



ANNUAL REPORT



2020–2021





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1.0 Message from the Chair

The last year of the pandemic has continued to present unprecedented challenges for family support centres and those they assist across Canada. Adopting a priority-driven, building-block approach, Families Canada (FC) surveyed members and stakeholders, devised strong business plans, expanded our social enterprise and scaled up our digital presence, all sharply focused on continued corporate infrastructure modernization and sustainability.

Pandemic-inspired operational reconfiguration forever changed the way FC members support families. Given inequalities in capacities to cope and thrive, community organizations heroically responded to their families’ needs, but they needed FC’s help. Making better use of FC’s web ‘real estate’ to deliver online programs, resources, and content became mission critical. FC ended 2020 having offered some 40 free online events with some sessions enjoying sign-ups of 1200-1400 family support practitioners.

- FC ended 2020 having offered some 40 free
- online events with some sessions enjoying sign-
- ups of 1200-1400 family support practitioners.

FC also opted for intense focus on e-commerce through the build of a new store with support from Digital Main Street which should be open for business in early fall 2021. It will offer resources in print/digital formats and facilitate access to multi-media products such as e-learning modules, podcasts, videos, and paid events including professional development plus online training for frontline service providers.

Members and stakeholders have responded positively to the business model shift, encouraging FC to do more and directing focus to the areas of highest interest. Thanks to our digital transformation, FC has emerged from the pandemic well-positioned to take on new challenges.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis
Chair, Board of Directors

2.0 Our Team

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VOTED IN ON OCTOBER 20, 2020



- Debra Armstrong**
- Karen Burpee**
- Lyne Charlebois**
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- Grabrielle Lavoie**
- Brenda Lohrenz**
- Grant LoPatriello**
- Sye Mincoff**
- Murielle Mutatayi**
- Shane Pospisil**
- Dr. Paul Roumeliotis**
- Randy St. Louis**
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- Kelly Stone**
President & CEO
- Zindu Salih**
Director of Operations
- Rebecca Balcerzak**
Senior Project Officer
- Clare Pama, CPA, CMA**
Virtual CFO
- Zoe Chen**
Bookkeeper
- Mitzie Constant**
Administrative Officer
- Sydney Walter**
Communications and Project Officer
- Rym Bousenane**
Project Officer
- Bushra Rahman**
Project Officer
- Hilary Allen**
Program Manager

FORMER STAFF

We would like to thank all our past staff and volunteers who have contributed their efforts in the previous year: Annika Ang, David Agbaire, Pamela Yengayenge, Cate Brown, Karen Hutchison, Tahsin Nawar, Angelina Abbaticchio, and Quyu Annie Zhen.



3.0 Vision and Mission Statement

VISION



A Canada committed
to building **strong**
families.

MISSION STATEMENT



To champion the priorities,
policies, and programs that **build**
the strength of Canada's families.

4.0 Our COVID-19 Support to Members and Families

4.1 Financial Literacy Increasing Financial Literacy Opportunities for Women Living on Low Incomes: An Action Plan for Change.

April 2018 – March 2022
Funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada

Like all Canadians, women living on low incomes need basic financial literacy knowledge, skills and confidence to improve their quality of life. Through national research, this project identified gender-



specific barriers that prevent women living on low incomes from accessing financial literacy programs. It also identified recommendations for improving program delivery.

- This year, FC:
- Released the ground-breaking report “Accessing Financial Literacy Education Programs: Barriers and Opportunities for Women Living on Low Incomes”
 - Presented research findings at the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada’s Innovation in Financial Education event
 - Continued developing an Action Plan to support women’s financial empowerment

- Thank you to our funder and partners—the Canadian Credit Union Association and Vancity—for supporting this work.
- This year, FC also secured additional funding to act on the research recommendations.
- SAFE Women (Safety and Financial Empowerment for Women)**
April 2021 – March 2023
Funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada
- Building on our previous financial literacy work, this project will address the need for Trauma and Violence-Informed Approaches (TVIA) in financial literacy programming by developing a toolkit of TVIA resources and learning opportunities for financial literacy educators.
- In the next two years, FC will broaden:
 - awareness of TVIA and how it can be applied to financial literacy education
 - access to practical TVIA tools and information by developing a TVIA toolkit tailored for financial literacy educators
- We look forward to meeting this pressing need in conjunction with our partners, CPA Canada, the Canadian Credit Union Association, and Vancity, and moving the dial for women’s financial empowerment.

