



BC Centre  
for Ability

# Annual Report

2023 - 2024

*We would like to acknowledge that this Annual Report was created at BC Centre for Ability's Vancouver office, located on the traditional, unceded territories of the xʷməθkwə́yəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations. Our work at BCCFA extends across the homelands of many diverse Indigenous peoples within the area we often call British Columbia. Territorial acknowledgements are just one small part of dismantling colonial worldviews. Please take a moment to think of other ways you can enact decolonization.*

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*BC Centre for Ability is proud to be CARF Accredited.*

# About Us

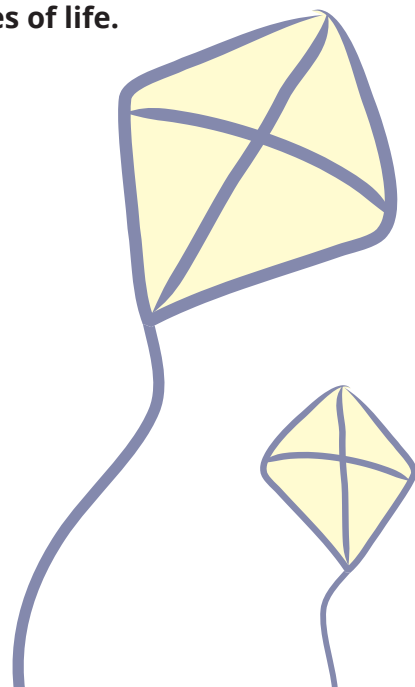
BC Centre for Ability (BCCFA) has been delivering quality services for children, youth, and adults with disabilities and their families since 1969. We are the largest community-based provider of child development services in BC and are considered provincial leaders in our field.

We were founded with the goal of creating inclusive communities and a sense of belonging. We use approaches that are compassionate and evidence-based. We serve clients across the lifespan; helping families enhance their child's development and inclusion in the community, supporting families in successfully navigating life transitions, and providing adult clients with vocational training and connections to meaningful employment. We consistently receive high accreditation scores for the quality of our services, our dedication to client and family-centred care, and our opportunities to provide feedback in our client experience surveys. Our commitment is to provide outstanding support and to ensure positive outcomes for each client and family we serve.

Our programs provide support to children, youth, and adults, through a variety of services, including Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech-Language Pathology, Social Work, Supported Child Development, and Employment Services. We provide services throughout our community—at schools, parks, public spaces, or one of our four locations in the Lower Mainland.

Internally, we aim to create a workplace that is supportive, encouraging, fun, and engaging. We are dedicated to nurturing a healthy workplace culture and consistently engage staff in surveys and opportunities to provide feedback on how we can improve. We pride ourselves on our ability to attract and retain talented, knowledgeable, hard-working, and passionate professionals.

Through the collaboration of our staff, clients, families, caregivers, and the broader community, we are able to achieve the best possible outcomes for the clients we serve and **foster inclusive communities where every person thrives at all stages of life.**



## 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 people with disabilities.**

## 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.

# Letter

from our Executive Director  
& Board Chair

The past year has been an exciting one for BC Centre for Ability. 2023 brought a number of new programs and opportunities including the acquisition of occupational therapy services through SET-BC, the expansion of our rural outreach therapy services, the expansion of our autism assessment capacity and launch of our new autism navigation program. We were also excited to launch BC's first community-based student-led physiotherapy clinic in partnership with The University of British Columbia. With the generous support of Coast Capital, we were able to extend and expand on our Coast Capital THRIVE vocational program. Finally, in early 2024 we were thrilled to learn that we were chosen as the lead agency for Foundry Burnaby, which is set to open in 2027. These new and expanded services allow us to grow our impact, provide services to more people, and influence service delivery locally and provincially in unique and important ways.

Along with growing our impact in the community, we also strengthened our leadership and governance by successfully amalgamating the BC Centre for Ability Association and the BC Centre for Ability Foundation. The remaining entity, the BC Centre for Ability Association, is now the sole entity providing services and accepting and managing the charitable donations and projects internally. This decision was voted on unanimously by our members and provides more clarity around leadership, governance, and accountability within the organization, as well as streamlines and creates cost savings across multiple administrative processes.

