available for children and their families.

## Highlights

- Funding was received from Vancouver Foundation's Community Response Fund and United Way's COVID-19 Emergency Community Support Fund.
- With increased funding, programming expanded to provide services to youth aged 12-19.
- Group sessions were offered to children and families on an ongoing basis, both virtually and in-person when safe outdoor meetings were permitted within public health guidelines.
- The previous Social Emotional Enhancement and Development (SEED) website was updated and made available on BCCFA's main website to reflect new and updated material on social emotional health.

 **254** FAMILIES SERVED

# Key Worker Support Services

The Key Worker Support Services (KWSS) program in Burnaby offers individual support, group therapy and skill development programs for children and youth with:

- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD)
- Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
- Complex Developmental Behavioural Conditions (CDBC)

KWSS educates families, professionals and other service providers about the behavioural presentations of these conditions, which can impact development, learning, mental health and adaptive and social skills. They provide training for parents and community service providers, networking opportunities for families to reduce social and emotional difficulties and challenging behaviours, and life skills to encourage success and participation in everyday life.

## Highlights

- Offered ten monthly virtual parent networking groups throughout the year, including during the COVID-19 lockdown to increase connection and a sense of community.
- Held multiple children's groups both in person, as per public health safety guidelines, as well as virtually, and hosted virtual spring break groups where program materials were delivered to clients ahead of time.
- Provided online interactive information to celebrate and spread awareness for FASD Day in September 2020.



**Ryan** was first referred to KWSS at five years of age and has been an active participant for seven years. Ryan is a regular at the Key Worker Program's social emotional groups for children and his family also attends family together nights.

Ryan is a bright and active child who enjoys sharing his knowledge with others. He has made great gains in his learning and development. Although 2020 brought on many challenges and changes with COVID-19 and the transition to a new school, Ryan thrived throughout online learning and adjusted well to his new school. Ryan has made huge academic progress, including learning to read in the past year. Program staff have also observed Ryan's social emotional growth over the years, demonstrating emotional regulation skills, social awareness and great participation in group activities. Staff love having Ryan in groups with his great sense of humour and willingness to try new things.

Ryan's parents are also active in the program, receiving support and consultation and collaborating with the Key Worker to ensure Ryan's success at home, school, and the community. The Key Worker Program has been fortunate to have Ryan's mother Wendy serving as a parent on the program's Advisory Committee; her contributions and insight are invaluable to the program.

# Family Counselling Support Services



The Family Counselling Support Services for Children and Youth with Support Needs (FCSS) is a 6-month support for families that promotes healthy development, maximizes quality of life and assists families in their role as primary caregivers. In a collaborative relationship with families and individuals served, this program enhances an individual's capacity to effectively parent a child or youth with support needs, strengthens family functioning, and increases awareness of family strengths through facilitating family cohesion and broad community connections. It maintains and enhances the stability of families who have a child with extra challenges.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 100% of families who participated in the annual family survey indicated that Family Counsellor services have made a positive difference in their lives.
- 100% of families who participated in the annual family survey indicated that they have increased hope for the future after receiving services from the Family Counsellor program.
- The Family Counsellor Program took part in Foundations of Compassion Focused Therapy training to increase counselling knowledge to support families receiving services.

"I have an increased understanding of how anxiety impacts my life. I have strategies to acknowledge and decrease my anxious reactions. I also have an increased understanding of what it means to be an adult and I know what I want for my future."

 **31** FAMILIES SERVED

"My time with the family counsellor was an absolute God send! It was the perfect timing. The family counsellor worked with me through, honestly, some of the darkest thoughts and times I had. I feel so grateful for the family counsellor's efforts and supports. My white board is full of motivating statements that I review and turn to regularly."

# Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services

Funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services program offers respite support for families and children throughout BC with complex health conditions. These families currently receive at-home program respite benefits and collaborate with social workers from Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN) to be referred for additional respite throughout the year, due to the complexity of their child's medical condition. The program offers two streams:

- **At-Home Program Respite Top-Up:** For families already receiving the At-Home Program Respite funding and due to the high complexity care needs of their child, the parent requires additional respite support. Respite is provided as an overnight and out-of-home at an alternate caregiver's home. This top-up is administered through the local CYSN office responsible for each family's existing At-Home Program respite agreement.
- **Contracted Respite:** Delivered by a contracted agency such as Community Ventures Society in the Lower Mainland, or alternate agencies throughout BC. Eligible families are allocated 26 days of respite annually. The contracted agency recruits, matches and supervises the caregiver.