4.2 Intergenerational Volunteering Integrating Senior Newcomers through Intergenerational Volunteering at Family Support Centres

April 2018 – March 2021
Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

This year, FC successfully wrapped up a national Intergenerational Volunteering pilot program in eight family support centres across Canada. The project demonstrated that intergenerational volunteering is a viable intervention that can help reduce seniors’ social isolation, particularly amongst newcomers.



Although COVID-19 brought in-person programming to a halt, pilot sites were able to adjust programming quickly by moving to an outreach model where possible (phone calls, Zoom programming, kindness cards from children to seniors, etc.) to ensure ongoing connections with seniors. Community organizations were innovative, spent additional time and sought out family members or friends to help with translation where possible.

- This year, FC:
- Produced culturally-adapted versions of the Intergenerational Volunteering programming guide in Arabic and Simplified Chinese (with



Photos of the Intergenerational Volunteering pilot program in action!

- support from New Horizons for Seniors Program, Economic and Social Development Canada)
- Produced a report on the Intergenerational Volunteering pilot program. The report includes seven key lessons learned in piloting an Intergenerational Volunteering program
- Developed two recorded webinars on Intergenerational Volunteering, including lessons learned, which can be accessed on our YouTube channel
- FC will continue to share knowledge with our members and service providers across Canada to encourage the scaling up of intergenerational programming between seniors—including newcomers—and preschool-aged children.

Testimonials

4.2 Intergenerational Volunteering

Testimonials from Seniors:

“Thank you for such programs. It was good to participate in them when you can’t go outside.”

“During this COVID situation I often feel angry. I can’t go outside, can’t meet and talk to people but only during this program I feel happy.”

“Due to COVID-19, I was feeling depressed. This program helped me to have some fun with children and other seniors. I made many new friends in this program and I learnt technology that is really big achievement for me and I am still eager to learn more. After the program I realised grandparents learnt technology and children gained knowledge from seniors’ experiences. This was the beauty of this program. I love this program.”



Testimonials from Parents:

“After attending this session, [my child] is more eager to learn. He started asking more questions than before. His language skills improved and his mobility skills boomed up.”

“My son hasn’t seen a lot of people because he hasn’t been outside to be able to communicate with people. But this program helped my child with his language and communication.”

“[My son] is feeling more comfortable, more friendly and more confident interacting with seniors now”

4.3 Children's Rights

FC champions children’s rights in all our work. The *Nobody’s Perfect* and the *Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting* programs, which we actively support, are founded on a rights-based approach.

Last year, as part of our Parenting initiative, we helped community-based organizations in Ontario adapt their *Nobody’s Perfect* parent groups for online delivery, allowing parents to better support their children’s rights during the pandemic. As part of our Play initiative, we finished developing a plethora of new play resources—including new *Why Play?* pamphlets and activity cards which support children’s right to play. Take a look at the resources section for more information!

In the coming year, we will be working with Carleton University on a new project funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, titled: “Children’s rights, climate change, and emotional wellbeing: equipping young Canadians to thrive in times of crisis”. As the project’s community partner, FC will help recruit research participants and mobilize research findings.

We continue to work in partnership with the Landon Pearson Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children’s Rights, and many others, to actualize Canada’s commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

4.4 Food Safety
Promoting Health and Inclusion of Senior Newcomers Through Food

March 2021 – March 2022
Funded by Employment and Social Development Canada

COVID-19 has caused an increase in food insecurity, especially for isolated populations. This project, extended due to the pandemic, aims to support the healthy aging of newcomer seniors in Ottawa by identifying and addressing challenges they face in accessing services, resources, and information on food safety and nutrition. In the coming year, FC will engage newcomer seniors in an interactive workshop to identify these challenges and develop helpful

- multilingual brochures through consultations with community partners and newcomer seniors. While the project focuses on Ottawa, we hope that the results and resources will be useful to a much wider population.

