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# Our **Mission,** **Vision,** and **Values**

## **Our Mission**

Committed to assisting people with developmental needs to live, work and participate fully in the community as valued partners.

## **Our Vision**

Community Living Owen Sound and District will be a positive influence in shaping a community where all people have the opportunity to live out their hopes and dreams, regardless of differences in intellectual or other abilities.

## **Our Core Values**

- Dignity and Worth of Every Person
- Mutual Respect and Healthy Relationships
- Family and Friends
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Informed Choice
- Risk, Opportunity and Lifelong Learning
- Community Inclusion

# Message from the **President**

My first year and initial few months as President were one of initial sadness with the unexpected death of our dear colleague Gary Dale, a well-respected President for Community Living Owen Sound. My learning curve has been steep but full of inspiring information.

2021/2022 was a year of dedication and hard work for all the staff with the continuation of covid. The adaptation of new policies and health regulations was confusing to all involved initially. It never ceases to amaze me how everyone adapts. Such a resilient group! Zoom continued as a means for connectivity to friends, relatives, and the outside world. We continue to wait for the day that all restrictions are lifted. I can't wait to start meeting in person again!

In 2021/2022 we welcomed Judy Porteous and Al Smethurst to the Board. Dave Wenn has taken on John Cherrie's duties as Treasurer and Chair of the Resources Committee and as Robyn Bumstead prepares to leave the board, Al Smethurst takes over as the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Thank you, Robyn, for all your hard work.

In the spring of 2021, the board approved the purchase of a home in Port Elgin. A much-needed space. Funding and staff had been secured. This house is now a new home for three young ladies.

In December of 2021, the Board adopted the "Master Service Agreement" with the Grey Bruce Management and Administration Services. In January of 2022, Michele Bell is welcomed as the new Executive Director of Community Living Owen Sound and District and CEO of GBMAS as Rick Hill plans his retirement at the end of March. A well-earned retirement after thirty-seven years of service to the Bruce Peninsula Association for Community Living, Owen Sound and District, and Walkerton and District and after nine years in the

creation of the "Grey Bruce Management and Administration Services" (TASSO). We wish Rick a wonderful retirement.

Finally, the Board, through the capable hands of Michele, sent a letter to all local candidates vying for seats in the Ontario government concerning affordable housing, the need for increases to O.D.S.P as well as the cost of living and transportation.

As the Board heads into a new year, we expect a licensing review and its results and plan to set an agenda for 2022/2023. The Board expects to welcome and provide training for new members, have all members involved in Governance training as well as learn about "The Journey to Belonging". We will also set a date to draft a new strategic plan.

Thank you for your continued support of Community Living Owen Sound and District, its people we support as well as our hard-working staff.

**Rosalind Brooks**  
President





# Message from the CEO

Our second full year of the pandemic. What a challenging few years it has been for sure.

Year two of the pandemic had some of us feeling like we were in a bit of a holding pattern, a state or period of no progress or change. Others were feeling like they were characters in the movie “Groundhog Day.” Despite this feeling of suspended animation, holding pattern, or Groundhog Day, people did in fact march on and forward. And it was no different for us here at CLOS&D.

We continued to carry on, under the ever-changing conditions and mandates. We got boosted, continued to mask, (and then some) we sanitized, and much of our supports were augmented in some way. We experienced a few more waves, and in fact, our communities experienced the most challenging times in Dec, Jan, Feb and March.

It has been a very long and challenging two-plus years, and hopefully, we have come to the end of the more challenging times.

We could not have done any of this without the amazing staff teams who have stepped up in a significant way to ensure that people were supported, despite all the changes in pandemic protocols and despite staffing challenges caused by all the requirements for isolation as well as an overall staffing crisis that is happening in all sectors.

Each and every day, our front-line staff and supervisors worked with people in their homes, wearing uncomfortable PPEs that were hot, and sweaty, and made it uncomfortable to breathe through the masks, supporting them in their daily lives. And our staff did this with enthusiasm and with the professionalism that was required.

Our front-line staff and supervisors have been the heroes of this past year. Never wavering in their support to ensure that people supported were living their best lives in a pandemic.

To them, we are so very grateful and appreciate the work they do each and every day.

The people we support have also settled into the ever-changing protocols and limitations placed on their lives. They have become accustomed to wearing masks, having staff in their homes with full PPEs, with limits placed on their comings and the cohort requirements.

Despite all of the limitations this past year, people supported continued to celebrate successes. They celebrated birthdays, regularly attended virtual events hosted by our community participation team, visited with family, both virtually and in person (when permitted), and they supported each other. We should be immensely proud of the demonstration of such resiliency of people supported these past two years.

We are in the midst of making plans to return to a more familiar way of life. A return to a full calendar of events at our community participation program, no masking requirements in our administration offices, and hopefully no seventh wave in the fall.

Again, thank you to our amazing staff and to our people supported for their amazing demonstration of resiliency in year two of the pandemic.

We are all excited about what the future has in store for us.

