

Because every child deserves to be safe

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



A world where children are protected, valued, and can thrive

Our Vision –
a World Where
Children are
Protected, Valued,
and can Thrive.

We work to prevent child abuse and violence through awareness and education. Under one roof, we collaborate with police, child protection, medical, and mental health agencies to provide an individualized and child-friendly response for every child who has experienced abuse.

Core Values

Commitment

We are fierce about protecting children.

Collaboration

We work better as a team.

Child-Centered

We work with children, youth and families through a trauma-informed lens.

Respect

We acknowledge and challenge systemic oppression and value the differences each individual brings.

Quality

We provide high quality service and are committed to continued improvement.

Leadership Message

2021 was a year like no other. We not only needed to navigate through a global pandemic, but we bore witness to racial intolerances on a global scale. These events challenged us, made us adapt to new realities and inspired us to come together as a collective with a single objective – continue to service our most vulnerable populations in a manner that demonstrated compassion, integrity and respect.

It also made us proud of what Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre (Boost CYAC) can achieve together in a time of crisis. We want to begin by thanking our staff, our agency partners and the broader community partners. It was a collective effort, dedication and versatility that allowed us to continue to pivot and serve our community. Cheers to you all!

We are only just beginning to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the mental wellbeing and physical safety of vulnerable children and youth in our community.

What has already been revealed is that closures of schools resulted in children and youth missing out on the supports that our education system provides, resulting in learning loss, lack of access to food programs, social isolation, and the increased risk of abuse, including child sexual exploitation online. Many children and youth no longer had connections and access to trusted adults. Countless parents had to negotiate the challenges of working and caring for their children, sometimes resulting in loss of income leading to stress, anxiety and depression.

Our values sit at the heart of everything we do. As an organization, our values drive us in our mission to prevent child abuse and violence through awareness and education. These values emboldened us to do things differently, while providing an individualized and child-friendly response for every child who has experienced abuse that has come to Boost CYAC. In order to adapt to a new reality, it was paramount that we redesign and re-imagine service delivery models, and develop new and innovative modalities to continue to meet and better respond to the needs of our clients. Organizationally, we have committed to strengthening our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and to champion allyship with BIPOC, LGBTQ2S+ and underrepresented communities to optimize access and inclusivity and ensure that their voices continue to be heard. The lens of inclusivity and equity will drive our program redesigns and delivery models.

Like most children's mental health organizations, we rely heavily on government funding to cover half of our operating budget. Throughout 2021, we were fortunate in being able to access COVID-19

emergency subsidies. These much needed funds afforded us the opportunity to continue to provide innovative services virtually to facilitate access to much needed programs. That said, there was still a significant need to fundraise. The pandemic challenged these efforts, including our inability to host the Butterfly Ball® for a consecutive year. This had significant implications financially as the event generates nearly 20% of our revenue. Boost CYAC however, was buoyed by the wonderful support we received from donors, private foundations and corporations who stood by us during this challenging time, and allowed us to move forward with greater fortitude and resilience delivering innovative programs and initiatives that enable children and youth to receive the gold standard of care of which we are so proud.

As a result of the government's declaration of a second state of emergency in January 2021, the Ontario Court of Justice began conducting proceedings by remote technology through video and/or phone, unless an in-person appearance was required to ensure meaningful access to justice. The Child Victim Witness Support Program (CVWSP) is critically important in educating

children about the criminal justice system, and preparing them for their role as a witness in court. With financial support from the TELUS Friendly Future Foundation, we recreated and are now delivering the program through a virtual platform when meeting in person is not possible.

The ability to access a child-friendly environment during difficult and stressful situations not only optimizes the emotional, physical and mental health of the child, it also helps alleviate stress for families during what can be a very difficult time. The pandemic highlighted the positive impact of this environment more than ever! Many community and partner agency personnel also had to shift to virtual adaptations and accessed Boost CYAC offices involving our staff to support remote testimony, Crown meetings, preliminary hearings, trials, and judgement and sentencing proceedings, all of which involved staff in the CVWSP. The court process can be a confusing and frightening experience for a child and we anticipate offering remote testimony beyond the pandemic in light of the mental and emotional health benefits to children and youth victims and witnesses.