4.5 Social Inclusion of Newcomers

- Every year, family support centres across Canada welcome newcomers and help them build ties to their community.

- This year, as part of the *Integrating Senior Newcomers through Intergenerational Volunteering at Family Support Centres* project, FC expanded our popular *Family Life in Canada* video series.

- A new video, “Being a Senior in Canada,” is now available in seven languages on YouTube. Thank you to the Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network for helping create the video! The series aims to help newcomers adjust to life in Canada and encourages them to access information, programs, services, and resources in their community.

- This year, we also promoted the social inclusion of newcomers through our very popular Intergenerational Volunteering program where the majority of participating seniors identified as newcomers.

4.6 Parenting
Supported Parents: Supportive Parenting

April 2018 – April 2022
Funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation

- FC is supporting minority-speaking language communities in Ontario by increasing parents and caregivers’ parenting skills through the *Nobody’s Perfect* parenting program. This program is designed to meet the needs of parents with children aged 0-5 who may be facing multiple barriers. Whether they are young, single, living on low incomes, socially or geographically isolated or have limited formal education, the *Nobody’s Perfect* parenting program supports them on their journey of parenthood.



Ongoing evaluations show that *Nobody’s Perfect* effectively promotes positive parenting, improves understanding of children’s health, safety and behavior and helps prevent family violence. Evidence also shows effective parenting programs reduce social and mental health challenges experienced by children later in life.



Photos of the translated *Nobody’s Perfect* parent kits. Arabic, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese and Spanish.

Throughout this project, FC has:

- Translated the *Nobody’s Perfect* parent kits into Arabic, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese and Spanish
- Trained 40 new bilingual program facilitators
- Partnered with 29 family support centres across Ontario to deliver the program to minority language speaking parents

Once COVID-19 hit, *Nobody’s Perfect* parent groups needed to be delivered virtually. FC responded by holding an online refresher training for facilitators. Next year, expect programming to continue online with the possibility of in-person sessions to reach up to 2000 parents across Ontario.

4.7 Play
Early Childhood Development Science to Practice: Knowledge Mobilization Project

March 2018 – May 2021
Funded by Employment and Social Development Canada

This year FC and partners produced a number of evidence-based resources on early childhood development. These resources make the latest science and information in the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development accessible to vulnerable families, community-level organisations, and service providers working directly with parents and children.

The resources include:

- A number of additional brochures under FC’s flagship *Why Play?* series including pamphlets specific for parents of children with intellectual disabilities and First Nations parents. The *Why Play?* Spotlight series was also launched with four new pamphlets on language development, emotional expression, self-regulation, and pro-social behaviour.
- A new set of 24 *Why Play?* Activity Cards contain attractive illustrations and science-based examples of play activities that support essential competencies and skills in early childhood.
- The *Supporting Families* podcast, hosted by renowned pediatrician, Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, CEO of Eastern Ontario Health Unit and FC’s new and esteemed Board Chair. The podcast engages expert speakers on various early childhood development topics.



Testimonials
4.6 Parenting

Testimonials from Parents:

“There are so many uncertainties for September school start. I am so grateful to have this group where I can discuss and get information.”

“It was such a relaxing time to get together with nice moms online. I haven’t had such opportunities for

a long time. It’s comforting to learn that we all face similar challenges. We are supporting each other!”

“Kids have suffered a lot. Lack of interaction with other children has had a negative impact on my kids. I can’t wait to have a group like this for my kids too. Fingers crossed for September.”

- Two e-modules on Brain Development and Play. These were developed with support from the Science of Early Childhood Development, Red River College. These modules will be released on FC's Virtual Institute in 2021.

In response to COVID-19, FC and the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development (CEECD) launched a webinar series titled *Early Childhood Development in a Time of Pandemic*. This proved a great success with more than 1,000 family support practitioners across Canada participating in the 6-part series. The topics (such as self-regulation and resilience) were aimed at helping service providers support parents of young children during unprecedented social and economic restrictions and challenges.



Supporting Families Podcast

helping service providers support parents of young children during unprecedented social and economic restrictions and challenges.