**Michele Bell**  
CEO



# Board of Directors

## 2022-2023

Al Smethurst

Bob Nicol

Dave Wenn

Jamie Nicol

John Cherrie

Judy Porteous

Michael Forcier

Paul Middlebrook

Ron Fenwick

Ros Brooks

### Executive Committee

#### 2021/2022

**Ros Brooks**, PRESIDENT

**Michael Forcier**, VICE PRESIDENT

**Dave Wenn**, TREASURER

### Nominating Committee

#### 2021/2022

**Al Smethurst**, CHAIR

**Ros Brooks**

### Resource/Property Committee

#### 2021/2022

**Dave Wenn**, CHAIR

**Ros Brooks**

**Michael Forcier**

# Management Team

## 2022/2023



**Michele Bell**  
CEO



**Adriana Londono,**  
MANAGER OF FINANCE



**Craig Rourke,**  
MANAGER OF  
ACCOMMODATIONS



**Joanne Young,**  
DIRECTOR OF  
SPECIALIZED SERVICES



**Leanne Hopkins,**  
MANAGER CHILD AND  
FAMILY SERVICES



**Lorraine St.Germain,**  
MANAGER BUSINESS AND  
CORPORATE RESOURCES



**Sarah Beaton,**  
MANAGER OF  
ALTERNATIVE HOUSING  
AND COMMUNITY LINKS



**Sue Skinner,**  
MANAGER QUALITY  
ASSURANCE AND  
RESOURCES



**Tammy Robertson,**  
MANAGER OF COMMUNITY  
SUPPORTS

# Staff Milestones

A special thank you to those celebrating a milestone anniversary this year for your hard work and commitment to the people and families that we support.