In September, we opened a new office in North Vancouver to house the therapy services that we provide on the North Shore. We are co-located with Hollyburn Family Services, which is a strategic partnership between two prominent agencies serving children and families on the North Shore and allows for better collaboration and integration of services for the many families who receive services from both organizations. Our North Shore office is now our fourth location joining Richmond, Burnaby, and our head office in Vancouver.

Our accomplishments in 2023 would not have been possible without your support. We would like to thank all of the staff at BC Centre for Ability for their tireless work serving children, youth, and adults in our community and their commitment to the organization's vision and mission. We would like to thank our funders, donors, and supporters for their trust and

belief in the work we do and for helping us grow our impact in communities across the province. Many thanks to our clients and families for allowing us into their lives and trusting us to provide safe, responsive, evidence-based, and compassionate services. We look forward to continuing to work with our clients, donors, community partners, and funders to improve the lives of people with disabilities across this province and towards our vision of inclusive communities where every person thrives at all stages of life. —



**Joshua Myers** MSW, RSW  
*Executive Director*



**Peta Wales**  
*Board Chair*

# Centre Highlights

## Foundry

BC Centre for Ability is proud to be one of ten organizations around the province to be selected as lead agency for a new Foundry centre. BCCFA, along with a diverse group of community partners, was successful in the application to bring Foundry to Burnaby. Foundry centres provide four pillars of health care to youth and young adults between the ages of 12 to 24—physical/sexual health, mental health, social supports, and peer supports.

The project will include funding from the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions of approximately \$3 million over the next 3 years, with the expectation that the grand opening of Foundry Burnaby will happen sometime in 2027.

This project will allow us:

- To grow our leadership provincially and specifically in the community of Burnaby.
- To lead in the design and delivery of better and more comprehensive services for children and youth in Burnaby.
- To have the resources and infrastructure to better meet the mental health needs of our clients.
- To grow and strengthen our profile and brand.
- To diversify our funding sources/revenue streams.

We are in the early stages of planning this exciting project and are working closely with the Foundry Central office to determine next steps. We look forward to sharing more about the project as we go along.



## New Space in North Vancouver

In 2023, we expanded our physical footprint in the region by opening our fourth office in North Vancouver. This office space will allow us to better serve the communities of North and West Vancouver and make services more accessible to those who live and work on the North Shore. The space is co-located with Hollyburn Family Services Society, making it a hub of services for children, youth, and families in the region, and creates a one stop shop of services for many families.

## Rural Outreach Team

As the largest community-based child development centre in BC, we take seriously the responsibility and opportunity that being based in an urban centre offers us in terms of providing support to the rest of the province. In response to BC's critical shortage of allied health professionals in rural and remote communities across the province, we expanded our rural outreach and virtual therapy team. This team includes two Physiotherapists and an Occupational Therapist. This team provides in-person consultations and therapy one week per month in Prince Rupert, Haida Gwaii, Terrace, and Smithers. Visits are provided virtually when team members are not visiting the communities in-person. This is a great way to be able to provide services to children who otherwise wouldn't have access, and it provides a great opportunity for our staff to have the experience of rural practice, expand their networks, and get unique cultural experiences.

## UBC Clinic

In partnership with UBC, we launched BC's first community-based student-led clinic for Physiotherapy. The goal of the clinic is to increase access to physiotherapy services and to provide an opportunity to engage students with practical learning in pediatrics to aid in hiring and retention. This pilot project includes one dedicated full time Physiotherapist who is responsible for training and mentorship, as well as running the day to day operations of the clinic. The clinic's service model seamlessly aligns with BCCFA's community service offering, but is slightly different to allow families to have increased access and frequency to work on specific goals. This provides a full circle learning environment for the families, as well as the students. Since its launch in November 2023, the clinic has been able to reduce wait times, increase access to crucial healthcare, and develop unique connections among families in the program and between students.



# Centre Highlights

## Amalgamation

On April 1, 2024, the BC Centre for Ability Association and BC Centre for Ability Foundation amalgamated into one entity, the BC Centre for Ability Association.