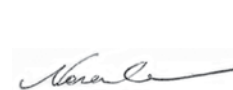
The very way of life for many children, youth and their families was turned on its head throughout 2021. Most notably, the closure of schools created unforeseen challenges. Our Prevention Education Program (PEP) successfully transitioned to remote prevention program delivery and returned to in-person classrooms in September. We also offered

teachers and other professionals virtual education, training and prevention programming, and launched a new series format of multiple sessions that allows for deeper topic exploration. We continue our work on applying an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens to our prevention program materials and messages.

Looking ahead, we're excited to be able to implement our new three-year strategy in 2022 that will see Boost CYAC continuing to innovate through the development of trauma-informed and evidence-informed programming, and the ongoing formation of strategic and critical relationships with community organizations. There is a corporate commitment to integrating

the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion through the very fabric of the organization.

This year has shown us that when we work together, we can overcome tremendous challenges, adapt quickly to support our community, and achieve new firsts in delivering our programs and servicing our clients.



Nora Conostas
President & C.E.O



Sybil E. Veenman
Chair, Boost CYAC Board
of Directors



Nora Conostas



Sybil E. Veenman

About Boost CYAC



During the various COVID waves in 2021, the CYAC coordinated teams of Toronto Police, child protection workers, and medical and mental health experts continued to collaborate to make the CYAC successful. Victims of physical and sexual abuse were provided a multidisciplinary child-friendly investigative response. This included crisis support, specialized investigative response, safety planning, medical assessment, treatment and court preparation.

Amidst the pandemic and despite challenges, new processes were created to ensure that children and youth needing service, received it. Police, Children's Aid and Hospital for Sick Children staff worked on-site with strong health and safety protocols to mitigate risks associated with Covid-19.

In 2021, 1000 investigations were conducted. 1587 persons were formally interviewed and 217 individuals were arrested.

The Hospital for Sick Children, Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) team of specialized medical clinicians provided medical assessment and treatment to 106 children/youth who

experienced sexual abuse and 86 children/youth who experienced physical abuse. The SCAN team provided expert witness documentation and testimony for matters before the courts on numerous occasions. SCAN Social Workers conducted a number of Forensic interviews and provided mental health service to 46 children/youth and caregivers.



Victim/Witness
Assistance Program

Child Victim Witness Program

The Child Victim Witness Support Program (CVWSP) believes that every child and youth has the right to be thoroughly prepared for their role as a witness in court. By teaching children and youth their job as witnesses and educating them about the criminal justice system, we lessen their anxiety about attending court.

The CVWSP supports witnesses attending Toronto courts and in those attending in the Central Region of Ontario, including Barrie, Peterborough, Midland, Orillia, Bradford, Collingwood, Lindsay and Cobourg.

New Referrals to the CVWSP: 206

Individual Caregiver Sessions: 178

Child/Youth Individual Court Preparation and Crown Preparation Cases: 151

(represents one contact only per case)

Attended Different Court Proceedings with Children/Youth: 112 Cases

(this can be multiple days of court and different types of court proceedings)

Remote Testimony Cases: 85

(which consisted of multiple days of remote testimony from Boost CYAC offices or courthouses)

Parent/Youth Support Contacts: 1,226

(e.g., phone calls, emails, and meetings)