## 35 Years

Bill Johnson

## 20 Years

Julie Fitzsimmons

Kati Burgess

Donna Paterson

## 15 Years

Stephanie McGregor

Margaret Muir

Lorraine St.Germain

Erin McCall

## 5 Years

Maryanne Reid

Brooke Ramsay

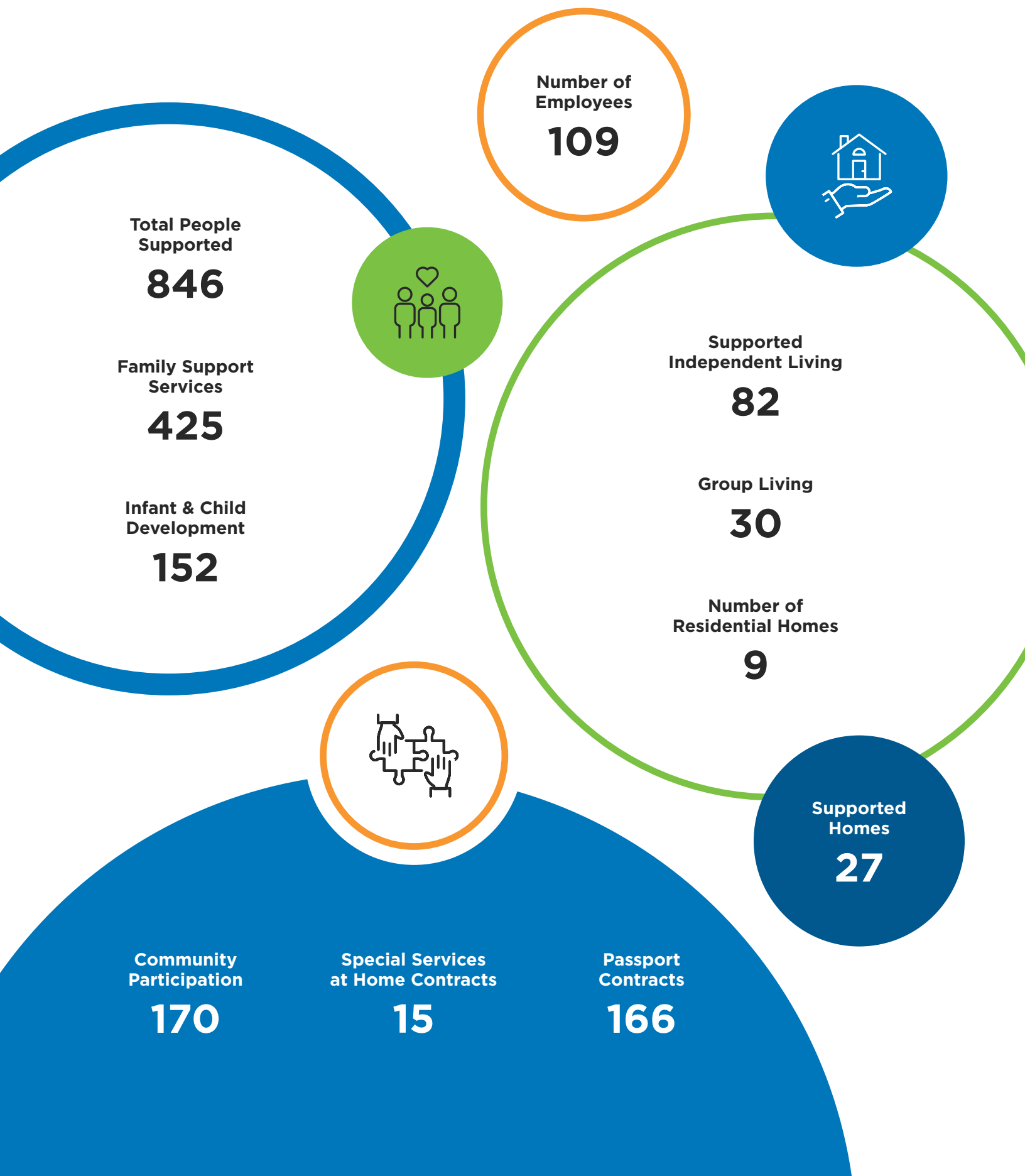
Lisa Kay Blome

Dan Ball

Patty Middleton



# Service at a Glance



Number of  
Employees  
**109**



Total People  
Supported

**846**

Family Support  
Services

**425**

Infant & Child  
Development

**152**



Supported  
Independent Living

**82**

Group Living

**30**

Number of  
Residential Homes

**9**



Supported  
Homes

**27**

Community  
Participation

**170**

Special Services  
at Home Contracts

**15**

Passport  
Contracts

**166**

# Tri-Alliance Shared Services Update



On January 1st, 2022, Tri-Alliance Shared Services (TASSO) began operations.

## What is Tri-Alliance Shared Services?

Tri-Alliance Shared Services is the innovative and deepening work of the three Boards of Directors of Community Living Owen Sound and District (CLOSD), Community Living Walkerton and District (CLWD), and Bruce Peninsula Association for Community Living (BPACL).

## Why Was Tri-Alliance Shared Services Formed?

Working collaboratively in a Shared Leadership model for the last 8 years led the boards to explore the benefits of expanding the collaborative working relationship resulting in a decision to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our management and administrative functions by bringing them together into one agency.

## What Has The Tri-Alliance Shared Services Accomplished Thus Far?

With the changing landscape ahead, even pre-pandemic, the three boards have taken this decision to strengthen the working relationship to better prepare all three agencies for the future.

In the first three months of operation, in the midst of a pandemic, the management and administrative teams of three agencies have begun to work together. Aligning systems and our work to create greater efficiencies on the back end with the intention of strengthening the support provided to the people supported in our community. Being more efficient in the back office will provide greater opportunities for the people supported by all three agencies.

## How Does The Tri-Alliance Shared Services Function?

Each of the agencies continues to be a separate legal entity that now contracts the management and administrative services from the Tri-Alliance Shared Services.

TASSO is a not-for-profit agency, supported by a Board of Directors comprised of two Board members from each of the three founding members.

## What's Next For Tri-Alliance Shared Services?

The management and administrative teams have begun to work collaboratively together to ensure efficiencies in the following areas:

- Accounts Payable: One position to support two agencies
- Leadership: One CEO instead of 2 EDs
- Housing & Maintenance: Creation of a manager role to support all three agencies' housing stock and plan for the future

We are also in the process of applying for charitable status and hope we receive approval for this within the year.

# Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC)

It has been a challenging year for all of us, looking back at the work that had to be done to protect the people we support, ourselves, and family members from COVID-19 is not something that brings a smile to anyone's face, yet we find solace in knowing how much worse it could have been.

Every effort we made helped a bit more in protecting people that had a high risk of infection and their support staff. In total, we created 7 educational videos and wrote more than 10 IPAC guides for employees, people we support, and their families. Organized weekly rapid antigen testing clinics and then transitioned to self-testing.

We actively participated in the Provincial Network Vaccine Advocacy group to make the vaccine distribution prioritized to people who live with a disability regardless if they live in congregate care homes, independently, or with family. During our 3 vaccine clinics, 340 doses of vaccines were administered.

We learned from the South West IPAC hub partners, a multi ministerial IPAC initiative, about personal protective equipment, ventilation, and air quality, and we taught our health partners about the different needs of people who live with an intellectual disability to accept and follow prevention strategies.

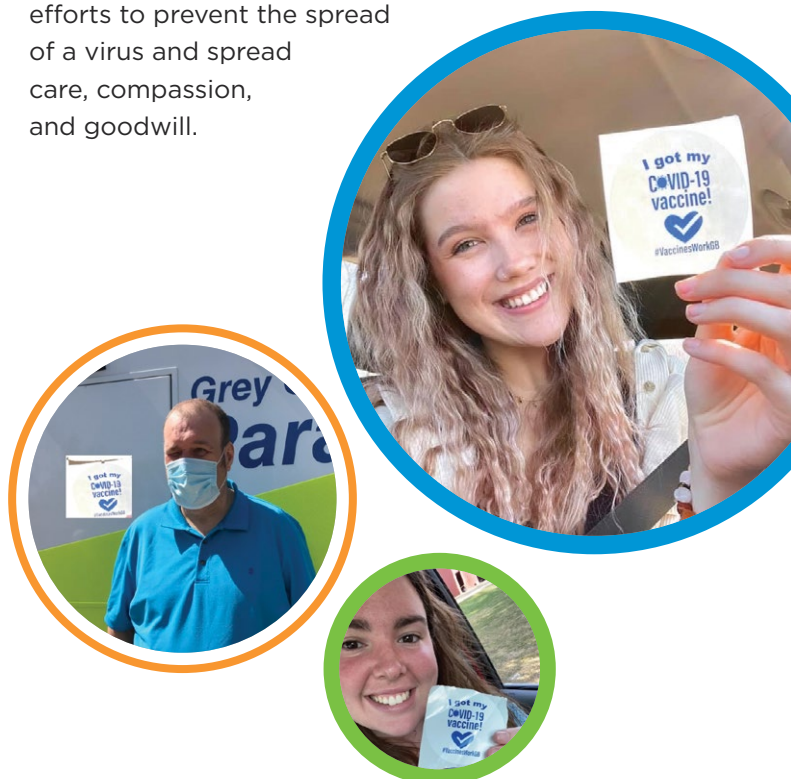
As we understood better the importance of fitting an N95 mask, our health partners also considered implementing guides that considered the mental health effects of isolation in congregate care.

