



Bridges to
BELONGING
WATERLOO REGION

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19



Enhancing Possibilities ~ Enriching Community

About Us

OUR VISION

Waterloo Region is a community where everyone belongs – where we value meaningful relationships, honour choices and dreams, and celebrate the uniqueness of each person.

OUR MISSION

Through meaningful relationships, we support you to build on your unique abilities, to create the life you want in the community.



OUR VALUES

Choice: The opportunity to choose

Uniqueness: The individuality of each person

Relationships: Social networks and friendships are critical for healthy well being

Full Citizenship: Valued membership of community

Respect: Mutual respect and kindness for all

Collaboration: We value partnerships - working well together with others

Inclusion: Full involvement in community for all

A Message From our Board Chair

This famous quote from Charles Dickens that opens his seminal novel The Tale of Two Cities, could have been written to describe the journey that Bridges to Belonging (B2Be) has been on over the last year.

In June 2018 the members of Planned Lifetime Networks unanimously voted to accept the recommendations of the joint merger committee to dissolve its' corporation and merge with the existing Bridges to Belonging organization. Later that month, the B2Be board and members also chose to accept the recommendations. The merger process began and the existing two Boards of Directors were merged into one, under the Bridges to Belonging banner.

In the spring of 2018, the current Executive Director, Cameron Dearlove resigned his position and after an extensive search by the Board of Directors, in July 2018, Ms. Donnamarie Dunk was selected for the position. She has worked very hard to solidify and enhance the structure of the organization during a time of steep learning and tremendous change. We are very grateful to her for her leadership.

As Donnamarie began her work, we were hopeful that the new provincial government would continue its support for our work through their Independent Facilitation Demonstration Project. We were then in the extended fourth year of the project and hoping for the annualization of dollars to support people living with developmental disabilities and families through our work of independent facilitation.

At our last annual meeting in September 2018, I agreed to co-chair the Bridges to Belonging Board of Directors with Sharon Giles, who had been a member of the former B2Be Board for several years. Unfortunately, Sharon, soon after, had to resign from the Board due to personal reasons. I then took over the sole responsibility of Board Chair and Jamie Moffat moved from being the Board Treasurer and assumed the position of Vice-Chair. One of our new members, Alexia Kuan became our Treasurer. Gracious thanks to you both.

During the autumn months, I worked with others from our provincial organization, the Ontario Independent Facilitation Network to undertake a strategic inquiry with members of the new Conservative government, including the past chair of Bridges to Belonging, MPP Amy Fee. We attempted to work with the government to demonstrate, through research and story, the very positive outcomes of Independent Facilitation for the people and families we had served.

As well, in November 2018, Donnamarie, Jamie and I attended the Capacity Canada Boot Camp for not for profit governance. This two-day workshop, and the material that was provided, will help us to develop a sound governance structure for the organization as we move ahead.

Board Chair Message cont'

In early January 2019, we were told that the funding we had received through the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) would end in March 2019. We still held out hope that the Conservative government would change their minds. An on-line, family-led, provincial lobby group, Independent Facilitation Matters, was launched, further demonstrating, through story and testimonial, the positive effects of Independent Facilitation on the lives of people and families. Our Vice-Chair Jamie Moffat took it upon himself to initiate both an online petition, which accumulated over 6,000 signatures and an extensive letter-writing campaign to all members of the Provincial Legislature and Federal Parliament. I wish to send out a tremendous Thank You!!! to Jamie for his awesome passion and commitment to the cause of providing Independent Facilitation and for his steadfast support of the Bridges to Belonging organization.

However, all of the lobby efforts were unsuccessful and on March 31, 2019, our provincial funding, which constituted a major portion of our operating budget ended. In April we saw the majority of our contracted Independent Facilitators leave the organization. We wish them well.

And we are still here! Donnamarie has been working very hard during the last year to diversify our income stream. She has also been successful in attaining some project-based grant funding. She has reached out to other organizations in our region and developed important collaborations. Thank you Donnamarie for your dedication and diligence in promoting sustainability for Bridges to Belonging. We are still in business, on a fee for service basis and many people and families are working with our independent facilitators to establish lives of choice, voice and citizenship in Waterloo Region. As I write, we look forward to a very successful fundraising event, "Bowling for Belonging," this evening. We are moving forward into a bright and sustainable future of meaningful service to our community.

