



# Years of Serving Our Community



2018/19 Activities & Achievements

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## OUR VISION

We share a vision of communities where every person is able to participate and contribute in all aspects of life.

## OUR MISSION

The BC Centre for Ability provides community-based services that enhance the quality of life for children, youth and adults with disabilities and their families, in ways that facilitate and build competencies and foster inclusion in all aspects of life.

## OUR VALUES

**COLLABORATION:** We work together with partners, clients and their families to build on all our strengths and pursue the best possible outcomes.

**EXCELLENCE:** We aspire to do better, we create and apply new knowledge, and we lead, in order to contribute to the lives of those we serve, our professions and our communities.

**INCLUSIVENESS:** We celebrate diversity; everyone belongs, and all contributions are valued.

**QUALITY SERVICE:** We establish, achieve, and exceed performance targets, based on feedback, evidence, and professional practice standards.

**RESPECT:** We strive to encourage, hear, and honour each voice.



# Mosaic of Milestones

## BC Centre for Ability Celebrates Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### BC Centre for Ability then and now

We began as the Vancouver Neurological Centre in 1969, incorporated on August 16, 1978, and changed our name to the BC Centre for Ability on August 25, 1999. As you can see, we upgraded from our original building when we held the grand opening of our new centre in May 1993.



### Delivering services

From the beginning, we've delivered a range of important services for children, youth and adults with extras needs—like this group of therapists helping a client at home in 1998 and Vancouver Native Health Society staff presenting our SCD leadership with a dream catcher in 2018—in thanks for our partnership delivering culturally sensitive services for Indigenous children and youth.

### Fundraising

We established the BC Centre for Ability Foundation in July 1987. Donors like Victor and Anna Kern have been strong supporters from the beginning. We award our Heroes of Ability at the annual Dining for Dreams Gala, where donors always make major contributions to the Centre. And we've been the beneficiary of the Hot Chocolate Fun Run for the last three years.

### Celebrating families at our annual picnic

Every summer, we invite our clients, families, staff and their families to an annual picnic to showcase the Centre, network and have fun! We recently moved the event from Burnaby's Central Park to the Centre. Staff participation is key to the success of the event, and every year staff excitement builds as we get ready to welcome over 200 guests.



### Unveiling our Ability Sculpture

In October 2016, we unveiled our beautiful new Ability Sculpture, in the lobby with our Kite Wall, as part of a Thank You Open House for clients, families, partners and the public.



### Therapeutic horseback riding

We've had a longstanding relationship with the Southlands Equestrian Centre who donate horses, space and volunteer hours for therapeutic riding sessions several times a year.



### Setting a course for the future

Our staff participated in planning sessions in February 2019 to help us develop a new strategic plan. We are excited to build on our past success and chart a new path for the future. Watch for the unveiling of our new strategic priorities at our Annual General Meeting in September 2019.







# Family Voices

## Early Intervention Program

“The focus on preparing for kindergarten and assistance with the transition from the Social Worker was **amazing**. Without this support, I would have been completely lost. The actual therapy has been incredible as well.”

## Community Brain Injury Program for Children and Youth

“We were giving up. It felt like our son was stalled and no longer making progress. But with your program, we saw so much progress in both his physical strength and academic advances. He is now going to school half time, a **huge leap** from where he was.”

## Key Worker Support Services

“The Key Worker helped us in the school by attending **Individualized Education Plan** meetings, and with direct weekly support for our child, which was very helpful.”

## OPPS Program

“If not for the OPPS Program, I honestly don’t know where I’d be ... probably homeless and on welfare. Instead, I am now **employed full time** with the BC government.”

## Stepping Stones Program

“The parent networking has helped me **connect with other parents** and learn from their experiences, especially in dealing with stresses associated with school transitions. My son has enjoyed the social events and games, and it was beneficial for our family to feel connected to the community at BC Centre for Ability.”

## Supported Child Development Program

“With the guidance of our SCD Consultant and afterschool program staff, our child has begun to flourish in this environment and his relationships with peers have greatly improved. Her advice taught us a great deal about how to help our son manage his ADHD, and he has begun to **thrive and grow in confidence**.”



# Notable Achievements in 2018/19

**BCCFA**

We attained our highest accreditation score ever!

Our performance was measured against internationally recognized standards for quality in children and youth services.



## UNITED WAY STEPPING STONES PROGRAM

98%

of children and youth **gained skills to manage their feelings and emotions** in the program this year, up from 89% in 2017/18.

## NORTH SHORE SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM

75%

of students **achieved their self-care therapy goals** this year—up from 70% in 2017/18

## EARLY INTERVENTION THERAPY SERVICES

78%

of families had a **service plan in place within three months of referral**, up from 64% last year. Plus, we saw an increase in clients achieving their desired outcomes for social-emotional well-being.

## FASD KEY WORKER SUPPORT SERVICES

98%

of our community participants reported **gaining new skills** to apply at work.

## OPPORTUNITIES FUND PROGRAM

96%

of clients would **recommend the OPPS program** to a friend or family member, up from 89% in 2017/18.

## COMMUNITY BRAIN INJURY PROGRAM

99%

of parents and youth were **satisfied with program services!**

## SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

100%

of children referred to us in Vancouver and Burnaby were **connected to support within three months** – five years in a row!

87

**more children were served this year**, from 1,213 in 2017/18 to 1,300 in 2018/19.

## FAMILY COUNSELLING SUPPORT SERVICES

We launched this new program in 2018/19 to strengthen families' coping strategies and parents' capacity to support their children with extra needs and are seeing very positive early results.