The BC Centre for Ability Foundation was established prior to the land purchase and building of our head office on 2805 Kingsway in 1993. These two separate, but related, entities have existed in parallel, however the sole purpose of the Foundation was to financially support the Association to enhance and expand programming. That arrangement has created a history of confusion within the organization and boards about role and scope of each entity, governance challenges, and have added financial and administrative burdens on both entities. Management, the Association Board, and the Foundation Board, along with a legal team at Norton Rose Fulbright, spent much of 2023 performing due diligence and evaluating the risks and benefits of amalgamation. Following extensive evaluation and member engagement, the amalgamation was tabled and approved at an Extraordinary Special Members meeting on March 4, 2023 that would come into effect as of April 1, 2024.

Some of the benefits that the organization expects to realize as a result of this amalgamation are:

- Significant savings in administration costs
- Time savings in the administration of a second entity
- Simplified financial processes
- Board recruitment and retention
- Brand clarity for members, donors, and clients



## Autism Services

### Autism Assessments

In 2022, we partnered with BC Children’s Hospital and Sunny Hill Rehabilitation Centre to implement BC’s first public sector autism assessment program outside of BC Children’s Hospital. This community-based program allows children with suspected autism to get their assessment in the community where they are already receiving services rather than in acute care. This program has also helped drop the near two-year waitlist of publicly funded assessments by expanding the availability of assessments in the Lower Mainland. This service is free and is delivered by a BC Centre for Ability Speech-Language Pathologist as well as a community-based Developmental Pediatrician. BC Children’s Hospital provided training to our Speech-Language Pathologists to be



able to complete the assessments, which was a great opportunity for them to receive additional credentialing at no cost. This will allow them to expend their scopes of practice at the organization and beyond. This year, we will double our assessment capacity from 50 to 100 kids served. We have added an additional Pediatrician and Speech-Language Pathologist to the program in 2023/2024 as a way of reducing a significant and lengthy wait list for autism assessments in the public sector. This has also been a great opportunity to expand the scopes of practice of our Speech-Language Pathologists by paying for this additional training and providing an opportunity for them to grow in their careers.

### Autism Navigator

The Autism Navigator pilot program was launched in 2023. The program is dedicated to providing support to families with children at various stages of the autism diagnostic process. Our goal is to assist families in accessing resources, navigating the assessment process, and coordinating

autism intervention services. We also offer emotional support and guidance to help families understand and cope with their child’s confirmed or potential diagnosis. Our aim is to empower families, ensuring they feel supported, informed, and equipped to make informed decisions throughout their child’s pre and post-diagnostic journey.

# Centre Highlights

## 3D Printing

With the support of a generous donor, we were able to launch a number of unique and innovative projects using 3D printing technology. In partnership with our Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, and Speech-Language Pathologists—as well as parents and kids with disabilities—we have identified a number of accessibility issues that can be overcome with the use of adaptive equipment. Historically, adaptive equipment for children and families has been difficult to source, is costly, and requires significant modifications. Our team has worked with therapists and families to identify prototypes for assisted devices, such as adaptive pedals for children with cerebral palsy who can't independently keep their feet on the pedals of their tricycles and adapted fork and spoon handles for kids who don't have strong fine motor skills or the ability to grasp their hands to eat independently. We are able to 3D print these devices quickly, at a low cost and high volume which allows us to provide children with devices to help increase their independence and achieve their therapy goals, and make these devices affordable and accessible as compared to other devices currently on the market. Our plan is to continue working with our staff and families to identify more resources that can be created with 3D printing technology and make these resources available to as many families as possible.

## Building Upgrades

In early 2024, our washrooms were upgraded to be more physically accessible and environmentally-friendly. Updating our lavatory, toilets, sinks, and our soap dispensers and hand dryers to touchless sensors will significantly benefit the community we serve, as well as reduce potential transmission of cold and flu viruses with the reduction of high touch surfaces. Updating the lavatory to also included temperature mixing valves, wheelchair accessibility, and adult- and child-friendly toilets that will help our clients and community we serve. We have a number of staff who have mobility challenges and these upgrades make the office more accessible and welcoming to staff as well.

## Greater Vancouver Board of Trade Finalist

BCCFA was selected as a finalist for the 2023 Business Distinction Awards, for Community Impact, presented by the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. This award recognizes organizations that have “gone above and beyond to set themselves apart in business growth, employee engagement, community impact, sustainability and more.” Additionally, we were the first organization to be highlighted as part of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade’s new non-profit spotlight series. A suite of promotional material, interviews, and videos were produced to help raise the profile of the organization within the local business community.