We participated and presented 2 case studies in ECHO (Ontario Adult Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities group) a collaboration between the Canadian Mental Health Association and the University of Toronto. This Group addresses the intersection of intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in adults and mental health concerns that this population faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We also participated in a research study led by McMaster University: Examining the development and utilization of infection control policies to safely support adults with neurodevelopmental disabilities in congregate living settings during COVID-19 to learn more about the complexities of what people we support face when implementing guides and directives.

All of our homes have experienced outbreaks and we have worked closely with the Health Unit, to monitor the outbreaks, and with medical professionals to ensure the safety of the people who needed medical care or hospitalization, by monitoring basic health indicators.

It has been a difficult year, and in our organization, we concentrated our efforts to prevent the spread of a virus and spread care, compassion, and goodwill.



# Compliance Review

Program advisor from MCCSS Quality Assurance and Compliance conducted an inspection of the agency in July 2021



The inspection was completed, based on **86 indicators.**

**100%**  
compliant  
on QAM  
Indicators

Community Living Owen Sound and District received a **letter of full compliance** from MCCSS on July 28th, 2021.

The Compliance Advisor provided additional **complimentary feedback** on:



Staff was knowledgeable, welcoming, and professional



Impressed with the conduct of proper IPAC procedures

# Partnership is **Key**

Mark Parker, Executive Chairman and past CEO of NIKE Inc., is quoted as saying “The biggest sources of opportunity are collaboration and partnership.” A small quote packed with so much truth for Community Living Owen Sound & District Adult Services.

This past year, it has been partnerships at all levels that have not only helped us during the trying times but have also helped us to support people to navigate systems and to continue to transition and grow.

## Partnership with Families

To continue to keep people safe, directives and restrictions outlined by the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services continued. Through the important partnerships we have with families, we were able to continue to keep people connected with those who play such an important role in their lives. We also worked closely with the families of four young people as they transitioned to CLOSD residential supports, with three young women moving into a new supported home together in Port Elgin and a young man moving into our youth transition home. More details on this are outlined in the report from the Manager of Alternative Housing.

## Partnership between Programs

CLOSD has a history of partnerships between programs, and this year, those partnerships have been crucial. At times it has been all hands-on deck as we came together to ensure that people were well supported. When in-person activities at the LINKS program were closed during times of lockdown, LINKS staff ramped up virtual activities, ensuring people in supported homes and supported through the Support Pool had the materials they needed to participate. When homes were short-staffed due to COVID-related

staff absence, staff from Support Pool and LINKS stepped in. In challenging times, our staff continues to work together to ensure people are well supported.

## Partnerships within the Tri Alliance

As we moved towards the final steps of implementing the Tri Alliance Support Services Organization, all three associations used the opportunity to grow and expand our partnership. One of the critical areas was the work of the TASSO IPAC Workgroup, where representatives from all three associations worked together to develop common policies and procedures in how we address and support each other with public health-related concerns such as COVID.

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The work of this workgroup has been instrumental in ensuring we continued to be compliant with the ever-changing provincial and ministry directives and that we continued to keep people as safe as possible.

### **Partnership with our Funder**

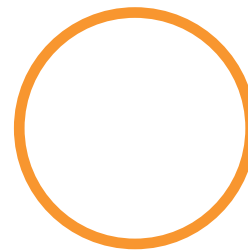
The partnership with our funder has allowed us to grow once again this year. We worked closely with MCCSS to put the resources in place required to support three young women to move into a supported home together, and in January of 2022, we launched the Wellington St home in Port Elgin formally launched.

### **Partnerships with Community Partners**

Through the challenges of the past year, we have built upon existing and developed new partnerships with community partners. These have become invaluable and opened doors for people as we have supported them through some, at times, very complex challenges. Our managers now sit at numerous community tables that include partners from police, health, mental health, justice, homeless, poverty, children's, education, as well as other developmental service agencies.

Over the coming year, we will continue to work in close partnership with families, the Tri Alliance, our funder, community partners, and each other. There is much we need to do to ensure we continue to provide quality support, address day-to-day challenges that arise, and grow and transform to address service gaps.

As Mother Theresa so eloquently put it, "You can do what I cannot do. I can do what you cannot do. Together we can do great things."