Julian White  
BCCFA President



Joshua Myers  
Executive Director

## Message from our President & Executive Director

I have had the honour and privilege of being the new Executive Director of the BC Centre for Ability (BCCFA) since January 2019. Julian and I look forward to working with staff, clients, stakeholders and the Board of Directors to advance the Centre's vision in the coming years, and ensure we sustain our reputation as leaders and innovators in our field. We would like to thank the Board, leadership team, clients and staff for their support during this transition.

### Creating and strengthening partnerships

In the past year, we **expanded our partnership with MOSAIC** to deliver employment services for adults with disabilities. We now offer support in their Delta centres, in addition to their Commercial Drive location in Vancouver.

We were also fortunate to establish a **new partnership with Douglas College** to deliver disability-related employment services at their Maple Ridge and Langley offices. We look forward to growing our investment in adult services over the next few years to help meet the demand for support, as our children and youth transition to adulthood.

### Innovation and technology

We renewed our commitment to innovation with steps to capitalize on the opportunities new technology can offer our staff and clients, such as improved efficiencies, data analytics, communication and access.

The BC Centre for Ability is now part of several innovative ecosystems including:

- Canada's Digital Technology Supercluster, which **facilitates ambitious, collaborative technology projects** and partnerships to improve services in health and social services.
- UBC's Knowledge Exchange, which works with partners to develop **new initiatives, strategies, technologies and partnerships** to expand best practices in a variety of fields including health care and social services.
- Other local, provincial and national groups dedicated to **advancing health and social services** through innovation, technology and strategic partnerships.

We are sending a strong signal to these networks that BCCFA is a progressive organization ready to partner with other leaders to help drive improvement and solve complex problems facing non-profit organizations and the people we serve.



*years of serving our community*

### Quality services and strong outcomes

In October 2018, we went through our three-year accreditation with the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). We hosted several surveyors from across North America and, following their analysis, the BC Centre for Ability was granted accreditation with no recommendations. We **attained one of the highest scores an organization can receive** and our best result ever as an organization. We are so proud of our staff and leadership team, who are responsible for ensuring we meet and exceed the standards for client and family-centredness and quality every day.

### People and culture

While **providing excellent services to clients** is our primary focus, we must also ensure we are caring for our staff. These two concepts are inextricably linked. To deliver an outstanding client experience requires an atmosphere where staff can thrive.

Consequently, we conducted a staff engagement survey this year to hear from staff about areas where we are doing well and areas for improvement. We've created a staff engagement committee that meets regularly, and are investing in wellness and leadership development, and **engaging staff** in key decisions and strategic planning.

As we **celebrate the BC Centre for Ability's 50th anniversary**, we also recognize the exciting opportunities ahead for the organization with new leadership, a new strategic plan and priorities, and a bold, innovative vision for the future. We thank you for your support of the BC Centre for Ability and welcome you on this next phase of our journey in the coming years.





# Dining for Dreams

The night of April 25, 2019 marked the 20th annual BC Centre for Ability *Dining for Dreams Gala*. The event took place at the beautiful Fairmont Waterfront Hotel in Vancouver, giving supporters and community members an opportunity to celebrate the BC Centre for Ability's exceptional work and the amazing accomplishments of our clients and families. *Dining for Dreams* is the Centre's premier fundraising event, and this year we raised \$170,000 towards the Centre's important services.

On behalf of the BC Centre for Ability and our Foundation, I would like to thank everyone who made the 2019 *Dining for Dreams Gala* a success. **Thanks to our generous sponsors, guests, volunteers and staff for your contributions and ongoing support for BCCFA.**

We look forward to seeing you again on April 23rd, 2020!

*BCCFA Foundation President*  
**Paul McGuigan** (below)





# Heroes of Ability

**Leena** was diagnosed with Down syndrome at birth. While her development has been delayed in many areas, Leena has a tenacious spirit that has enabled her to surpass expectations. Once she recognized mobility gave her freedom, there was no putting on the brakes: Leena is always motivated to move! She has shown great progress in all her goals, met milestones in her first 18 months, and, by two years of age, was climbing on toddler playground equipment; the merry-go-round is one of her favourites. Leena may have lifelong challenges, but her tenacity and joyful personality will help her navigate the journey ahead.



**Kara** applied to our Opportunities Fund program at the end of 2017, when she was a single mom of a ten-year-old boy and wanted to build a better future for her family. She struggled with anxiety and her lack of education and experience made it hard to find employment. Her disability income was not enough to support her son, and she truly needed a change.

BCCFA accepted her application. Kara was determined to succeed and diligent with assignments. She successfully completed the Health Care Assistant Program at Vancouver Community College, and started work as a home care aide at a long term care facility. Congratulations!



**Lincon** experienced respiratory distress requiring resuscitation and intubation at birth. An MRI at one year of age confirmed Lincon had perinatal asphyxia, and he has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, with challenges in muscular control, balance and coordination. Despite these difficulties, Lincon is the most determined little boy you will ever meet; he persists until he achieves his goals. He is feisty, courageous, and a burst of joy to be around.

Lincon's spirit has blossomed with the support of his amazing parents, Sunaree and David, who grab hold of every opportunity to learn and grow together. Sunaree and David continue to exude a positive family outlook through multiple adversities, including David needing a liver transplant in the last year.

**Kaiya** was diagnosed with Down syndrome and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Kaiya and her family have been very involved with BCCFA and our Stepping Stones program. Kaiya's family always brings a positive outlook and a wealth of information to share with other families at parent workshops, family nights and group sessions. They work collaboratively as a family with the BCCFA team, other families, and in their school and community. Kaiya's parents, Denise and Kevin, have been strong advocates for both of their daughters as they navigate the school system.



**Tyson** was struck by a piece of retaining wall that fell on the back of his head at daycare in May 2018, causing a skull fracture and brain injury. He has participated in interdisciplinary rehabilitation through our Community Brain Injury Program to help him regain function. Tyson persevered in all his therapies and is recovering nicely.