# Programs Overview



## Adult Services

| Program Name              | Description  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>THRIVE</b>             | Assists youth with disabilities in building vocational and employability skills, through one-to-one coaching, mentorship, advocacy, and direct connections to employers. |
| <b>WorkBC</b>             | Assists individuals in accessing job search resources, employment planning, skills assessment, training, work experience opportunities, and more.                        |
| <b>Opportunities Fund</b> | Assists people with disabilities to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment.  |

## Children & Youth Services

| Program Name  | Type of Service   | Description  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Early Intervention Therapy (EIT)</b>                                 | Occupational Therapy<br>Physiotherapy<br>Speech-Language Pathology<br>Social Work | Provides community-based services for children from 0 to 5 years of age who have, or are at risk of having, a developmental delay.   |
| <b>Supported Child Development (SCD)</b>                                | Consultation  | Helps families with children who need extra support to access inclusive childcare.   |
| <b>Community Brain Injury Program for Children &amp; Youth (CBIPCY)</b> | Service Coordination  | Coordinates short-term community-based rehabilitation and support for children and youth, following a brain injury.  |
| <b>North Shore School Occupational Therapy</b>                          | Occupational Therapy  | Provides school and community-based services to students with support needs in the North and West Vancouver School Districts.  |
| <b>Family Counselling Support Services</b>                              | Social Work   | Provides support to families following a new diagnosis, during life transitions, or caring for one or multiple children with complex medical needs.                        |
| <b>Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services</b>              | Social Work   | Offers respite support for families and children in BC with complex health conditions.   |
| <b>Key Worker</b>   | Social Work   | Provides support to children and youth with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD), Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, and Complex Developmental Behavioural Conditions (CDBC). |



# Early Intervention Therapy

The Early Intervention Therapy (EIT) program is a community-based service for children from 0 to 5 years of age with developmental disabilities. The program supports children and their families living in the Vancouver, Burnaby, Richmond, and North Shore regions. The program includes Occupational Therapy (OT), Physiotherapy (PT), Speech-Language Pathology (SLP), and Social Work (SW) services that enhance each child's development and promote participation in all aspects of their lives. Appointments occur in the home, at our BCCFA offices, or other community venues based on goals for the session.

## Program Highlights

**Number of clients served: 1,424**

- Launched the Physiotherapy Student-Led Clinic in partnership with UBC.
- Completed the pilot project evaluating the accuracy of SLP referrals to the Autism Spectrum Diagnosis program with a 95% accuracy rate.
- Completed 30 Autism assessments contracted by the BC Autism Assessment Network.
- Collaborated with Supported Child Development to centralize intake, which allows for a more seamless referral experience.
- Incorporated a Rehabilitation Assistant into our program to increase client access to services.
- Developed a Social Work screening tool to allow clients to be waitlisted based on their support needs.
- Co-located with Hollyburn Family Services on the North Shore. Now able to offer clinic visits in North Vancouver.

## Meet Io!



Io is a bright, happy two-year old boy. Although Io has experienced challenges, including a diagnosis of Noonan's syndrome, having systemic lymphagiectasia, and requiring heart surgery, Io has thrived! Io and his family started services with BC Centre for Ability when Io was about 6 months old. Throughout their time in the Early Intervention Therapy Program, they've

accessed the Rapid Response Feeding Team, physiotherapy, speech-language therapy, social work, and a block of therapy sessions with our Rehabilitation Assistant. Io learned to walk very recently and is enjoying showing off his new skill with his friends and family. He is very engaging, and he loves using his iPad talker (his Augmentative Communication Device) to tell others about his favorite dinosaurs, Peppa Pig, and make others laugh (by saying "fart" on his talker)! Io enjoys visiting with all his team members and looks forward to their visits. The Early Intervention program has helped Io progress with all his skills, while also helping his family navigate the supports available to them.

# North Shore School Occupational Therapy

The North Shore School Occupational Therapy program supports students with disabilities from kindergarten to Grade 12 in the North and West Vancouver school districts. They collaborate with students, families, and teachers, and enable 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).