Thank you to Donnamarie and to all of the Directors for keeping me sane and on track as we move through this time of transition from the worst of times to the best of times.

Respectfully submitted, Roz Vincent-Haven



Roz Vincent-Haven
Board Chair

A Message From our Executive Director

It was late in July when I first experienced what it felt like to “belong” before even making a contribution or having demonstrated value to “earn” my place. Every encounter with Sharon Giles, Acting Chair was saturated with words of gratitude, confidence and positive expectations for what the future held for Bridges to Belonging and me as the new executive director. She was a gifted woman who radiated acceptance, compassion, empathy and love, leaving a legacy of belonging.

This past year was one of change, transition, adapting and building resilience for Bridges to Belonging. The year began with implementing the merger agreement between Planned Lifetime Networks (PLN) Waterloo, Wellington, Oxford and Bridges to Belonging including a new board with members representing both organizations. In late spring, Cameron Dearlove, Executive Director resigned after building a strong team of independent facilitators.

By mid-summer, I began onboarding in my new role by emerging myself in the history and philosophies of “The New Story”. It was not long before I recognized that the fundamental principles and practices of independent facilitation based on human rights and citizenship differentiated Bridges to Belonging offerings from the current mainstream program, placement and service delivery approaches used by social service agencies, providing people living with a disability to have a good and meaningful life of their choosing in community, and their families with the peace of mind of knowing that their loved one has a place to belong.

By early fall we recognized the need to begin contingency planning for the possible discontinuation of the project funding we were receiving from the Ministry of Children and Community Social Services (MCCSS). The funding allowed 85 people living with a disability in Waterloo Region to receive independent facilitation. In early January, we were officially notified of the MCCSS’s decision to stop funding organizations providing independent facilitation.

Amidst the change and shifting landscape, people and their families together with their independent facilitators continued to embrace their citizenship, prove their resilience and persevere to build a good life in community for themselves.

I continue to be inspired by the vision, gifts and fortitude of the people and families we walk with. I invite you to join us in our commitment and resolve for all people to live with dignity, worth and absolute equal rights and privileges as fellow members of our human family.

Yours in Inclusion



DonnamarieDunk
Executive Director

BE-collaborative

Research

Bridges to Belonging was thrilled when by Emily Tang a graduate student in the Faculty of Kinesiology at Wilfrid Laurier University, contacted us about participating in a research study she was conducting to understand the impact of independent facilitation during the transition from youth to adulthood for "emerging adults" (18-29) with disabilities. Emily's study examines the lived experience of the person, their family and other caregivers, support network members and the independent facilitator.



Together with Paula Fletcher, Ph.D., Professor at the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, Emily sees the research project as contributing to the growing body of research on the impact of person-directed services by emerging adults with disabilities during life transitions and believes it will increase awareness on the value and benefits of independent facilitation.

Community Engagement

Matt White is the Co-founder and Artistic Director of Green Light Arts. After learning about the loss of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services funding for independent facilitation, Matt invited Bridges to Belonging to participate in The "This is the Point" after-show Fuel-Event to share information about independent facilitation, the impact of the funding cut for people with disabilities and their families, the advocacy efforts and how others could be involved, and the Facilitation Matters Coalition.

This is the Point was a live performance co-presented with MT Space, that addressed societal misconceptions and judgements about love, sexuality and disability. The show shared the ordinary and extraordinary true stories of two real-life couples who were actors in the performance.

We are grateful to Green Light Arts for creating the platform for this crucial conversation.



Community Development

"Picture This: An Evening with Andrew Gurza"

Together with the Independent Living Centre (ILCWR) and Shore, we hosted An Evening with Andres Gurza to present and discuss "Picture This" featuring the realities of sex, disability and queerness. produced by The National Film Board of Canada.

Andrew is a disability awareness consultant who shares his lived experiences with Cerebral Palsy, queerness, sexuality and body image in a raw, vulnerable and unapologetic fashion.



Those who attended the event were appreciative of Andrew's vulnerability and openness and grateful to have a respectful space to have a real conversation about the intimate needs of people living with disabilities

A Sibling Conversation

Jeremy Foote, came to Bridges to Belonging for his Laurier MSW Field Placement. As a sibling with two brothers living with a disability Jeremy was interested in focusing his placement on researching the roles, challenges, and experiences of adult siblings as caregivers to their brother or sister living with a disability.