Tyson's mother has been a champion for his rehabilitation, collaborating with the therapists to support her son, and remaining in close contact with the program coordinator. She accessed our support to transition Tyson to community-based services and back to school.





# Programs at a Glance

BCCFA PROGRAMS	SERVICES OFFERED	
<b>Supported Child Development (Burnaby and Vancouver)</b>	<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 Therapy Program</b> (Physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy and social work support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Intervention</li> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• Service coordination</li> <li>• Group therapy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational workshops</li> <li>• Casting and splinting</li> <li>• Equipment lending</li> <li>• Resource library</li> <li>• Toy lending library</li> <li>• Feeding</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> </ul>	
<b>United Way Stepping Stones Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group programs for children up to 12 years of age</li> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• Social-emotional development</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>Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocational Training Plan</li> <li>• Wage subsidies</li> <li>• Financial assistance for vocational training</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>Case Management Services</b> for people with disabilities, in the WorkBC Vancouver Northeast Employment Services Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case management</li> <li>• Vocational counselling and planning</li> </ul>	
<b>Family Counselling Support Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling for families, siblings and children/youth with extra challenges</li> <li>• Resource information</li> <li>• Information and educational workshops</li> <li>• Parent networking opportunities</li> <li>• Social-emotional support</li> </ul>	

## Our Costs

<b>59.50%</b>	Supported Child Development
<b>22.90%</b>	Early Intervention Therapy
<b>7.8%</b>	Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities
<b>4.65%</b>	Community Brain Injury Program for Children & Youth
<b>1.38%</b>	Facility & administration costs
<b>1.30%</b>	Employment Program NE Catchment
<b>0.77%</b>	Social work respite
<b>0.75%</b>	United Way
<b>0.70%</b>	Communications & resource development
<b>0.25%</b>	Family Education & Resource Libraries

## BCCFA Budget

## Our Funding

<b>88.62%</b>	Provincial government
<b>7.37%</b>	Federal government
<b>1.12%</b>	School Districts
<b>0.82%</b>	BCCFA Foundation contribution
<b>0.77%</b>	United Way
<b>0.65%</b>	Other income
<b>0.55%</b>	Gaming income
<b>0.1%</b>	Donations



# Supported Child Development Program



1,044 VANCOUVER  
436 BURNABY

### Burnaby and Vancouver Regions

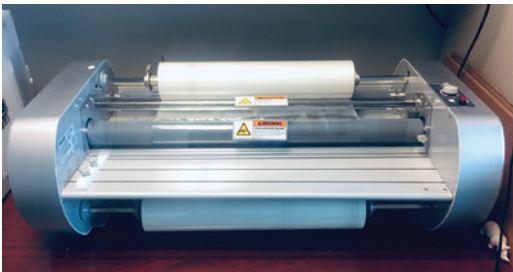
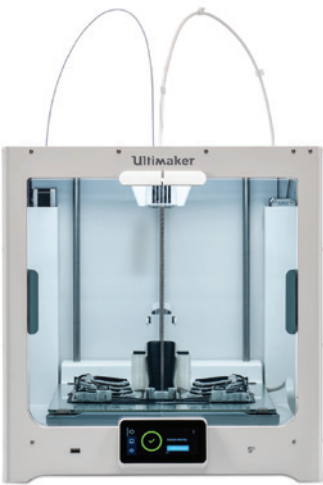
Our Supported Child Development (SCD) consultants **help families and children needing extra support to access inclusive childcare**. Team members work with families to plan support for children’s individual needs, and consult with daycare, preschool, and out of school care programs to help them develop inclusive principles and practices that enrich all children’s experiences. The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) funds this program.

**TRANSLATING OUR DOCUMENTS** – We translated our parent handbook, SCD brochure, and various forms into Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Filipino, Persian and Vietnamese to **help families and childcare providers who are English language learners** understand SCD services.

**INCREASING LIBRARY CAPACITY** – We purchased specialized toys and resources to enhance our Vancouver and Burnaby libraries, and renovated the Burnaby library to expand storage space.

**HOLDING SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL CONFERENCES** – We hosted two training conferences in the past year:

- Vince Gowmon, founder of Remembering to Play Events, provided an interactive workshop on team communication skills and collaboration, where 80 childcare providers practiced the art of playing along in another’s world, being curious, and building trust and openness in relationships (Vancouver)
- 96 Early Childhood Educators learned best practice approaches for working with children with autism and related disorders, with Deb Lightman, an Occupational Therapist and founder of Kids First Pediatric therapy, who taught participants how the ability to process sensory information affects daily interactions and abilities (Burnaby)



From top: New library resources – 3D printer, laminator, Twinkler and braille blocks

Bobby



**Bobby** is a gentle, warm hearted five-year-old with a curious nature. His family and preschool teachers referred him to our SCD

Program with concerns for his social and emotional development, because Bobby was often shy and anxious about new people and places. At preschool, his parents noticed he became anxious and upset when he saw other children display “big emotions”.

Our SCD Consultant met with his parents to discuss his strengths and discovered Bobby has a wide variety of interests, including music, dancing, cars, dinosaurs and sensory activities. Together, we created a plan to increase his self and social awareness. His teacher noted that Bobby felt safe and secure in the classroom when he felt a strong bond with her, so she nurtured their relationship.

At the preschool, we discussed using a social and emotional lens. His teacher embraced the approach and feels she is a different teacher now than a year ago. All the teachers have added social and emotional components to the curriculum where possible, with activities like a “feelings check in” and “how to make a friend” book. They model ways to regulate emotions through deep breathing and remaining calm and connected. Teachers support the children in watching glitter fall in “mindful jars” and provide places to relax and take a break.