4.8 Trauma and Violence-Informed Approaches (TVIA) Incorporating Trauma and Violence-Informed Approaches in Ottawa Family Support Programs

March 2020 – March 2021

Funded by the Ottawa Community Foundation

- Adequately supporting those impacted by trauma and domestic/family violence is crucial, especially during the COVID-19 crisis. This project created tools to help family support practitioners in Ottawa incorporate TVIA into their program delivery, to better meet the needs of program participants experiencing trauma and domestic/family violence.



This was achieved by:

- Hosting a focus group with family support practitioners in the Ottawa area to explore their knowledge of and training needs related to TVIA in programming
- Providing a tailored training webinar to family support practitioners in Ottawa who provide direct programming and assistance to families
- Developing four infographics for family support practitioners



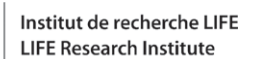
- When practitioners are equipped with knowledge on how to foster safe environments, families can be better served and supported.

5.0 Funders and Partners

Funders:



Partners:



Testimonials

4.7 Play

Participant Testimonials, ECD in a Time of Pandemic webinar series:

“I loved the webinars, it was my ‘treat’ of the week. Especially with the pandemic!”

“Learning something new & refreshing existing knowledge.”

“This is an outstanding opportunity and platform. Thank you so much!”

“Thank you for the conversation, this is what I am needing right now, a chance to brainstorm ideas with other play advocates!!!”

4.8 Trauma and Violence-Informed Approaches Testimonials from Webinar Participants:

“It was very helpful, eye-opening and inspiring.”

“This was probably one of the best webinars that I have participated in since the onset of Covid. I thoroughly enjoyed the well-planned, organized and positive-based material that was put forth. I work in the military environment and often that is the only perspective that I am exposed to however, in this group, I was exposed to many other social sectors, eg. immigration, single fathers, women’s support, etc. It was a presentation that was different than most and I would love to attend more in the future.”

“Hearts and souls were put into this session and lots of life experience. It has helped me better understand myself and I will pass the skills I’ve learnt today to my clients. Many thanks!”

6.0 New and Upcoming Resources

EN English FR French CH Chinese AR Arabic SP Spanish MA Mandarin CA Cantonese PU Punjabi

NEW

Report: Accessing Financial Literacy Educations Programs EN

Through a Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) approach, FC developed and released a report identifying: social, economic, and institutional barriers that prevent women living on low incomes from accessing financial literacy education programs. The report features financial literacy education topics that women living on low incomes want to learn about and recommendations for making financial literacy education programs more accessible. Available at FamiliesCanada.ca.



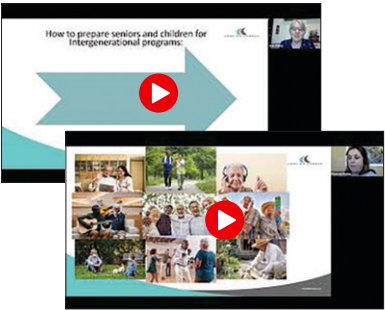
Guide: Intergenerational Programming AR CH

FC produced new culturally adapted versions of the Intergenerational Volunteering programming guide in Arabic and Simplified Chinese. Available at FamiliesCanada.ca.



Webinars: Promoting Intergenerational Volunteering between Newcomer Seniors and Young Children EN

FC hosted two webinars on lessons learned from the Intergenerational Volunteering pilot program. The webinars explore strategies to support virtual intergenerational volunteering programming, the benefits of the program for everyone involved, common challenges to expect and strategies for overcoming them. Available on our Youtube channel.



Video: Being a Senior in Canada EN FR AR PU MA CA SP

Moving to a new country can be challenging for seniors and they experience many different emotions about leaving their home, life, friends and family behind. This new video, part of the *Family Life in Canada* resource series, explores the lived experiences of newcomer seniors in Canada. Available on our Youtube channel.

Infographics: Compassion Fatigue and Secondary Trauma, Low Impact Debriefing, and Key Messages on Pandemic Fatigue EN FR

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of having sufficient support and resources to manage fatigue and trauma. FC produced four infographics on incorporating trauma and violence-informed practices. Available at FamiliesCanada.ca.