# A New Normal For Community Supports

This past year we've had more of a sense of "normal" for the Owen Sound Support Pool (Community Supports).

We have continued to support over 190 individuals with their Supported Independent Living, Community Participation, and Passport goals. While this year hasn't been without its challenges it has been one with many success stories. We have supported someone to move out on their own, another to access parent groups and resources for young parents and we've had a couple get engaged to be married.

The support pool is home to 34 direct support professionals and this year has been filled with both successes and challenges for them as well. We were able to have the entire staff team participate in some online training, which helped us be better communicators and a high-performing team. Throughout the lockdowns and community restrictions, they were able to continue to offer in-person support each day and respond quickly to the ever-changing restrictions as the community navigated its reopening.

Our challenges are much like every other workplace in the region, this is absenteeism due to COVID symptoms and appropriate staffing levels. The support pool has also been called upon for redeployment in many of the supported group living homes to offer additional support to those who receive 24-hour support.

Throughout it all, the staff team in the Community Support Program has been able to maintain a high level of professionalism, understanding, and enthusiasm for the "new normal".



## Ashley and Justin: A Love Story

Many things changed during the lockdown and while many felt stuck in their current surroundings Ashley and Justin made the most of it.

During the lockdown, they combined their households from two apartments to one and this spring Justin decided to get down on one knee and ask Ashley to marry him! They are currently planning their wedding and enjoying the steps that go along with that.

"We look forward to getting married in a church and then having a honeymoon trip after our wedding." — Ashley and Justin

# Penny Chasing Her Dreams

For as long as Penny can remember, she has been surrounded by horses and has always had an interest in them.

Penny had always loved horses, and in 2001, she began riding lessons and volunteering at Georgian Riding Association for Challenged Riders (GRACE) near Owen Sound.

After a few years of riding and volunteering, Penny began to ride at Windsong Carriage and Ranch, where she spent several years helping around the farm, attending lessons, and going to events with the horses.

Penny and the horses have travelled all over Ontario. You may have seen Penny at the Festival of Northern Lights or at the Salmon Spectacular.

With the help of Passport, Penny began weekly lessons at Dream Chasers Equestrian Centre (DCEC) in 2020. Her coach started by assessing her skills and knowledge of horses and was amazed by the amount of experience, knowledge, and talent she had.

Starting with Gator, Penny showcased her skills around brushing and tacking up. It wasn't too long before Arthur caught her eye and Penny began to ride him during her lessons. With Arthur, Penny focused on loping, groundwork (lunging), and even jumping! Since then, Penny has had the opportunity to ride several other horses including Bailey, Elliot, and Misty.

Today, Penny mainly rides Elliot. He is a young and vibrant black Percheron Cross thoroughbred horse that is 17 hands high and weighs about 1800 lbs. Together, Elliot and Penny have worked hard at skills such as barrel racing, riding both Western and English, riding bareback, navigating natural and man-made obstacles, leg yielding, posting, side passing, turning on forehand and haunches,



synchronized riding, trimming hooves, and even riding bareback with no hands.

All of these skills have helped Penny to increase her knowledge and to compete in the Dream Chaser's Barn Show. At the show, Penny placed 2nd and 3rd twice.

Penny is thankful for all she has been able to accomplish with her riding, including helping to train Elliot to be a lesson horse. Penny says riding has made her more confident and pushed her out of her comfort zone.

Penny recommends horseback riding to everyone. For her, it is a chance to focus on the horse and forget what is going on in the outside world.

With all the skills Penny has acquired over the years, she is thrilled to be working hard with Elliot towards her goal of competing in the 2022 Equestrian Paralympics!

Stay tuned... Penny hopes there is much more to come.

# Accommodation Supports

**This past year was one of the more challenging years in recent memory.**

After successfully navigating and adapting to the new normal during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we observed that people receiving support, their families, and their support staff struggled more during the second year of the pandemic. It would be disingenuous not to acknowledge this before sharing some of the highlights and celebrations from this past year.

We witnessed some people we support require more frequent mental health appointments and increased treatment for things like depression and anxiety.

One of our core values at Community Living Owen Sound and District is that people have a voice in decisions affecting their lives. While we did our best to offer meaningful choices day to day, we acknowledge that some people and their families felt voiceless as they advocated for fewer restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

In contrast, some people and their families were in full support of the measures that the Ministry of Community, Children and Social Services, Public Health, and our Association put in place. It was particularly challenging to apply general rules and restrictions for all people supported when we are so accustomed to basing our approaches on individual needs. We appreciate everyone for their patience, resilience, and understanding.

Staff were stretched this year to new limits. With staff required to be off for 10-day isolation periods related to COVID-19 symptoms both for themselves or for family members within their households, there was a significantly increased demand for people to work additional hours, stay late, postpone vacation time and assist at other locations. Casual part-time staff

often worked full-time hours or more and we found ourselves needing to enact emergency redeployment measures which meant some community-based supports were canceled or postponed to ensure that we could effectively continue to support people in their homes.

We appreciate all of the efforts of all staff in all departments who continually work together to ensure that we can support people to be safe and well in their homes by taking on additional work and being flexible. Their commitment is commendable and is recognized.