Bobby began to use these strategies independently. His teachers are excited that he’s been joining small group play, initiating play, and sharing ideas with peers. We played a game of hide and seek and Bobby was smiling and engaged, right in the middle of it all. This summer he is signed up for soccer and t-ball. His family has seen the changes and are thankful for the support they’ve received from the SCD Program.

Program Outcomes		Target	Achieved	
Access to Services	Children receive a support guide and connections to support within three months of referral	100%	Burnaby	Vancouver
			100%	100%
Efficiency	Our consultants spend 50% of their time in direct client-related support	50%	50%	55%
Effectiveness	Childcare staff say SCD consultants help increase their skills	80%	100%	89%
Satisfaction	Families are involved in determining goals and support strategies for their children	90%	98%	97%
	Families say, overall, SCD services met their needs	90%	85%	90%

**PROVIDING NON-VIOLENT CRISIS INTERVENTION TRAINING** – We provided the opportunity for 77 childcare providers from across Vancouver and Burnaby to participate in this program, considered the global standard for crisis prevention and intervention training. The program authorized participants to train other staff at their place of employment.



Early Intervention Program



\*15 children were seen in two regions, as their families moved from one region to another, so the regional total is 1,315

NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED IN EACH REGION	
547	VANCOUVER
310	BURNABY
280	RICHMOND
163	NORTH SHORE

Our Early Intervention Program (EIP) team supports children with special needs—from birth to age five—with physiotherapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), speech-language pathology (SLP), and social work (SW). We collaborate with parents and other caregivers to offer evidence-based assessment, treatment, groups, workshops, and family support at home and in the community to **help children achieve their full potential where they live, play and learn.**

- HIGHLIGHTING OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS** – In the last year, our EIP team:
- Attained an outstanding **CARF Accreditation with *no recommendations***
  - Expanded our Feeding Service to include children with all feeding issues, except those related to mental health
  - Piloted a physiotherapy acupuncture fee-for-service program
  - Offered trial “Occupational Therapy Focused Learning Sessions” in three of BCCFA’s four regions

- SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PARTNERS** – We also **partnered with community agencies** and broadened services by:
- Participating in the Vancouver Early Intervention Agency Network’s annual staff event focused on “Compassion, Resilience and Caregiver Wellness”
  - Supporting Richmond Society for Community Living proposals to develop Community Hubs
  - Delivering two OT workshops for Alan Cashmore Centre clients, which provides early childhood mental health services
  - Expanding use of the simplified Infant Development Program referral form to Burnaby (in addition to Vancouver)
  - Meeting with Vancouver Coastal dieticians to explain referrals to our expanded Feeding Service

**CONTINUING ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS** – We **provided supervised clinical placements for students** in physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology. And our strong relationship with the UBC School of Physical Therapy continues through clinical faculty appointments, teaching and committee participation.

- LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES** – Our team provided **workshops for BCCFA staff** in:
- Executive functions
  - Education for PTs/OTs on equipment prescription
  - Working with transgender children

Gabriel



Born at 27 weeks gestation with a birth weight of only 335 grams, **Gabriel** is one of the smallest babies ever born in BC. Doctors were unsure whether he would survive. After 245 days in hospital, Gabriel was discharged home and started support services with us. His mother Grace, “... hadn’t heard of the BC Centre for Ability before Gabriel was born, but the Centre has exceeded our expectations. Gabriel gets everything he needs to help him develop.”

When Gabriel came home at eight months of age, he couldn’t hold his head up, but is making progress with gross motor skills. “Catherine, the physiotherapist, came to help Gabriel and I saw progress every week. He’s doing so well now he can walk pushing his walker,” Grace said.

Gabriel was fed by a gastrostomy tube, so we helped the family with the transition to eating by mouth. “Both Nicole and Tannis [OTs] helped Gabriel learn to eat, which helped him grow. They showed us how to feed him and now he eats everything and can drink water from a sippy cup.”

Gabriel is curious and loves playing with toys; he always wants to see what toys the therapists have in their bags. But Gabriel has been slow to start talking, although his mother recently noticed some progress: “Kim and Sophie [speech-language pathologists] gave us great advice on how to help Gabriel learn to talk, with both sign language and words. Now he is babbling.”

Gabriel’s family also met with a social worker to learn how to access community resources for him.

*“All the support has contributed to what Gabriel can do now. He is such a happy baby who likes to walk and play, and we are so thankful for our team at the BC Centre for Ability.”* Grace, Gabriel’s Mom

Program Outcomes		Target	Achieved
Access to Service	Families have an initial service plan for their child within three months of referral	75%	78%
Efficiency	EIP staff spends the majority of work time in client-related activities	Therapists 80%	OT 73% PT 78% SLP 73%
		Social Workers 75%	SW 69%
Effectiveness	Children achieve their families’ desired outcomes for them	75%	Posture and mobility 78%
			Play and learning 71%
			Self-care 74%
	Families achieve desired outcomes for their children	75%	Communication 81%
			Social emotional well-being 88%
			Well-being of child and family 97%
Satisfaction	Service information families receive is relevant to their needs	90%	95%
	Families are involved in determining goals for their child and family		98%
	Families would recommend BCCFA services to a friend or family member		93%



# North Shore School Occupational Therapy Program



**SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**141 NORTH VANCOUVER**  
**49 WEST VANCOUVER**

In North and West Vancouver, our occupational therapists **support students with neurological, physical and/or developmental challenges**, from kindergarten through grade 12. We collaborate with students’ families, teachers and support staff to design strategies that help students achieve their educational goals. Our objective is to support students’ inclusion, participation and independence in school and the community.

This year, we provided **1,312 hours of service for 190 students**, the majority in school, but also some support at home, on the phone, in tertiary care, and in the community.