Typically, this program offers an opportunity to participate in a 5-day sleepover summer camp experience at Camp Alexandra, supported by the Community Ventures Society. Unfortunately, this program was not able to proceed in 2020 due to COVID-19.

"In an extraordinary year of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services program continued to offer extra respite support to families. Families shared that this extra support allows them to get a good night's sleep as they know their child is in good hands. I'm excited to further develop this program by engaging with families and exploring ways to better meet their needs."

- Yeram Ryu, BCCFA Social Worker



 **36** CLIENTS SERVED

# BCCFA Budget

## Our Funding

# \$18,525,621

TOTAL REVENUE

- 84.08% Provincial Government
- 6.21% Federal Government
- 4.72% Donations & Other Income
- 3.75% WorkBC Contracts
- 1.24% School District

## Our Costs

- 54.74% Supported Child Development Program
- 24.02% Early Intervention Therapy Program
- 6.47% Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities
- 5.13% Community Brain Injury Program for Children & Youth
- 3.62% Facility and Administration
- 3.37% Employment Program Work BC
- 1.00% Social Work Respite Program
- 0.95% FAS/NAS Complex Behaviour Program
- 0.42% Stepping Stones Program
- 0.28% Family Education & Resource Libraries

# Donor & Funder Recognition

BC Centre for Ability makes a meaningful difference in the lives of children, youth and adults with diverse abilities, thanks to the generous support of our donors and funders. We want to recognize and thank those who share our vision for inclusive communities and contributed \$500 or more to our cause in the last year.

### FUNDERS

BC Provincial Government  
 City of Burnaby  
 Community Gaming  
 Douglas College  
 Employment and Social Development Canada  
 Ministry of Children and Family Development  
 M.O.S.A.I.C  
 North Vancouver School District  
 West Vancouver School District  
 Provincial Health Services Authority  
 Province of British Columbia

### CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

Able Auction  
 Anthem Properties Group Ltd.  
 Averbach Family Foundation  
 Belmar  
 Benefaction Foundation  
 CIBC Wood Gundy  
 Coast Capital Savings  
 Deetken Group  
 Flavelle Mctavish Gift Fund  
 HLL Consultants  
 James Family Foundation  
 McCarthy Tetrault Foundation  
 Murphy Battista LLP

Nicola Wealth  
 Pythian Cerebral Palsy  
 RBC Foundation  
 Royal Bank of Canada  
 Schmelke Family Foundation  
 The Christopher Foundation  
 The Wolrige Foundation  
 United Way of the Lower Mainland  
 Urban Impact  
 Vancouver Foundation  
 Vancouver Pacific Lions Club  
 Victor & Ann Kern Foundation  
 Westcoast Actuaries Inc

### INDIVIDUALS

Delayne Sartison	Janice Hunter	Maria Boni	Shirley Lim	Thomas Merinsky
Desmond Ng	Jean Guyader	Mark Standerwick	Shu-Hsien Crowe	Vanessa Lapointe
Arthur Illiffe	Jefferson Mooney	Myron Backlin	Silvana Echeverri	Vimal Anthony
Don Kim	Jo-Ann Bayley	Nathan Brice	Simon Ting	Misquitta
Don Nicholson	Joshua Myers	Philip Yun Wah Po	Tara Walter	Virginia Angus
Michael Jones	Kelly Luu	Robin Turnill	Thomas J Sork	William Levine



# BC Centre for Ability

*Beyond challenges—the sky's the limit*

2805 Kingsway  
Vancouver, BC V5R 5H9  
P: 604.451.5511  
F: 604.451.5651

Instagram: @bccentreforability  
Facebook: @BCCFAF  
LinkedIn: @BC Centre for Ability  
Twitter: @BCCFA  
YouTube: @TheBCCFA

[www.bc-cfa.org](http://www.bc-cfa.org)