Jeremy hosted a "Sibs Event" to learn about the experiences, need and concerns of other siblings in the Waterloo Region and to share his own.

The evening was well attended. Siblings were grateful to have a space to share and learn together and expressed the need for peer support and a safe place to discuss the future and break their isolation.



BE-collaborative

On the House



On the House is an opportunity for families that have a loved one(s) with a disability to enjoy a delicious compliment support person nearby so the family can relax and enjoy their meal participants are chosen by random selection

On the House is an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Collaborative initiative between Bridges to Belonging, Children's Safety Village, Waterloo Region Family Network, Borealis Grille & Bar and Extend A Family Waterloo Region



Future Planning

At Bridges to Belonging, we believe that Future Planning is one of the most important aspects for a person with a disability to have a good life of their choosing in the safest and most secure way possible, and for their loved ones to have peace of mind.

The merger of Planned Lifetime Networks (PLN) Waterloo Region with Bridges to Belonging provided BtoBe with the rich knowledge, experience and local partnerships cultivated by PLN over the years to offer Future Planning Workshops and resources to the people and families we walk with.

This year we offered workshops on Wills, Estates and the Henson Trust as well as Tax Planning, the Disability Tax Credit and the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

One of the many benefits and resources that PLN brought to Bridges to Belonging was their knowledge, expertise, resources and partnerships related to Future Planning.

Wills, Henson Trust and Estate Planning Workshop

Peter Brennan of Amy, Appleby and Brennan facilitated a workshop about the Henson Trust, Wills and Estate Planning as well as information about Guardianship and Power of Attorney for Personal Care and Property.

The workshop clarified the essential process for planning the future financial security of our loved ones living with a disability.



Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) Workshop

In October, 2018 Bridges to Belonging hosted a workshop facilitated by Al Etmanski, author, community organizer and social entrepreneur, and Paul Arsenault, Certified Financial Planner. The workshop was sponsored by Kindred Credit Union and it discussed RDSP and provided families and community members with information about financial planning.



Independent Facilitation Demonstration Project (IFDP)

This was the last year of the Independent Facilitation Project as the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services informed of their decision to discontinue the project funding beyond March 21, 2019.

The IDFP began as a two-year project and was given an additional two years of funding. During this time over 150 people and families had an independent facilitator assist them with envisioning the life they wanted, creating plans and setting goals to get, then most importantly... walking with them to explore potential, embrace the possibilities and find ways to overcome barriers.

The loss of funding left thousands of families across the province with the decision to either pay for independent facilitation using their limited Passport funding or stop receiving the facilitation services.

In response to the funding cuts, the Bridges to Belonging board made the decision to reorganize from contracting out the services to providing Independent Facilitations by employees of BtoBe. A number of the contracted facilitators made the decision to continue to offer their services on a contracted individualized basis to people with disabilities and families in the community, while others preferred to offer independent facilitation as an employee of Bridges to Belonging.



Be-in service

Be at Home Creative Housing Supports

The Be at Home Creative Housing Supports celebrated its 3rd year of supporting people with developmental disabilities and their families make the next move toward independence in their life.

Finding suitable affordable housing continues to be a significant challenge as both the demand and cost for rental units continue to rise in Waterloo Region.

The demand for creative housing support is strong and continues to grow. When the initial offering of our program launched it filled immediately, and we maintain a significant waiting list. We are very grateful for the past support of the KWCF of this project.

This past year we led several focus groups to better understand the concerns and needs of individuals and family members when it comes to living their own. Focus groups were facilitated by a Master's student in the Community Psychology program at Wilfrid Laurier University. Several families were interviewed including people who found housing and people looking for housing options to share their stories and experiences with the housing process.

In addition, Bridges to Belonging Be At Home Creative Housing Supports and Extend a Family Waterloo Region have come together to collaborate with the high demand of housing supports and create a housing committee that will focus on a sustainable plan of support. Still in the early stages of development, the hope is to provide a hub of resources and supports for families, individuals and staff; provide peer to peer and family supports; broaden resources, partnership and collaborations within the wider community and to expand relationships that bring together a community members' voice, choice, safety and security.