MCFD and the North and West Vancouver School Districts fund this program.

**REDESIGNING CRITERIA TO INCREASE ACCESS** – This year, we redesigned the eligibility criteria for services in the North Vancouver School District to address a waitlist exceeding two years for both high and low incidence students. Our aim was to **develop a tiered model of graduated interventions** to:

- Ensure occupational therapy support is available for students who require it most —low incidence students
- Increase opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills among learning support personnel, so they can support high incidence students effectively, without an OT’s intervention

We used the *Response to Intervention* model—which offers interventions at increasing levels of intensity to **accelerate students’ rate of learning**—as a guide. Here are the steps we took:

- Offering all high incidence students on caseload and the waitlist a final consult/review, appropriate learning strategies, and then discharge
- Reviewing all low incidence students on the waitlist by school-based teams to ensure their current needs fit the new program criteria
- Selecting 26 of 42 low incidence students on the waitlist for support in the current academic year; 16 remain on the waitlist for further OT review in the 2019/20 school year



MJ

**MJ** is a typical teen who likes to sleep in, watch YouTube videos, and play video games. He also enjoys writing stories, cooking and baking. MJ’s been on the

Honour Roll throughout his secondary school years, and treasurer of the Student Leadership Council for the past two years. This year, MJ received a Certificate for Outstanding Graduate Award. He likes to study chemistry and math and code computer programs. MJ composes music on the computer and conducted his own piece played by the school band, at the year-end school concert. He will spend the next year in work experience related to coding and wants to pursue post-secondary computer studies at BCIT.

Did we mention MJ has athetoid cerebral palsy? He uses a Lightwriter communication device to type messages that get relayed through speakers by an automated voice when his speech is unclear, and just got his “driver’s license” for a new power wheelchair. MJ drives to school and gets around his community on local transit using the power chair. He likes driving up and down Grand Boulevard in North Vancouver, so he can “go full speed and feel the breeze.”

MJ has been involved with our program since starting high school. Our OT worked with him to research adaptive equipment, including tools for home economics, a cuff to hold his drumsticks so he can play with the band, and supportive seating for science class. The OT also helped with the joystick setup for the power chair, mounting the Lightwriter, and instructions for initial driving skills.

MJ describes his strengths as having a scientific mindset and being able to turn negatives into positives. He has certainly shown what can be accomplished with hard work and a positive attitude!

Program Outcomes		Target	Achieved
Effectiveness	Students achieve their therapy goals	75%	Posture and mobility <b>75%</b>
			Productivity/recreation/learning <b>69%</b>
	Workshop participants learned strategies to support students with special needs*	90%	Self-care <b>75%</b>
Satisfaction	Workshop participants’ learning objectives were met*	90%	<b>98%</b>
	Participants thought the workshop was <b>very worthwhile</b> or <b>extremely worthwhile</b>		<b>98%</b>

\*4 or 5 on a 5 point Likert scale

- Sharing the new criteria with school-based teams to increase understanding of the school OT program mandate, and reduce the number of high incidence referrals as a result
- Offering additional professional development workshops for education assistants, learning support teachers, and teachers



# United Way Stepping Stones Program



including children, parents,  
caregivers, community partners



PEOPLE SERVED

785 FAMILY GROUPS

299 0-6 YEARS OLD

467 7-12 YEARS OLD

1,635 PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

In our United Way Stepping Stones Program (UWSS), **we work with children with neurodevelopmental conditions**, up to 12 years old, and their families. We help to strengthen their social and emotional skills and ability to manage at home, with friends, at school, and in the community.

Children gain opportunities to develop social-emotional competencies, such as identifying strengths, regulating emotions, handling stress and maintaining self-confidence. We offer training workshops and consultation for parents, caregivers and community service providers on promoting social-emotional development in children with extra needs. Brief individualized intervention is also available for children and families.

**TRANSLATING OUR SERVICES** – We facilitated a social emotional learning group in French for eight to ten-year-old boys at a French Immersion school. École Anne-Hebert in Vancouver coordinated the translation.

**SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES** – We participated in various community activities this year:

- We hosted a “**Kindness and Gratitude Family Night**” to discuss the importance of kindness and gratitude, through books, games, crafts and activities with families. And we created a mural where staff and families recorded what kindness and gratitude means to them for the anti-bullying Pink Shirt Day.
- We facilitated **social-emotional learning and development training for Richmond School District (RSD)** professional development day, as the district moves towards a focus on social-emotional learning. Over 200 Education Assistants attended.
- We provided a continuum of **wraparound services for children with extra needs transitioning to kindergarten**, which involved:
  - » Introducing UWSS at Early Intervention Therapy (EIT) kindergarten transition meetings
  - » Collaborating with EIT team members
  - » Facilitating spring and fall parent workshops to prepare for their child’s kindergarten transition, with an introduction to social-emotional development and learning designed for kindergarteners
  - » Checking in during the fall to see how the transition is going
  - » Attending Individualized Education Plan meetings when needed
- We organized an **educational open house** on Child and Youth Mental Health Awareness Day, so staff and participants could learn about paediatric mental health for children with neurodevelopmental conditions and their parents/ caregivers.

Paula\*



Program Outcomes		Target	Achieved
Access to Services	Services were delivered in convenient locations for families	80%	95%
Effectiveness	Families learned new skills and strategies to support children at home	75%	86%
	Families had opportunities to network & connect with other families	75%	90%
	Children/youth gained skills to manage their feelings and emotions	75%	98%
	Community participants gained new skills to apply at work	75%	96%
Satisfaction	Service quality met families’ expectations	85%	94%

CLIENT ACTIVITIES

1101 PARTICIPANTS IN SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP TRAINING

444 COUNSELLING SESSIONS

148 HOURS COMMUNITY WRAPAROUND SESSIONS

54 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS OR EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS FOR COMMUNITY PARTNER STAFF

13,704 INFORMATION PACKAGES/NEWSLETTERS/ BROCHURES SENT OUT

Nine-year-old **Paula\*** has been with us since she transitioned to kindergarten to help address concerns about her ability to identify her emotions, self-regulate, and interact with peers in her class.