## Program Highlights

**Number of clients served: 141**

- OT co-presented "The Relational Reset: How to Redesign Inclusion for ALL in the Early Years" at the UBC Early Years conference.
- Co-led the Feeding Futures fine motor group where students used child-friendly kitchen tools to prepare food while also working on fine motor strength and coordination.
- Supported the Kindergarten Vision Screening project for a second year.
- Supported the Stepping Up to Kindergarten summer pilot program which offered a play-based program to support children's transitions into kindergarten.
- Provided numerous education sessions for staff on topics including: Interoception, Fine Motor Skills, Self-Regulation, and Neurodiversity.
- Developed a menu of education sessions for principals to request topics for upcoming Professional Development days.
- Created the School OT Padlet, an online resource board that stores information and makes it easy for school staff to access.
- Provided school teams education on using SET Direct inclusion kits to facilitate technology use with students.

# Community Brain Injury Program

## For Children and Youth in BC (CBIPCY)

BCCFA's Community Brain Injury Program for Children and Youth (CBIPCY) provides intensive short term, home and community-based rehabilitation. CBIPCY serves 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, and service coordination to help children and youth return to activities that matter to them and to participate in school, home, and their community. This program is funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

### Program Highlights

#### Number of clients served: 165

- Previous client contracted to create an Adult Transition information site and Adult Transition follow-up resources.
- Supported families with complex needs in accessing vital medical equipment, including orthotics and glasses.
- Coordinators presented at UBC rounds on program eligibility criteria and services available to nurses and presented the impact of community pediatric PT services for brain injury clients to physiotherapists.
- Streamlined the onboarding process for contracted service providers.

## Meet Michelle!



"Michelle is a happy 5-year-old girl who was diagnosed with a brain tumor in September 2023.

While she was growing up, our family had already noticed some physical and motor weaknesses in her that prevented her from doing things that children naturally do at her age, such as running without stumbling, jumping, climbing, swinging and other daily activities that many other children can do at their age.

We remember the day we entered the emergency room without knowing for sure why she had a headache and with the wish that she could be get well soon; then we received the diagnosis and were overwhelmed; we felt alone without knowing what to do, disoriented, with many questions that we did not know how to answer.

Michelle was referred to CBIPCY for therapy support at home and at school. Through the program, Michelle has the support of an

excellent team of physical and occupational therapists at home and at school.

Michelle has an Occupational Therapist who, with her professionalism and warmth, has helped our daughter noticeably improve her fine motor skills, generating confidence in the development of her skills, integrating into her daily school activities, and continuing her learning safely; physical therapy has strengthened her physical abilities and has allowed her to move with more self-confidence.

CBIPCY have provided fundamental support to our family, guiding us and giving us answers to questions we didn't know how to answer before, restoring our faith and hope, and providing Michelle with support beyond what we could imagine or what anyone could do for her.

Now Michelle has new friends, she loves going to school and receiving therapies from her OT, because she knows that she will meet all those wonderful people who want to support and help her. Our family thanks CBIPCY, they have been a great blessing for our daughter Michelle."

**—Victor & Tatiana, Michelle's parents**

# Supported Child Development

Our 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 their child's individual needs, and consult with daycare, preschool, and out of school care programs to help them develop inclusive principles and practices that enrich all children's experiences. The SCD program also disperses funding for childcare programs to hire additional staff to further assist with the inclusion of children with extra support needs to be successful and included. The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) funds this program.



## Meet one of our partners!

"For over three decades, ISSofBC has been dedicated to providing childcare services to immigrant and refugee families. Our preschool program is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and operates in conjunction with the LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) program. We offer

12 seats to children in the morning and afternoon. The program is facilitated by a team of four qualified staff members, all of whom are Early Childhood Educators.

Our commitment to excellence is reflected in our high educator-to-child ratio, enabling us to cater to the unique needs of every child under our care. As an inclusive program, with additional staff members integrated into our childcare structure, we can ensure that we are well-prepared to meet the diverse needs of each child.

In our day to day work, we collaborate closely with our Public Health Nurse to ensure that families receive the necessary support whenever required. Additionally, our longstanding

collaboration with BC Centre for Ability over the past 12 years further strengthens our ability to provide comprehensive support to children in need of additional assistance.