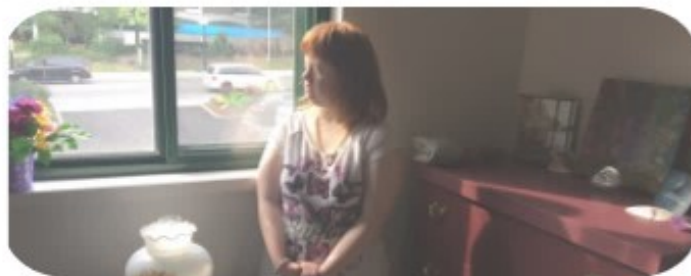
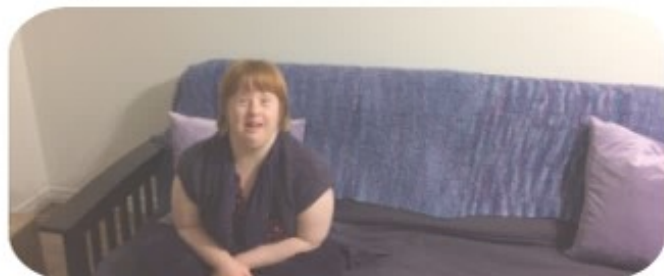


People Served are Cumulative -including people supported more than 1X per month



Parent Feedback: Alison's Story

"On Nov 1st, our daughter, Alison moved into her first home away from home - a 2 bedroom in a cooperative apartment. She adapted to it surprisingly quickly and easily. For the first month or so, I stayed with her because we hadn't yet found a supportive roommate. In December, we identified a potential roommate and she has now officially moved in! Our commitment going forward is keeping the lines of communication open and working together as a team to make this a successful experience for both roommates. We are grateful for the support of BtoBe's Housing Coordinator Jess as we move forward in this new chapter of our daughter's life."



"Our Stories"

Timothy was very frustrated and lonely when we met him a couple of years back. Now if you see him, you might doubt yourself and think that his is not the same person. He is now a great Champion Bingo volunteer at KW Gaming place, and works at The Registry Theatre and is enjoying his job very much.

Timothy has been involved in many events as a self-advocate and his greatest opportunity came when Bridges to Belonging encouraged him to share his story at an international seminar on autism as a resource person in August. His presentation was appreciated by the participants.

Tim is more active in the community and his "Quality of Life" has been enriched, since he is developing more self-confidence and leadership skill, thanks to Bridges to Belonging.



Christina is a warm, creative and playful 28 year old living in Cambridge. "I make friends really easily. People are naturally drawn to me," Christina notes. Her love for travel, cooking, and words is shared by her family. Travel plans keep people coming and going in the house she shares with her mom, two brothers, stepfather, and service dog Jester. Christina herself is studying to become a travel agent through Conestoga College, following in the footsteps of her mother Cathy. Independent Facilitation is a key resource for Christina and her family, as she journeys towards greater independence. Though change can be uncomfortable for Christina, she appreciates this process of building a life lived according to her own interests and on her own terms.



Bowling 4 Belonging

This year, we held our second annual Bowling 4Belonging event at the Bowlounge at Bingemans in Kitchener. The event is much more of a FUNdraiser, with teams of bowlers showing up dressed up in some wacky outfits and hats, balls bouncing off the guard rails (yes they are up), lots of laughter and people making new friends.

This year, 45 bowlers formed teams of families, friends, support networks, independent facilitators, BtoBe staff and board members.

We are grateful to the many companies that donated products and services for door prizes and raffle ticket draws, individuals that sponsored and donated to the event, and to our Brittany Spadafore, our summer student who single-handedly organized the entire event.

Bottle Drive

A huge thank you goes to Amy Fee for naming Bridges to Belonging as her favourite charity for the Bottle Drive Bottle Drive and to everyone at the Beer Store on Hespler in Cambridge for all of your support from getting prizes donated to unloading vehicles and making it a really fund day!



\$1040.30

Community Donations



BRIDGES TO BELONGING

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Year ended 31 March	2019 \$	2018 \$
SOURCES (USES) OF CASH:		
Operating activities		
Net income (loss)	59,213	(7,449)
	<u>59,213</u>	<u>(7,449)</u>
Changes in non-cash working capital items		
Decrease (increase) in HST receivable	1,983	(2,170)
(Increase) in accounts receivable	(7,727)	(3,879)
(Increase) decrease in prepaid expenses	(5)	2,426
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued charges	1,143	
(Decrease) in deferred revenue	<u>(69,183)</u>	<u>(19,083)</u>
Cash used in operating activities	<u>(14,576)</u>	<u>(30,155)</u>
Investing activities		
(Increase) decrease in guaranteed investment certificates	-	30,000
Cash provided by investing activities	<u>-</u>	<u>30,000</u>
Net decrease in cash	<u>(14,576)</u>	<u>(155)</u>
Cash, beginning of year	<u>100,320</u>	<u>100,475</u>
Cash, end of year	<u>85,744</u>	<u>100,320</u>

Audited financial statements available upon request.