Paula’s parents have been involved in our monthly parent networking group and parent workshops since then, and have had social work consultations to support Paula’s social-emotional development.

To ensure success at school, Paula participated in play-based children’s groups that focus on fun, interactive ways for children to develop social-emotional competencies. With these opportunities and parents who are great advocates, Paula had a smooth transition to kindergarten and has been thriving at her local elementary school for the past few years.

Now in grade four, Paula still participates in the group and has created friendships with girls she sees in our program. She is bright, creative, labels her emotions with confidence, and describes how she self-regulates. Paula continues to learn about social awareness and relationship skills and to develop friendships.

*“We have been involved in Stepping Stones for many years now, and the activities for our daughter have really made a difference in her growth and development. The staff are professional, knowledgeable and kind, and the additional school support has been so valuable. We are grateful for everything the team has given us.”* Paula’s Mom

\*Name has been changed.



# FASD Key Worker Support Services



CLIENT ACTIVITIES

2 NEW INTAKES

9 CHILDREN DISCHARGED FROM PROGRAM

12 PROGRAM INQUIRIES/CONSULTATIONS

Our Key Worker Support Services (KWSS) team in Burnaby **supports children and youth** up to 19, living with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD), Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), and other complex developmental behavioural conditions (CDBC), with individual support, group therapy and skill development programs. Our goal is to help these children and youth:

- Reduce their vulnerability to social and emotional difficulties
- Minimize challenging behaviours that can hinder their participation in everyday life
- Develop skills so they learn how to achieve success

We **also support their parents and caregivers** and professionals and other community service providers with:

- Education on the behavioural symptoms of these conditions, which can affect development, learning, mental health, and adaptive and social skills
- Training workshops for parents and community service providers
- Networking opportunities for families

**BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS** – We partnered with Burnaby Family Life’s Prenatal Program to deliver **educational sessions on FASD for pregnant** women experiencing high risk pregnancies and/or multiple barriers in life. We also partnered with a Burnaby elementary school to deliver social-emotional learning sessions for a group of students (including one KWSS client and her peers).

**NETWORKING EVENTS** – We launched **monthly Parent Networking & Education Evenings** on a variety of topics, including *Supporting Your Child/Youth with Complex Needs* and *Promoting Your Child/Youth’s Social-emotional Development*.

**RECOGNIZING COMMUNITY SERVICE** – We presented Margaret Sundberg, Learning Support Teacher with the Burnaby School District, with a BCCFA Community Partner Award, to acknowledge her many years of dedicated support to BCCFA and our program.

Nick



Program Outcomes		Target	Achieved
Access to Services	We delivered services in convenient locations for children, youth and families	75%	98%
Effectiveness	Families learned new strategies to use at home to reduce stress and strengthen family relationships	80%	96%
Satisfaction	Families were satisfied with the quality of services	75%	94%
	Community partners were satisfied with our services and training	75%	94%

Twelve-year-old **Nick** has been part of our Key Worker Support Services program for more than five years. He was first referred in grade two, when he was experiencing social, emotional and academic challenges at school and home.

Nick and his grandmother have learned about Nick’s brain-based differences and how to identify ways others can promote his success. With our Key Worker’s support, his grandmother advocates for Nick at school meetings and within the community to help others understand him.

Nick attends KWSS children’s groups to practice social-emotional learning skills, such as regulating his emotions, making and maintaining friendships, and making responsible decisions. Nick is in grade six at his local elementary school in Burnaby, where he has developed friendships with peers and enjoys playing basketball and riding his scooter. He continues to progress academically, and we anticipate he will be a youth leader/mentor in KWSS groups one day, supporting younger children in the program.



# Family Counselling Support Services



PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

30 REFERRALS

25 NEW INTAKES

25 ACTIVE CLIENTS

5 WAITLISTED

5 DISCHARGED ACTIVE CLIENTS

3 DISCHARGED WITHOUT ACTIVE SERVICE

17 CLIENTS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2019/20

We began a new program at the BC Centre for Ability this year—Family Counselling Support Services (FCSS)—to increase families’ positive coping strategies, promote healthy family relationships, and **strengthen parents’ capacity to support children with extra needs**. With funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development, we deliver:

- Up to six months of counselling for couples, families, siblings, and children/youth with extra needs
- Information and educational workshops
- Parent networking opportunities
- Together Nights with activities for the whole family
- Community resource information

OUR GOALS FOR THIS IMPORTANT NEW PROGRAM

- Increasing parents’ capacity in their role as primary caregivers, with knowledge of their child or youth’s extra needs and effective strategies to support them
- Enhancing functioning, stability and quality of life for families who have a child/youth with extra needs
- Ensuring families have an ongoing network of support and access to community resources
- Decreasing frustration and **increasing the success of children with extra needs** by helping them develop social-emotional competencies

FCSS Services	# Sessions	%
Therapeutic intervention	252	59%
Training and education	78	18%
Intake assessments	45	11%
Communication with family	32	8%
Information sharing and referrals	19	4%



*“I wanted to let you know your meeting with our son was a huge success. He felt better after talking with you and getting stuff off his chest and wants to talk again. His mood is way better after talking too.”*

*“Things are running more smoothly now. I have a better understanding of my son, which has allowed us to do more activities together. Our son has been calmer, which has helped his sibling relationship too.”*