We view our work as more than just a profession; it's a heartfelt endeavor. We prioritize working alongside families, forming a strong team dedicated to enhancing the well-being of the children under our care."

—Ana Delgado, ISSofBC



Our consultant has been a consistent and productive supporter of our child's development. I believe our daycare staff have learned and implemented successful strategies with our child's behaviour, and at home it has had a huge difference. We have learned a lot about how to approach our child's behaviours.

—Parents of a child in the SCD Program

## Program Highlights

### Number of clients served: 1,658

- Burnaby SCD saw an increase of 15% clients served; an additional 70 children.
- Launched training website and exceeded training targets by 40%.
- Participated in development of CanAssist's Behaviour in the Early Years training.
- Provided evidence-based training from presenters, such as Dr. Deborah MacNamara, Judith Norman, Dr Mary Turi, Kate Saunders, and Kim Barthel.
- Created and launched new documents framed in the F-words of childhood development, including the Centre-wide goal plan.
- 99% of families reported they were involved in developing goals and strategies for their child's goal plan.
- 97% of childcare staff reported they worked collaboratively with their SCD consultant to determine goals and strategies for the child's goal plan.

# Psychosocial Programs

## Family Counsellor

The Family Counselling Support Services (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 and ensures they have an ongoing network of support and access to community resources. This program receives referrals from the Child and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) office for Burnaby/New Westminster, and expanded this year to include Maple Ridge and Tri-Cities.

### Program Highlights

#### Number of clients served: 41

- Achieved 115% of direct service hours target.
- Opened to Maple Ridge/Tri-Cities for referrals as of January 2024.



The Family Counselling and Support Services (FCSS) Program has helped our family navigate through some of the toughest times we have faced. Our counsellor's compassionate approach, dedication, and expertise allowed for a deep connection and effective collaboration, ultimately leading to remarkable improvements in our home.

The FCSS Program has been instrumental in fostering better understanding between family members. Our counsellor has helped us gain valuable insights into our son's unique needs and helped us find strategies to overcome some major difficulties. Thanks to our counsellor's exceptional support, our 16-year-old son has made significant progress in regulating his emotions, managing his behaviours, and developing essential life skills. Our counsellor has also helped me to cope with the personal difficulties that can come with parenting a child with ASD and OCD.

We want to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the program for providing us with such a dedicated, loving and skilled counsellor. His support has made a world of difference for our entire family and we are truly grateful for the opportunity to work with him.

—Parent participant in the FCSS program

## 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, and networking opportunities for families to reduce social and emotional difficulties and challenging behaviours, as well as life skills to encourage success and participation in everyday life.

### Program Highlights

#### Number of clients served: 39

- Baseline funding increase from MCFD; added an additional Key Worker to the program in December 2023.
- 7 youth participated in riding program with Southlands Therapeutic Riding, with the theme of "I Belong".
- KWSS hosted 12 attendees at a holiday Family Night.
- KWSS hosted Spring Break group for youth in March 2024.
- 3 Key Worker families contributed letters of support for BCCFA Foundry application.
- Key Workers attended "F-words of Child Development" implementation training.



I have had a connection to BCCFA for approximately 13 years; always such a positive and helpful experience. Thank you!

—2023/2024 Client Experience Survey Response

## Staff Feature



Michelle has been working at BCCFA since 2016 and is one of the social workers in the KWSS program.

"I love being a social worker at CFA. I have the opportunity to connect and work alongside some really wonderful, cool, funny, creative kids (and their families)! Children and their families can be a part of our program until they are 19 years old, so I have had the opportunity to see so many clients through a variety of big life transitions, through super challenging times, and moments of joy."

—Michelle

# Psychosocial Programs

## Respite

Funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), our Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services 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 top-up respite throughout the year, due to the complexity of their child's medical condition. The program offers two streams:

**Number of clients served: 39**

- **At-Home Program Respite Top-Up:** For families already receiving the At-Home Program Respite funding and due to the high complex care needs of their child, the parent requires additional respite support. Respite is provided as an overnight and out-of-home support 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.

The Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services program offered 3 different summer camp opportunities for families at Camp Alexandra in Crescent Beach over the summer of 2023. These 5-day sleepover summer camp experiences are supported by the Community Ventures Society and provide respite opportunities for 15 different families of children with complex medical needs.



We are grateful for our son to experience overnight camps or any sort of camps, and Camp Alexandra allows him to do so with supports. It allows us/parents a sense of relief and safety when he's there, knowing there's equipment and healthcare professionals/nurses on site if needed. It also allows him to mature by being away from his family and regular friends.

—Parent of Camp Alexandra participant

## Autism Navigator Program

The Autism Navigator Program (ANP) pilot launched in July 2023 in response to needs expressed by BCCFA families. The purpose of ANP is to provide short-term support to help families understand their options for autism assessments, connect with the Autism Funding Unit, and build a customized support team in the community that suits their family needs. Due to overwhelming demand, ANP will be continuing in 2024/2025.

### Program Highlights

**Number of clients served: 122**

- Presented to Burnaby Interagency Council on Neurodiversity.
- Partnered with UBC to develop a program evaluation structure.
- Received \$56,000 from Community Gaming Grant and \$25,000 from RBC.

## Meet Matteo!

"Our family was referred to the Autism Navigator Program (ANP) in September, soon after Matteo was diagnosed with autism. At this time, we were very glad to have this kind of organization to help because we didn't know where to start.

With the Autism Navigator, we started looking for therapies that would work for our family while we were waiting for our Autism Funding to come through. The Autism Navigator told me all about the different centres where we could get therapies and gave me time to contact them and decide which one to go with. We met with the Autism Navigator 4 or 5 times over 5 months until Matteo was settled in with his therapists. I felt like I got all the information I needed to support Matteo.

We are so happy and Matteo is doing so well now. We see a lot of improvement for him—now he can express what he feels and what he needs. This program was such a big help to me as a busy mom. I felt like I didn't have to do anything. The ANP made it easy for me because I didn't have to spend time searching for what is best."

—Kring kring Carmona, Matteo's mom



# Adult Services

## Opportunities Fund

The Opportunities Fund is a program that assists people with disabilities to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment. This program provides three streams of service: wage subsidies and support for people with disabilities seeking employment; wage subsidies and support for people with disabilities pursuing career advancement opportunities; and consultation, education, and supports for employers who are seeking to develop their inclusiveness and accessibility as an employer.

We support 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. Service Canada funds this program.

### Program Highlights

- **89 clients served in Stream 1** — Work Experience, Skills for Employment, and Self-Employment.
- **20 employers served in Stream 2** — Employer Awareness.
- **11 clients served in Stream 3** — Career Advancement.
- Began new 3-year contract with Employment and Disability Services Canada.
- Began service stream exclusively for employer awareness.
- Completed employer awareness video project.
- Surpassed all program targets.

## WorkBC

In partnership with MOSAIC and Douglas College, BCCFA has employed disability specialists in 6 WorkBC Employment Service Centres in the Lower Mainland. WorkBC assists individuals in accessing job search resources, employment planning, skills assessment, training, work experience opportunities and more. The BCCFA disability specialists worked 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. BCCFA WorkBC contracts with MOSAIC and Douglas College came to an end on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 and will not be renewed.

## Coast Capital THRIVE

Coast Capital THRIVE (Transforming Hiring Relationships, Inspiring Vocational Experiences) serves young adults with disabilities between the ages of 19 to 29 who are considering, are in the middle of, or have completed post-secondary education and are seeking employment. The vocational counsellors in the program provide career coaching, mentorship, advocacy, and direct connections

to employers. The goal of the program is to support participants in building vocational and employability skills and to assist employers to harness this talent. The services are customized to meet the needs of each individual participant and employer.

Previously known as THRIVE, the program has been renamed to Coast Capital THRIVE in recognition of Coast Capital's generous support of the program.

### Program Highlights

#### Number of clients served: 35

- 25 jobs offered to THRIVE participants.
- 40 interviews attended by THRIVE participants.
- 6 episodes of THRIVE podcast published.
- \$160,000 in funding provided by Coast Capital for 2024.
- Renamed the Coast Capital THRIVE program.