While people were encouraged to stay home and there were restrictions on what businesses were open, size gathering limits, and other barriers to people getting together socially or recreationally outside of their homes, a number of things were happening inside their homes. People did a lot of baking and canning. Online shopping was something that offered people new choices and more time to source out and select items.

People participated in virtual activities and continued to use social media and things like facetime and zoom to connect with family, friends, and their faith-based community.

People had time to search out distant family members and reconnect with siblings and other relatives by sending cards and making phone calls. Some people now have regular contact with family members that they weren't previously connected with and benefited from using technology at home to search out these connections and keep in touch.

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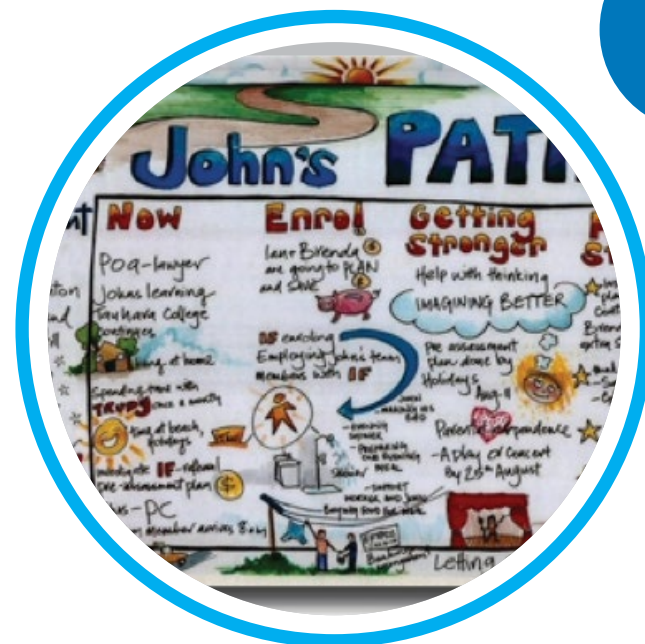


As restrictions lifted and people had more opportunities to engage in community life outside of their homes, people returned to horseback riding, Special Olympics, working out at the YMCA, going for coffee, hiking on local trails, and participating in the REACH program and attending church in person. For most people, this was a welcome change and they embraced and were enthusiastic to return, for some people it was a bit of an adjustment and caused some anxiety as they had grown accustomed to routines at home and had to adjust to different environments. It was evident that people were missed when their local shops and vendors were closed or when people were unable to access them as people were greeted with warm smiles (even if sometimes it was behind masks) as vendors expressed their happiness to see people return and eagerly welcomed them back as valued patrons.

One celebration of note was that we renovated the garage into an apartment at one location to enable someone who lived there to achieve his goal of moving into his own apartment. It was a significant renovation project that the person had input on and he transitioned fairly seamlessly into his new space and quickly had it set up and decorated the way that he wanted. This person's increased independence was very positive and people that know him all agreed that he was happier, more relaxed, and really embraced and was proud of his new apartment.

Staffing continues to be a challenge as we experience growth and attempt to meet the needs of the community. We are looking at new ways to recruit people and retain staff. The local unemployment rate is low and there isn't a lineup of people looking for work in the developmental sector.

People are optimistically planning for a summer full of enriching and exciting things to do in their communities. We are hopeful that we can continue to balance the need to take safety measures to prevent the risk of spreading COVID-19 while ensuring that people have access to their full rights of citizenship and are equal and valued members of their community.



# Alternative Housing and Community Links

## River House

Last year we focused part of our report on our new program at River House:

“As a result of the ongoing research and discussion into the changes and challenges presented to transitional age youth, an alternative housing model to help youth navigate the transfer from the Child Welfare System into the Adult Services system was launched.

The River House opened in February of 2021 and is currently providing individualized support to a transitional age youth as he prepares for independent living in the community. Simultaneously, the team is working with the child welfare system to prepare another youth to transition into the home as space becomes available.”

We are happy to update that our first youth has transitioned into his next stage of independent living, and is now residing at our 1290 apartments. The next resident transitioned to River house in November of 2021.

“J has the opportunity to have more space and independence – that he was ready for! Great pleasure getting to know J!”  
— Team Member

“I have also been able to see Z transition from River House to 1290 and then see J move into his new home at River House and can tell he will do amazing things!”  
— Team Member



## Wellington House

We are also excited to announce the opening of a second residential house in Port Elgin. Wellington house provides 24-hour support to 3 young ladies ages 19-25.

The new team of six – all with diverse backgrounds and experience will be fostering many opportunities to encourage learning, growth and development for individuals they support in the house.

Welcome Wellington team!

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## Community LINK

Again COVID-19 restrictions in 2021-2022 presented many challenges for the LINK and many ups and downs for the program. We were able to give the LINK a much-needed renovation in the fall and were able to open the doors back up in November.

The team was also able to put together a sensory room for individuals to use, which was well received. We planned and held many fun activities at the LINK itself and in the community. It was nice to see how as we added activities and opportunities, people began to come back.