*“I’ve realized our son needs to feel important and have a place in the family.”*

*“Relationships in our home are better and the stress level has decreased ... because of stepping back and taking control of what I can with my daughter. I now have the ability to reach out and address some of my feelings with my mom. And I reached out to my family doctor and have connected to ongoing mental health supports.”*



# Opportunities Fund Program



OPPS INTERVENTIONS

42% TRAINING

41% WAGE SUBSIDY

5% SELF-EMPLOYMENT

12% ENHANCED EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

(e.g., help with resume, interview skills, job search)

We help adults with disabilities prepare for employment and self-employment, through our Opportunities Fund Program for Persons with Disabilities (OPPS Fund), to help create diverse, inclusive workplaces. We help participants achieve their employment goals, by providing funding for:

- Training programs, wage subsidy work placements, and enrolment in self-employment programs to gain needed employment skills in a field of interest
- Adaptive equipment and tools participants require for training and/or to access the workplace and perform their duties

Based on an individual’s needs, the OPPS Fund can provide financial assistance during a training program, or wage subsidy placement, for one or more of the following:

- School supplies and textbooks
- Living expenses
- Disability supports
- Dependent care and/or childcare
- Travel expenses

We support eligible participants in the Lower Mainland, Sunshine Coast, Sea to Sky corridor up to Pemberton, Fraser Valley up to Boston Bar and Hope, Vancouver Island, and the Gulf Islands. Service Canada funds this program.

**INCREASING EMPLOYABILITY** – This year 77% of OPPS Fund participants who completed skills development training were **successful in securing employment**. Being part of the workforce is a major factor in contributing to improving clients’ disability management, well-being and quality of life.

**SURPASSING PROGRAM TARGETS** – We **exceeded our goals** for number of clients seen, number of clients who complete their intervention, and number of clients who are employed after completing an intervention.

Dave



Dave is a 34-year-old with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Before applying to the OPPS Fund, he

had worked in horticulture, farming, power washing and drilling. But he wasn’t able to secure full time employment and struggled to support himself financially, due to his condition.

Then Dave applied for and met the eligibility criteria to enter the Hydraulic Excavator Operator Program at the Operators Training School. He had always wanted to operate heavy equipment but had never been able to afford the training. So he applied to our program for assistance.

An OPPS Community Coordinator reviewed his application and recognized the potential for Dave to attain full time employment. We provided the financial support Dave needed to achieve his dream, with funding for program tuition costs, some supplies and living expenses. Dave aced his courses, one of the best students to go through the program.

He finished in January 2019 and initially was able to work only sporadically due to weather, as most excavation sites shut down in snow. But our Community Coordinator continued to support him during the job search, and was delighted when Dave found a full time position in April.

*“I got the best job ever, running a site in a full time operator position. I have two big excavators to operate, with my own set of keys to the equipment. It’s a union job with good pay and lots of responsibility. I wanted to let you know I am so happy. Thanks again for everything you did for me. The training I received was amazing, and I wouldn’t be where I am today without the OPPs Fund and Operators Training School.”* Dave S.

Program Outcomes		Target	Achieved
Access to Services	Clients served	158*	181
Efficiency	Plans produced within four weeks	80%	100%
Effectiveness	Clients with enhanced employability	126*	151
	Clients employed or self-employed after OPPS Fund intervention	109*	117
Satisfaction**	Clients satisfied with the OPPS program		96%
	Clients would recommend the OPPS program to a friend or family member	90%	96%

\* This year, we are reporting on a 12-month contract (October 2017 to September 2018). A new funding contract started on October 1, 2018, and reporting on outcomes for this one will be included in the 2019/20 annual report.

\*\* Response of 3 or 4 on a 4 point Likert scale



# Community Brain Injury Program for Children & Youth in BC



CBIPCY CLIENTS

- 53 NEW CLIENT REFERRALS
- 48 CLIENTS CONTINUING FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
- 28 FOLLOW UP CLIENTS
- 10 SCHOOL TRANSITION CLIENTS

We provide short-term home and **community-based rehabilitation for children and youth** with an acquired brain injury in BC\*. Our individualized acute rehabilitation support can include 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 life and their community. MCFD funds the Community Brain Injury Program for Children & Youth (CBIPCY).

- TRANSITIONING YOUTH** – We provided consultations and therapeutic services for youth transitioning to adulthood, including assessments in neuropsychology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language pathology.
- BUILDING CAPACITY** – We recruited two new coordinators to join the program this year.
- PROFESSIONAL LEARNING** – CBIPCY coordinators attended the North American Brain Injury Society Annual Conference in Toronto, Ontario, done concurrently with the 2019 International Brain Injury Association’s World Congress.
- PARTNERING WITH THE COMMUNITY** – We partnered with BC’s Provincial Resource Teachers to provide diverse learning support for CBIPCY children and youth as they transition back to school.
- RECONFIGURING RESOURCES** – We updated our Community Resource Information List to be more current and helpful for families using our services.

\* Who do not have third-party funding

Program Outcomes		Target	Achieved
Access to Services	Parents received services in a timely way	90%	90%
Effectiveness	Parents gained skills to help manage challenges associated with their child’s brain injury	85%	90%
Satisfaction	Parents and youth were satisfied with program services	90%	99%

Braden



In late 2016, 11-year-old **Braden** was diagnosed with a brain tumour. In the following year, he underwent continuous medical treatment, including surgery, chemotherapy and radiation,

which took a considerable toll on his body and dropped his weight to 50 pounds.

He was referred to our program after finishing treatment in April 2018. Although his energy levels fluctuated in subsequent months, Braden’s overall health gradually increased to a level where he had enough stamina to participate in therapy by that October.