BRIDGES TO BELONGING

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

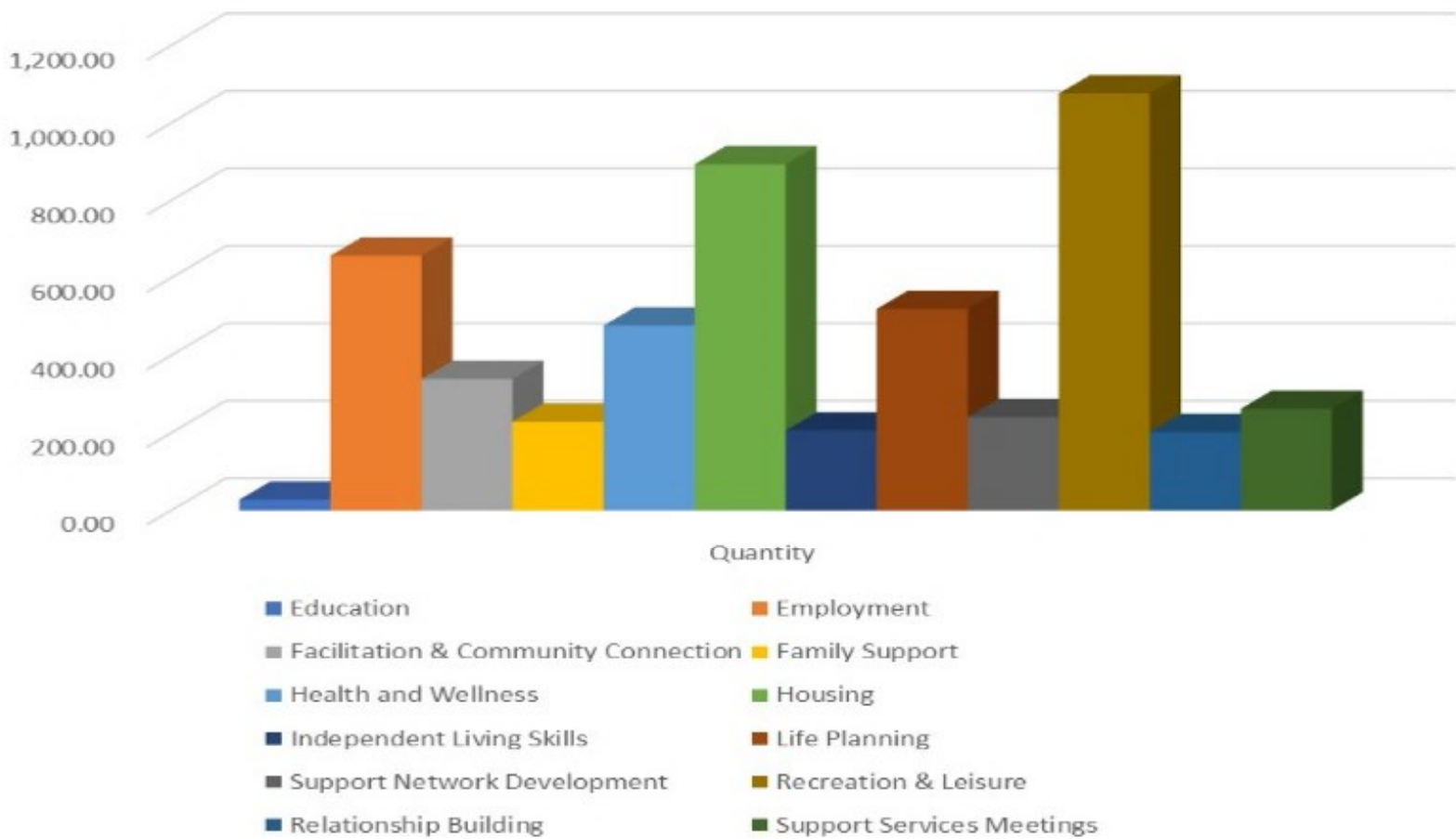
As at 31 March	2019 \$	2018 \$
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	85,744	100,320
Accounts receivable	14,785	7,058
Prepaid expenses	657	651
HST receivable	<u>4,252</u>	<u>6,235</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>105,438</u>	<u>114,264</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued charges	5,043	3,900
Deferred revenue (Note 4)	<u>-</u>	<u>69,182</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>5,043</u>	<u>73,082</u>
Commitments and contingencies - None	-	
NET ASSETS		
Operating reserve Fund	2,500	2,500
Access Fund	664	9,766
General Fund	<u>97,231</u>	<u>28,916</u>
	<u>100,395</u>	<u>41,182</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>105,438</u>	<u>114,264</u>