Victim Impact Statements Completed for Court: 25

*“Hi Kaye,
My daughter, was involved in a trial in 2018. I wanted you to have an update on how she is doing. Last year she was accepted into every university she applied. She accepted the offer at a University in the Criminal Justice and Public Policy program. She was given an entrance scholarship and accessibility grant from the university. She has now completed her first year. She was on the Dean’s Honour Roll for both semester one and two. Her experience with you and the trial has shaped her interests and career goals and I wanted you to know that although the trial process was very difficult and my daughter had many challenges and issues, she has come back stronger than ever. You were such a help and support to my daughter and we very much appreciated everything you did to get her through the trial process. I wish you all the best and once again thank you.”*

*“Hi Sierra,
Boost has been like a back bone full of support. When I was what I thought was my bottom, Boost was supportive. Always there to listen and offer support. I’m not an easy person to talk to when upset but the amount of courage and strength I have gained during my time with boost has really helped me a lot. I know trauma comes in all different shapes and sizes but BOOST is always ready to be supportive and do what they can! Thank you for supporting me at my worst to building me up towards my best!”*

Internet Child Exploitation Program

The Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) Program provides short-term counselling referrals for child and youth victims of online exploitation, and their impacted family members, across Ontario. Following a referral to the program, families are matched with licensed and accredited trauma-

informed therapists in their community. The program is funded by the Ontario Victim Services Secretariat at the Ministry of the Attorney General and administered by Boost CYAC.

Total ICE Referrals
(January - December 2021): 580

Referrals for Victims: 275

Referrals for Impacted Family Members: 305

Bark Program

Boost CYAC has three accredited facility dogs in the BARK Program; Aria, Iggy, and Jersey. They are all graduates of National Service Dogs, Canine Assisted Intervention Program. Each dog lives with a primary or secondary handler and comes to Boost CYAC daily to work. Our dogs are specially trained to support children and youth throughout a child abuse investigation, including the forensic interview, during counselling and court preparation sessions, and while attending court proceedings. They provide comfort and support during what can be stressful and difficult experiences for children and youth.

Once the COVID-19 lockdown was lifted, the dogs have been back to the Boost CYAC offices and at courthouses on a regular basis. The dogs take part in forensic interviews, therapy sessions, and all court proceedings. The dogs were very busy this year continuing to support remote testimony with child witnesses. Recently, Iggy and Jersey celebrated their seventh birthday.



Prevention Education Program

The Prevention Education Program (PEP) at Boost CYAC designs, develops and delivers prevention education, training and community crisis response programs for children, youth and adults. The Prevention Education stream creates, develops and facilitates classroom-based programming for children and youth, including resources and support for educators. The Training Program provides education, information and public awareness on child safety for youth-serving organizations, professionals who work with children, caregivers and the broader community. Finally, the Community Crisis Response program supports youth-serving organizations in crisis, particularly involving an investigation of a staff person, by providing consultation and intervention services to help reestablish safety. The Prevention Education Program utilizes an evidence-informed framework and focuses on a strengths-based approach in all program delivery.

Number of school-aged children who received PEP Talk prevention programs: **782**

Number of students who benefited from customized crisis interventions: **102**

Number of training sessions and workshops delivered: **30**

Number of professionals and para-professionals received training: **1,105**

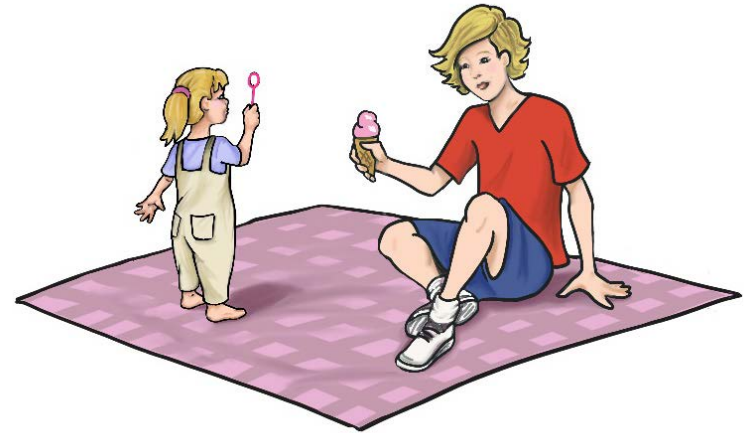
“Our Prevention Educator was amazing! He is an incredible asset to the program! He relates his experiences. He is kind, caring, engaging and hold kids accountable.”