Our therapists worked with Braden to help him pace activities, address fatigue, and promote physical recovery. He struggled continuously with nausea; his therapists were able to identify a vestibular concern, implement strategies to address the issue, and see rapid improvement. Braden started to gain more strength and endurance and his balance improved. Before long, he was able to balance on an uneven surface and resume his much loved juggling, with the support of his physiotherapist.

Initially, Braden’s parents weren’t sure how he would improve enough in endurance to get back to school full time. He attended sporadically but hadn’t been able to go full time since grade four. Then in January 2019, Braden began attending math class and has steadily increased to longer days at school.

Braden aims to attend more classes and loves baseball and basketball. He has joined junior community teams to play for limited periods. His prospects look good and we wish him all the best in his bright future.

*“We are so grateful for having such caring, knowledgeable and fun people work with Braden. Back in September, Braden wanted to go to school but was too weak and nauseous. Now he runs into school!”*

Braden’s parents

ETIOLOGY

- 24% VASCULAR
- 21% BRAIN TUMOUR
- 19% BRAIN INFECTION
- 13% TRAUMA
- 9% BRAIN SURGERY
- 4% HYPOXIA/ANOXIA
- 4% ACUTE DISSEMINATED ENCEPHALOMYELITIS (ADEM)
- 4% ENCEPHALITIS
- 2% OTHER



# Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services

RESPIRE SUPPORT STATS

- 42

CHILDREN HAD COMPLEX RESPIRE SUPPORT
- 17

CHILDREN ATTENDED SUMMER CAMP
- 22

CHILDREN WERE ASSESSED AND ACCEPTED
- 6

CHILDREN AWAITING ELIGIBILITY REVIEWS
- 9

CHILDREN WAITLISTED
- 3

CHILDREN DISCHARGED

We deliver the Provincial Complex Medical Respite Support Services program to coordinate additional respite support for families and children with complex health conditions throughout the province. These families do receive full medical and respite benefits at home, but can request a referral for additional top-up respite during the year from their social workers, due to the complexity of the child’s condition.

This program offers qualifying families overnight, out-of-home respite for 26 days a year, and an opportunity to participate in a five-day summer camp at Camp Alexandra, supported by the Community Ventures Society.

Children’s eligibility for program support is based on the following criteria:

- Non-ambulatory children under 19 years of age
- Dependent for feeding
- Not ventilator dependent
- Experiencing uncontrollable seizures
- At high risk for aspiration
- Needing complicated medication administration that requires specialized training
- Specialized equipment is necessary to physically care for the child
- Ongoing technology support and intervention are necessary
- Medically fragile condition requiring the support of specialized caregivers

The Ministry of Children and Family Development approves acceptance into and provides funding for the program.



*“Camp Alexandra was a fun change of scenery for our daughter and provided respite for us as caregivers. She loved the ocean walks and the fun time spent with counsellors. Thank you for helping our family and allowing our daughter this wonderful experience.”*

*“Our son was interested to meet new people and have new experiences in an environment where we knew all of his needs would be met.”*

*“It was great for our son to have variety in his summer schedule and participate in activities designed for his needs and abilities. The ratio of counsellors to children and their nursing experience and education were great.”*

*“This was the first time our child attended camp. The staff were friendly and very respectful, and they communicated regularly with us to let us know how things were going. Our child had lots of outdoor time and fun activities. It was a totally new experience and we loved it!”*

*“Camp was fun and it felt safe to send my child there; she was well taken care of by the counsellors. The ratio of campers to staff ensures they can concentrate on all the campers’ needs.”*



# Donor & Funder Recognition

The BC Centre for Ability makes a meaningful difference in the lives of children, youth and adults with extra needs, 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.

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Service Canada  
North Vancouver School District  
City of Burnaby  
Provincial Health Services Authority  
Community Gaming Grants Branch

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*“I had a great experience working with the therapists, who were very supportive of my child... My daughter has made significant progress through her therapy.”*



# We would like to introduce you to our 2020-2023 Strategic Priorities Map.

These priorities will form the basis of our new strategic plan, which will be released at the end of 2019.

We took a unique approach to identifying these priorities. Over the last eight months, we hosted several strategic planning engagement sessions with 120 participants—staff, clients, families, community partners, and the Board of Directors. We collected hundreds of data points and had participants theme, rank and weight the data to help us come up with the priorities you see reflected in the map.

These priorities will help us ensure we are focusing our energy and attention on what matters most to the people who matter the most to us.

We would like to thank everyone who helped inform the map and look forward to working with you to see us achieve our goals in these areas in the coming years.



## BC Centre for Ability 2020-2023 Strategic Priorities



- Centre services on our needs and preferences
- Make it quick and easy for us to access services
- Connect us to other families to share experiences and knowledge
- Expand services



- Diversify funding sources—service delivery
- Diversify funding sources – fundraising & Infrastructure upgrades
- Optimize financial resources



- Innovate**
- Enhance use of technology
  - Improve service delivery
  - Continuous improvement of current systems

- Collaborate**
- Increase collaboration between teams
  - Integrate family voices into our mission and vision
  - Strengthen external partnerships

- Communicate**
- Increase public awareness
  - Be influencers and leaders in our sector
  - Build membership

- Excel**
- Deliver high quality, evidence-based services
  - Use data and input to drive improvement
  - Develop and share best practices through research and education



- Create meaningful and flexible careers to recruit, retain and engage top talent
- Build and maintain a culture of psychological safety, trust, and shared accountability for performance

- Develop a structure to allow workloads and client needs to be managed effectively
- Provide continuous learning and development opportunities for staff, leadership, and Board

- Celebrate successes and recognize people for their contributions
- Strengthen communication by encouraging ideas and input from all stakeholders





**BC Centre  
for Ability**

*Beyond challenges—the sky's the limit*

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