Training Video: Incorporating TVIA in Family Support Programs EN

This is a foundational training webinar for family support practitioners to address increasing rates of domestic violence and family violence during COVID-19. This training builds the capacity of family support centres to adapt existing programs to better meet the needs of those impacted by trauma, domestic violence, and/or family violence. Available on our Youtube channel. Why Play? Pamphlets



EN FR AR PU CH SP

Based on the content in the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, the *Why Play?* series suggests play activities for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Two adaptations for specific groups were developed in the past year and will soon be available:

1. *Why Play? Growing at My Own Pace* for parents of children with intellectual disabilities. The content was adapted with support from West Island Association for the Intellectually Handicapped.
2. *Why Play? for First Nations Parents and Caregivers*. The content was adapted in partnership with the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health.

The *Why Play?* Spotlight series includes play activities that help develop specific skills and competencies in early childhood such as language, emotional expression, self-regulation and pro-social behaviour. **Available soon at FamiliesCanada.ca.**



Why Play? Activity Cards

EN FR AR PU CA SP CH

The *Why Play?* Activity Cards complement the *Why Play?* pamphlets. Each box contains a user guide and 24 activity cards that offer a variety of simple and short activities to enjoy with young children on a day-to-day basis. The activities foster competencies such as autonomy, communication, and exploration. These cards can be used by anybody who wants to play with a child aged 0-5 such as parents, caregivers, and service providers. **Available soon at FamiliesCanada.ca.**

Podcast: Supporting Families EN

The *Supporting Families: Latest Science, Best Practices* podcast, hosted by Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, presents the latest science and current practices in different areas of early childhood development. The podcast allows family support practitioners to access the material in their own time. The information discussed is based on material from the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development. So far, two episodes on Gender Identity in Early Years and Mental Health in Early Years have been released. Two more will be released soon on Outdoor Play and Technology in the Early Years. Subscribe on the platform of your choice to be notified when new episodes are available!



Available on: Spotify libsyn Google Podcasts

• • •

UPCOMING

E-modules EN FR

Coming soon—e-modules on play and on brain development. The modules are micro-lessons, with brief videos, readings, and interactive activities. The modules contain content from the Science of Early Child Development and the Encyclopedia for Early Childhood Development.

Text Messaging Toolkit EN

FC and the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development have developed a 'Text Messaging Toolkit' full of short messages on early childhood development for services providers to send to parents and caregivers. Text messages enable parents and caregivers who may not have internet or smartphones to access valuable evidence-based information. This resource will be released in 2021 and will be available in English.

Pamphlets: Food Safety for Newcomer Seniors

EN FR CH AR

FC looks forward to developing informational pamphlets to help family support centres work with newcomer seniors on food safety.

Guide: Engaging Newcomer Seniors

EN FR

FC will develop a guide on recruiting and engaging newcomer seniors to help family support centres successfully include newcomer seniors in their programming.

Training: Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support EN

In partnership with the National Family Support Network, FC will be adapting the *Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support* for Canadian family support centres and support its implementation in Canada.

For more information on the Standards of Quality, visit www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org.



7.0 Financial Report

These statements are an extract from the complete audited financial statements of Families Canada for the year ended March 31, 2021. Copies of the complete financial statements are available upon request by members.

The Auditor, Andrews & Co., has provided Families Canada with a clean audit opinion on the 2020-2021 Financial Statements.

Contingency Fund

This fund has been established to ensure the continued operation of the Association in the event of a disruption in its core funding or a deterioration in its operations. This fund can only be used towards operations with the approval of the Board. As operations allow, the fund will be maintained at an amount equal to three months of core expenses.