“Self-advocacy skills in my classroom improved a lot. The students are able to communicate well with adults in the building if they needed. They have started to share their personal stories with the teachers now. The importance of self-care has now become one of their main focus areas.”

PEP Talk: Classroom Delivery – Grade 8 Teachers

“You truly are amazing! We really appreciate all your help, huge amount of time that you have spent on us, and efforts in helping try to resolve everything.”

Community Crisis Response – Parent



Assessment Directed Therapy Program

CYAC Brief Mental Health Services: Following an investigation at Boost CYAC, children, youth and their caregivers are offered brief mental health services (up to 8 sessions). This service focuses on building safety and stability by offering psychoeducation and developing coping strategies. Service is provided by clinicians from Boost CYAC, Radius Child & Youth Services and the SCAN Clinic at SickKids Hospital. Clients and caregivers who would benefit from additional

support are referred to longer term services. In 2020, through a collaborative review with our multidisciplinary team, it was determined that a more streamlined approach was required for children and youth to access this brief service. With the development of a new service flow, in February 2021, Boost CYAC's Clinical Intake Worker assumed responsibility for processing all brief mental health referrals.

Referrals to the Assessment Directed Therapy Program: 106

Trauma Assessments: 33

Individual Therapy: 34

Caregiver Support Group Participants: 7

Referrals Processed for Brief Mental Health Services: 319

Child & Youth Advocacy Program

The Child & Youth Advocacy Program (CYAP) is a voluntary service offered to all families involved with Boost CYAC for a child abuse, human trafficking or technology-facilitated investigation. Child & Youth Advocates provide immediate and ongoing support, and advocacy and referral services to children, youth and their families.

During investigations, Advocates will: greet the family and familiarize them with the centre; introduce the Investigative Team; remain available to family members to provide emotional

support and to answer questions and/or concerns; and provide information on next steps and services available to the family through the CYAC and the community.

The multiple Covid-19 waves and subsequent lockdowns in 2021 further impacted the CYAP's ability to provide onsite services to children, youth and their families that attended Boost CYAC for investigations. However, with challenges came opportunities. Building on the strength of the CYAP continuity of care service delivery

model implemented since 2019, the advocates solidified their role as the single point of contact for families from investigation to court support. Being that supportive constant familiar face since the investigation translated into effective advocacy and system navigation supports for CYAP children, youth, and their families. As such, 2021 saw the CYAP better refine its service delivery with a focus on strengthening families' capacities to advocate and navigate systems on their own.

National Initiatives

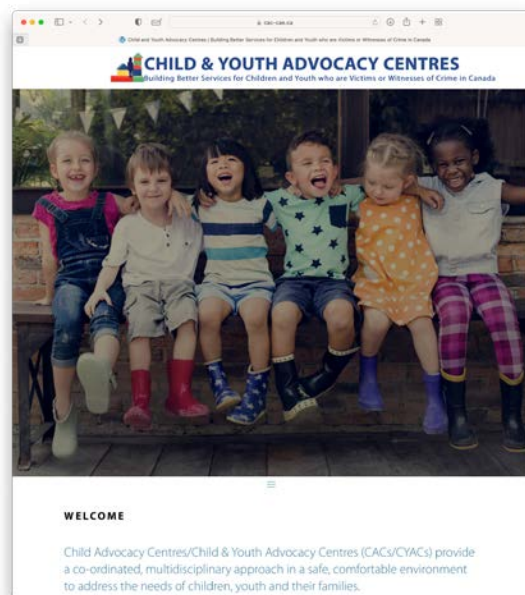
National Child & Youth Advocacy Centre Meeting