The last big event was a front row seat for the Christmas parade and watching the fireworks afterwards.

“People slowly started to come in the doors in November, we took things pretty small and cautiously for good reason and only had 12 people sign up for an entire day at The Link. In December, we added more events and allowed in a few more people and the space was feeling like a hub again.... a meeting space that was safe and inviting for friends to reunite. The Sensory room is yet another beneficial and much-needed place for so many participants!!” - Team Member

Unfortunately, due to the outbreaks in the community mid -December we had to close the doors again to onsite activities. We were still offering fun virtual LINK activities such as Bingo, Mindfulness and Yoga.

Restrictions are still in place that limit our onsite capacity, but we are hoping with the arrival of summer (and the nice weather) we will be offering more outdoor activities that will be able to accommodate more people and lots of opportunities to enjoy our exciting activities.





# Children's Services and Family Support

## Mission Moment

Communities that embrace inclusion are paramount to the achievement of our mission. Without true acceptance of others, we would not be able to support individuals to fulfill the mission!

We strive toward enabling and empowering people to live, work and participate in the community. For children, youth and their families, there are significant others that are key influencers. Educators are key influencers and can play a role to champion inclusion.

Schools are a rich component of a young person's community. More and more, we are experiencing that, individually, educators enact a more fulsome understanding of the importance of acceptance and supporting all children and understanding that one box does not fill all.

Through learning and problem solving together, we can ensure equity and authentic inclusion not only in school settings but also in the broader community.

## Supports

As of May 1, 2022:

- **587 people** were being supported by Children's Services and Family Support. Combined, the Infant & Child Development Services, Special Needs Resource Consultants and Family Support teams received 177 new referrals from June 2021 to April 2022.
- **173 Early Childhood Educator** mentoring consultations were provided by the SNR Consultants during the same time frame. This is activity over and above caseload support.
- **An average of 23** licensed child care programs were visited monthly.
- The Bluewater District School Board reported that **57** tier three early planning meetings were completed between January and March 2022 between school board personnel, parents and Children's Services team members to support preschoolers preparing for kindergarten entry in the fall of 2022. Tier three means that children have three or more intervention or treatment services connected to support their learning and development.

## Milestones

- We made every effort to enable and empower parents throughout the last year while working under constant change and the ongoing uncertainty of restrictions related to the pandemic.
- Team members worked from home and office on designated days and became even more efficient and proficient in their use of technology as a mode of engagement. Their resiliency is amazing.
- In the summer of 2021, the Special Need Resource Consultants resumed on-site consultations at licensed child care centers under strict protocols and guidance directives from the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. You can say they were double protected!
- The Family Support team re-vamped the summer program to a youth engagement model facilitated by a returning Teen Connect/Virtual Pod staff. The Youth Engagement Program consisted of four themes based, objectively driven modules delivered through a combination of online discussion groups, DIY activity kits and one-to-one, in-person, community-based discovery challenges.

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- Many families chose to have their children return to school or partake in synchronous learning which meant that advocacy and support for and with parents were critical to ensuring that individual education plans were being updated and implemented. The Family Support team was actively engaged with families to ensure the success of youth regardless of which mode of learning was undertaken.
- The Children's Services team worked with the school boards to support early kindergarten registration in the fall of 2021 by providing a parent-friendly child development screening tool in the parent information package and offering easy one-call access to arrange for follow-up consultation as requested. We are continuing to support the spring registration process in the same manner.
- In September, we participated in a drive-through event at Heritage Mall along with community partners to provide information and resource materials to families.
- As well in September, members of Children's Services researched and vetted materials for an online presentation in recognition of Truth and Reconciliation and prepared a resource package that is available for all staff to access.
- Team members also facilitated online sessions with 11 youth through the Reaction 4 Inclusion model to empower youth to become "Inclusionist Champions" in their homes, communities and schools.

## Challenges

Ongoing isolation, rising costs of living, lack of respite, and changing restrictions to safeguard population health and wellness presented challenges for everyone but compounded the pressures and stressors for those with developmental disabilities and their families. We experienced more families with heightened levels of near-crisis scenarios with respect to their food security, housing, employment,

and overall family well-being. This shifted the focus of our support and assistance from advocacy at a system level to individualized problem solving with parents for the basics on a daily basis.

The child care sector is significantly challenged to the point of crisis with respect to recruitment, retention and morale of Early Childhood Educators. Licensed programs often have to shutter rooms because of absenteeism and/ or programs struggling to fill vacancies. There are waiting lists for child care spaces for preschoolers and for before and after school programs for all children and this makes it even harder for families with children with special needs to access care and early learning. We worked with the CMSM at Grey County to advocate for additional funds to bring the hourly rate of pay for Special Needs Resource Consultant Assistants to an equitable level with registered Early Childhood Educators in an effort to address the recruitment difficulties for the dedicated staff in the center for children with special needs.

## Trends

Having the capacity to work remotely has enabled all team members to continue to support families albeit outreach via Zoom, TEAMS or the 8x8 platforms is not without issues. Technology and the utilization of apps and software will be an ongoing learning curve and we need to ensure we are positioned to be progressive in this regard with upgrades to devices when needed and ongoing professional development. Outreach via technology will remain an important addition to our service menu and we must continue to refine our skills to ensure optimal engagement.