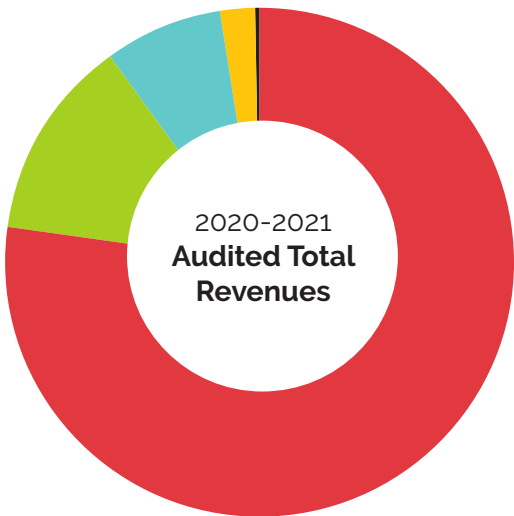
Project Funding and Government Contributions

Project Funding and Government Contributions have decreased in 2021 over 2020 by 18% equal to \$177,907

- due to reduced funding from various sources. We gratefully acknowledge contributions from:
- The Lawson Foundation
 - IRCC – Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
 - ESDC – Employment and Social Development Canada
 - OTF – Ontario Trillium Foundation
 - WAGE – Women and Gender Equality Canada
 - Community Foundations of Canada
 - TechNation

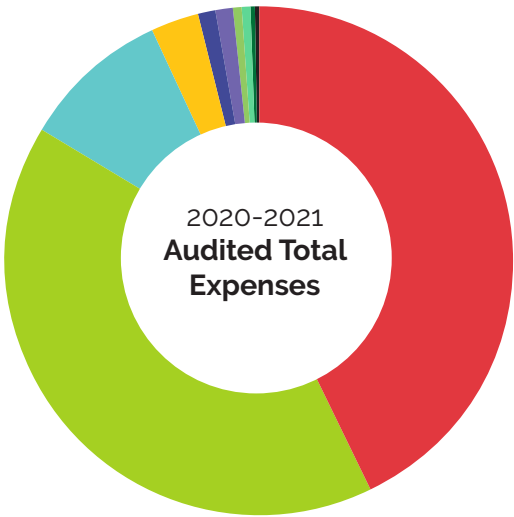
Financial Information

The year ended March 31, 2021, resulted in net revenue over expenses in the amount of \$102,901.



- **76.7%** Project funding and government contributions
- **12.7%** Other
- **7.4%** Publications
- **2.4%** Philanthropic donations
- **0.8%** Memberships

Other revenue includes Canada Emergency Subsidies

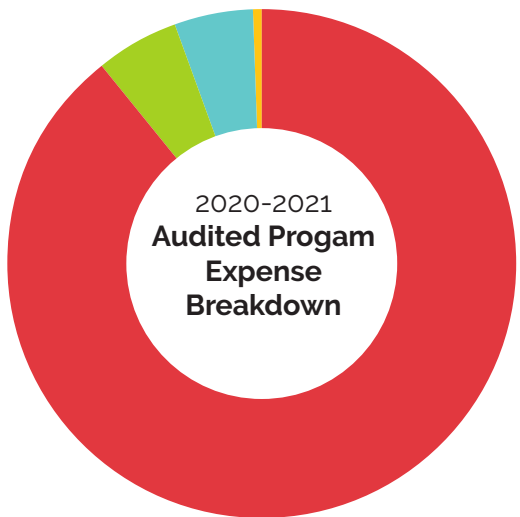


- **42.7%** Consultants and contracts
- **40.9%** Salaries and benefits
- **9.4%** Publications
- **2.9%** Rent
- **1.3%** Translation
- **0.9%** Professional fees
- **0.7%** Telecommunications
- **0.6%** Office
- **0.2%** Insurance
- **0.1%** Amortization

The decrease in expenses in 2021 over 2020 is due to reduced funding for programs resulting in lower expenses for programs and no travel related expenses due to COVID-19.

The decrease in expenses in 2021 over 2020 is due to reduced funding for programs resulting in lower expenses for programs and no travel related expenses due to COVID-19.

- **89.3%** Program Expenses
- **5.4%** Support Services
- **4.8%** Publications, Products, Services
- **0.5%** Admin and Overheads





List of Donors

We are thankful for the generous support of the following 2020-2021 donors:

- Active for Life
- UNICEF Canada
- Debra Armstrong
- Sye Mincoff Consulting Inc.
- Susan Ross
- Murielle Mutatayi
- Brenda Lohrenz

We also thank the donors who wish to remain anonymous



Connect with Us

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