Due to COVID-19, Boost CYAC hosted the fifth annual National Child & Youth Advocacy Centre Meeting virtually, where participants from across the country came together on March 3rd, 4th, 9th and 10th. The theme of the meeting, “Adversity – A Stepping Stone To Success” acknowledged and spoke to the difficulties facing our communities, most notably the pandemic and acts of racism. A panel presentation spotlighted innovative practices by CYACs during COVID-19, highlighting successes, challenges, lessons learned, and implications for future practice. Facilitator Nene Kwasi Kafele led participants in discussions to broaden their understanding of racism and oppression and how these can impact the clients served. Two days were devoted to building the foundation for a National Association and a formal action plan. After the meeting, a Working Group was established that completed a launch plan outlining the strategic direction of the Association, and accompanying national agenda.

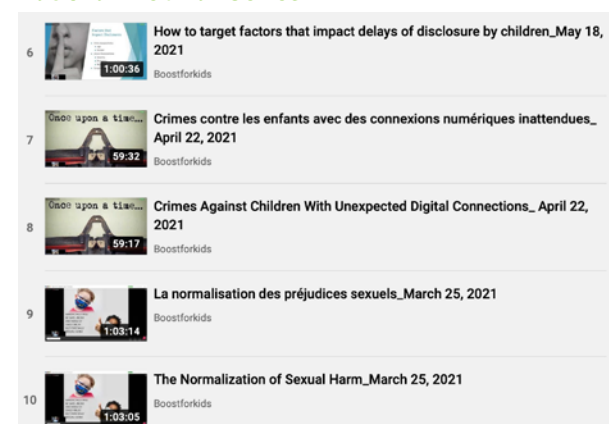


National Website

Boost CYAC maintains the **National Child Advocacy Centres/Child & Youth Advocacy Centres Website**: Building Better Services for Children and Youth who are Victims or Witnesses of Crime in Canada. Additional funds were received from the Department of Justice to have the National Website translated in French. The bilingual National Website is now accessible at <https://cac-cae.ca>



National Webinar Series



The National Webinar Training Program aired 9 webinars in 2021 that focused on: the links between sensory processing, behaviour and mental health; child sexual exploitation online; and anti-Black racism/anti-oppression. The 53 English and French webinar versions are posted on Boost CYAC’s YouTube channel, and the CYAC National Website. By the end of 2021, the number of live participants continued to climb, reaching 3,582, as well as over 12,500 views of posted webinars. Registrations for the series also grew to over 2,600 people.

All National Initiatives are funded by the Department of Justice Canada.

Our Sincerest Thanks to Our Donors



Boost CYAC would not exist in the way it does today or be in a strong position to continue to provide our services during and after the current health crisis if it weren't for the unwavering support we have received from these donors. Thank you.

Government Funders

Community Service Partnership Program (City of Toronto)
Department of Justice Canada
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (Ontario)
Ministry of Health (Ontario)
Ministry of the Attorney General (Ontario)
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Public Health Agency of Canada

Leaders – \$100,000 +

Georgian Partners Growth LP
Peter Cordy
The Aune Foundation

Protectors – \$50,000 +

La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso
Yannick & Shantelle Bisson

Believers – \$20,000 +

Help For Children (HFC)
Mark & Vanessa Mulroney
Rob Stovel Foundation
The Lillian Meighen & Don Wright Foundation
The Thor E. and Nicole Eaton Family Charitable Foundation

\$10,000 +

Candice Sinclair
Frederick and Douglas Dickson Memorial Foundation
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Sybil E. Veenman
TELUS GTA Community Board
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Children's Aid Foundation of Canada
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Ravindra & Jadwiga Raina
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The BLG Foundation
Thomas Player

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Constantine Yorkville Run
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National Service Dogs
Roger Vivier
Toronto Polar Bear Club
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VCA Mt. Pleasant-Davisville Animal Hospital