## Meet Samuel!

"I am immensely grateful to the Coast Capital THRIVE team for their unwavering support in my job search journey. Their personal guidance and encouragement have been invaluable; they helped me review job postings, prepare for job interviews, and talked through various challenges. Their guidance and encouragement has been invaluable in navigating the challenges of finding employment. Additionally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to them for introducing me to the Barista training program organized by KC Society and funded by the Opportunities Fund. It has been a transformative experience, and I am excited about the opportunities it has opened up for me. Thank you for your dedication to helping individuals like me thrive in both career and personal development."

—*Samuel Lee*

Samuel's experience demonstrates how BCCFA Adult Vocational Service programs can work together to support participants. Samuel joined Coast Capital THRIVE in August 2023 and worked with his Vocational Consultant for several months exploring his goals and ideal employment experience. Meanwhile, the Opportunities Fund was approached by KC Society about their Inclusive Barista Certification program and agreed to fund 10 participants

to take the training. This program consists of 4 components: Employability skills; Industry Certifications; and Hands-On Training in a Waves Coffee House along with Job Search support. With the encouragement of his THRIVE consultant, Samuel enrolled in the Barista Program. He is now employed as a barista at a Waves Coffee location and his employment is supported by an Opportunities Fund wage subsidy.



In May 2024, we welcomed Coast Capital to our Vancouver location for a cheque presentation for their funding of our Coast Capital THRIVE Program!



# Budget

## Revenue

|                       |                     |        |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------|
| Provincial Government | \$21,043,055        | 85.73% |
| Federal Government    | \$1,246,465         | 5.08%  |
| Work BC Contracts     | \$768,568           | 3.13%  |
| Other Income          | \$1,152,098         | 4.69%  |
| School District       | \$255,964           | 1.04%  |
| Gaming                | \$80,000            | 0.33%  |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>  | <b>\$24,546,150</b> |        |

## Expenditures by Program

|   |                     |        |
|---|---------------------|--------|
| Supported Child Development Programs                  | \$12,893,605        | 54.21% |
| Early Intervention Therapy Program                    | \$4,753,611         | 19.98% |
| Facility and Administration                           | \$2,668,304         | 11.22% |
| Vocational Services                                   | \$1,414,396         | 5.95%  |
| Community Brain Injury Program for Children and Youth | \$932,626           | 3.92%  |
| Employment Program Work BC                            | \$679,874           | 2.86%  |
| Social Work Respite Program                           | \$75,820            | 0.32%  |
| Family Counsellor Program                             | \$74,492            | 0.31%  |
| FAS/NAS Complex Behaviour Program                     | \$192,703           | 0.81%  |
| Autism Navigator Program                              | \$101,159           | 0.43%  |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>                             | <b>\$23,786,590</b> |        |

# Donor and Funder Recognition

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

City of Burnaby

Community Gaming

Douglas College

Employment and Social Development Canada

Ministry of Children and Family Development

MOSAIC

North Coast Community Services

North Vancouver School District

Northwest Child Development Centre Society

Province of British Columbia

Provincial Health Services Authority

Sunshine Coast Community Services

Terrace Child Development Centre

University of British Columbia

Vancouver School Board

West Vancouver School District

## Corporations, Foundations, and Organizations

Ann Claire Angus Fund-Vancouver Foundation

Averbach Family Foundation

Canadian Online

Coast Capital

Envol Strategies

Gift Funds Canada

Provincial Employees Community Services Fund

Pythian Cerebral Palsy Committee

Soong Ching Ling Children's Foundation of Canada

The Fahy Family Charitable Trust

The Hamber Foundation

The Victor and Anna Kern Foundation

The Wolrige Foundation

TSO Cleaning

UnitedWay LM

Urban Impact

Vancity Community Foundation

Vancouver Pacific Lions Club

Western Stevedoring

## Individuals

Chris Wales

Desmond Ng

Don Kim

Helene & Arthur Iliffe

Bill Corbett

James Leong

Michael Taculad

Sevinj Asgarova

Jennifer Williams

Myron Backlin

Shirley Lim

Mike Jones

Andy Stashuk

Bill and Risa Levine

Don E. Nicholson

Ian Mackinnon

Josh Myers

Lindsey LeClair

Billie Jo Elizabeth Aasen

Jefferson Mooney







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