**Continued on next page**



The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services continues to move ahead with its modernization agenda including digitalizing applications to online processes and significant investments in children's services including children's treatment centers and preschool speech services. Although there is not a direct investment in Infant and Child Development Services, we must continue to collaborate with our allied service partners to ensure we remain a valued and credible gateway to service for families with infants at risk or presenting with delays in development.

## Opportunities

### **Smart Start Hubs, Ontario Association for Infant Development & Child Development Advocacy Efforts, Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care, Representation on Special Education Advisory Committees**

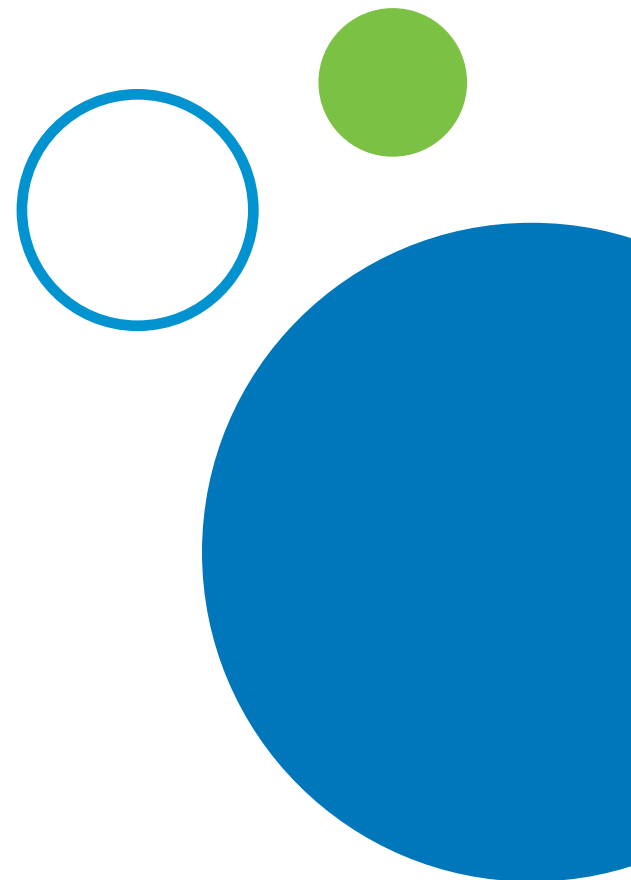
The Children's Services and Family Support team members are encouraged and excited to participate in initiatives with the Ministry and local partnerships.

The Ministry is launching Smart Start Hubs using Children's Treatment Centers across the province as a warm line referral and information sharing mechanism. Both Infant Development and Family Support teams will be working with TVCC in London in this process. The Ontario Association for Infant and Child Development (OAICD) Board of Directors is undertaking an advocacy campaign to showcase the merit and importance of early intervention programs like ICDS and to amplify the need for future investment to sustain and enhance the programs given that programs have not received any financial increases in the last twenty years!

The investments from the federal government with the objective to have \$10.00 per day child

care (averaged across the province) is now in their implementation stages in Ontario with a 73-page addendum to the regulations of the Child Care & Early Learning Act. The Special Needs Resource Consulting team will be involved locally to support the implementation to ensure the best outcomes for preschoolers with special needs.

And finally, now that Family Support is actively engaged with the Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC) with both local school boards, we hope to have the opportunity to influence and inform on the best practices of inclusion through work with the committees and through a Community of Practice.



# Statement of Financial Position

## Balance Sheet

as at March 31

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash & Receivables	530,187	743,788
Property and Equipment	3,301,075	2,907,563
	<b>3,831,262</b>	<b>3,651,351</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable	617,600	1,000,180
Long Term Debt	827,026	412,656
Deferred Contributions	522,653	540,165
	<b>1,967,279</b>	<b>1,953,001</b>
<b>Fund Balances</b>		
Capital Asset Fund	1,951,396	1,954,742
Operating Fund	8,747	- 17,072
(Association) Community Living Fund	- 96,160	- 239,320
	<b>1,863,983</b>	<b>1,698,350</b>
	<b>3,831,262</b>	<b>3,651,351</b>

(summary of audited financial information taken from audited financial statements)

(prepared by Baker Tilly SGB LLP)

# Statement of Financial Position

## Statement of Operations

April 1 to March 31

	2021/2022	2021/2021
Revenue	\$	\$
Provincial Grants	9,822,451	9,365,014
County of Grey	811,425	819,465
Donations	75,298	43,506
Rental Income	184,816	158,805
Other including expenditure recoveries	292,043	331,830
	<b>11,186,033</b>	<b>10,718,620</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Salaries and Benefits	7,881,462	7,294,754
Other Program Costs	3,090,392	3,307,025
Association / Board	48,546	35,475
	<b>11,020,400</b>	<b>10,637,254</b>
<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>165,633</b>	<b>81,366</b>

(summary of audited financial information taken from audited financial statements)

(prepared by Baker Tilly SGB LLP)



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