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Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If an error has been made, please accept our sincerest apologies. If you would like more information about how to make a gift to Boost CYAC or to update your name for the purpose of recognition, please contact us at 416-515-1100; info@boostforkids.org

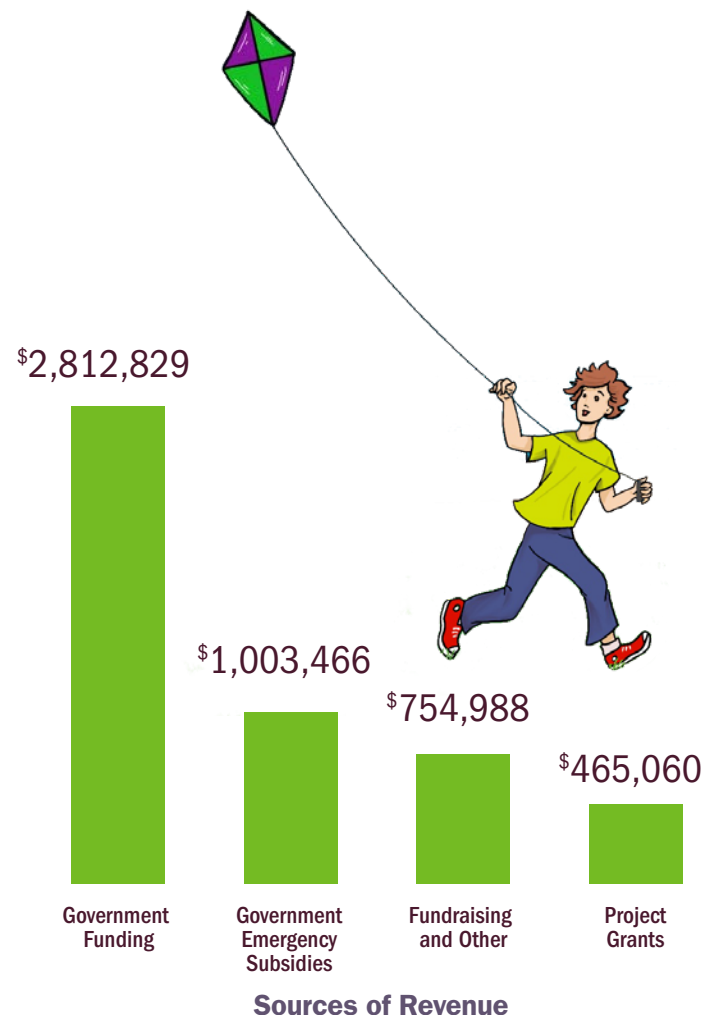
Finances

Statement of Operations.

For the Year Ended December 31, 2021

see accompanying notes

Revenue	2020	2019
Government Funding	\$ 2,812,829	\$ 2,355,162
Government Emergency Subsidies (note 10)	1,003,466	1,056,664
Fundraising and Other	754,988	995,322
Project Grants	465,060	537,077
Total Revenue	5,036,343	4,944,225
Expenses		
Program Expenses		
Assessment-Directed Therapy Program	928,901	989,485
Central Child Victim-Witness Support Program	286,480	276,576
Toronto Child Victim-Witness Support Program	281,833	271,598
Prevention and Public Education Program	539,965	627,645
Responding to Children at Risk Program	1,623,811	1,530,991
Internet Child Exploitation Counselling Referral Program (note 8)	299,832	276,805
Coordination and protocol	–	99,216
	3,960,822	4,072,316
Administration and Development	322,782	300,135
Total Expenses	4,283,604	4,372,451
Excess of Revenue Over Expenses for the Year	\$ 752,739	\$ 571,774



BOOST
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Boost CYAC is proud to be accredited for the 2020-2024 term by the Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA), an independent non-profit organization that offers accreditation specifically tailored to community-based health and social services across Canada.