Audited financial statements available upon request.

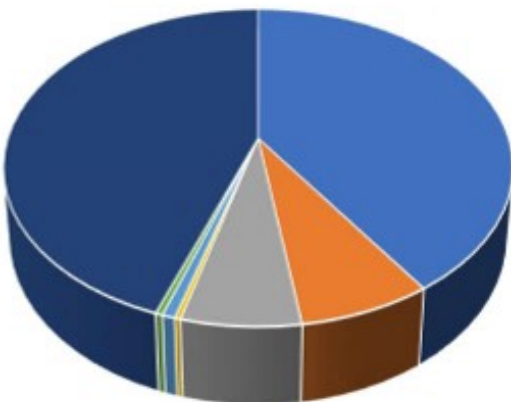
BE-a good steward

Hours walking with people and families to create the life they want

Independent Facilitation

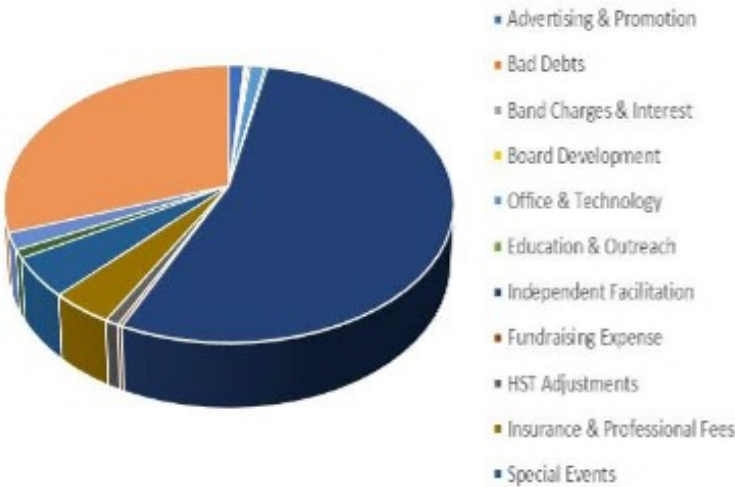


Income



- Grants
- Training Fees
- Donation & Fundraising
- Other Income
- Investment Interest
- Buddy Choir
- Fee for Service

Expenses



- Advertising & Promotion
- Bad Debts
- Band Charges & Interest
- Board Development
- Office & Technology
- Education & Outreach
- Independent Facilitation
- Fundraising Expense
- HST Adjustments
- Insurance & Professional Fees
- Special Events

BE-grateful Donors, Sponsors & Funders

Thank you for your generosity and dedication in making Waterloo Region a community where everyone belongs.

Donors

Lorna Aberdein
Cameron Dearlove
Donnamarie Dunk
Christine Gilmour
Erin Gollinger
Jamie Moffat
Wendy Newbery
Aneki Nissan
Lynne Quigley
Sandy Shamon
Alan Slater
Jacqueline Smith
Sheree Solomon
James Sowden
Brittany
Kim Sproul
Carol Sullivan
David Sutherland

Sponsors

Ontario Science Centre
Kitchener Rangers
Centre in Square
KW Symphony
CN Tower
Cambridge Butterfly Conservatory
Bingemans
Royal Ontario Museum
Boston Pizza
The Museum
The Keg Steakhouse + Bar
Splatzone Paintball
Waterloo Region Museum
Your Neighbourhood Credit Union
Adventure Guide
Our Studio

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Autism Services

Law Society of Canada

Autism Speaks Canada
KW Community
Foundation

United Way Waterloo
Region

Cambridge North
Dumfries Community
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