



BOOST
CHILD & YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRE

*Because
every child
deserves to
be safe*

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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.

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

Although we thought the Covid-19 pandemic would be over in 2021, it brought additional challenges in 2022. With the multiple variants, the lifting of mandates, and attempts to return to a new normal, 2022 was quite the year. Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre (Boost CYAC), along with our partner agencies, began the year with a renewed passion to continue to serve our community in a manner that demonstrates compassion and integrity through modalities that allow us to meet our clients where they are, whether in person, virtual or hybrid. Thank you to our incredible staff and partners for their dedication, nimbleness and passion.

In 2022 we built on the successes from previous opportunities – we successfully launched our new Strategic Plan 2022–2024, with a **strong focus on our commitment to exemplary and accessible services, and to incorporating equity, diversity and inclusion into our service delivery model.**

Organizationally, we continue to strengthen our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and to champion allyship with BIPOC, 2SLGBTQI+ and other underrepresented communities to optimize access and inclusivity to ensure that their voices continue to be heard. **The lens of inclusivity and equity will drive our program evaluation and delivery models.**

There is continuing concern about the long-term implications of the pandemic on children youth and their families and we don't yet know the full impact. For now, what are seeing are our most vulnerable population experiencing increasingly more complex clinical presentations that are not only challenging the capacity of our frontline staff, but also placing a strain on

their own mental health, despite their resilience.

In recognition of this, we are **committed to creating a culture that focuses on the health and wellness of our staff.** With the restrictions of the pandemic removed, we re-established our staff engagement opportunities to increase our sense of togetherness.

2022 brought on its own unique challenges including economic downturn, rise in cost of living and increase in service demands, which outpaced funding support. With Covid-19 subsidies ending, we continued to work on increasing efficiencies, optimizing program delivery models **and improving access to services with a focus on capacity building and professional development.** This also increased our reliance on our fundraising efforts. With the easing of restrictions due to the pandemic, we had an **enormously successful Butterfly Ball, with the 2022 event raising almost a \$1 million.** We are so thankful for the support and generosity of our donors, private foundations and corporate



sponsors who, despite these challenging times, continue to support us as **we strive to deliver trauma-informed services rooted in the most current evidence and standards to optimize outcomes for the children, youth and families we serve.**

With the opening of schools, our Prevention Education Program team was able to return to delivering services in person, which is always the preference. That said, the virtual programs that we delivered to teachers and other professionals continue, as they help to broaden our reach well beyond the physical borders of our city. As we continue to evaluate and create new material **applying an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens**, we look forward to expanding our curriculum and delivery models.

In order to prioritize a much more meaningful integration of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout our programming, services, and hiring practices, we restructured our organizational chart to include a top-level EDI&B position and hired a Manager to man that portfolio. Having a person who can work across all the units, influence policy positively, and have direct lines of communication with the board, leadership team and staff, helps move Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging from the mere realm of nice ideas and good intentions to actionable changes. As we continue to evaluate and create new material applying an anti-racism anti-oppression lens, we look forward to expanding our curriculum and delivery models. This new hire commenced work, about a month to the end of the year.

With the move to the new Toronto courthouse, we anticipate a return to in-person testimonies. That said, one of the key lessons learned and outcomes of the pandemic was the positive impact of remote testimonies in a child friendly setting such as the CYAC. Crown meetings, preliminary hearings, trials, and judgments and sentencing proceedings continue to occur remotely and, through the Child Victim Witness Support Program, we continue to support children and youth both virtually and within the courts.

None of the achievements of the past year would have been possible without the incredible group of dedicated staff and professionals at Boost CYAC. **We are truly proud and humbled to have the opportunity to work with such an amazing team!** We are excited about the future and the opportunities that it will bring for Boost, together with our partner agencies in the CYAC, to continue to serve our community.



Nora Conostas
President & C.E.O



Sybil E. Veenman
Chair, Boost CYAC Board of
Directors



About Boost CYAC



2022 proved to be the beginning of the end... the end of the pandemic. The constant flux of processes started to stabilize allowing for a more integrated return to a new normal. Working closely with onsite partners including police, child protection, medical and mental health experts, we worked to not only maintain but improve access to multidisciplinary services as restrictions were being lifted and greater onsite collaboration was made possible.

In 2022, 1,014 investigations involving Toronto Police Services were conducted, 1,597 persons interviewed resulting in 202 people arrested. This included joint investigations with child protection organizations including Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto, Children's Aid Society of Toronto, Jewish Family and Child Service and Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, and Toronto Police Service. SCAN (Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Program) through SickKids

provided medical assessments to 85 children and youth who experienced sexual abuse and or assault, and 65 children and youth who experienced physical abuse and or assault. SCAN social workers and psychologists also provided mental health services to 59 children, youth and caregivers. Radius Child & Youth Services provided services for a total of 83 children youth and caregivers over the course of the year. During this time, Radius also processed over 230 referrals

to the CYAC's brief mental health services. All children, youth, and families referred for service had the opportunity to have direct contact with an experienced Intake Coordinator who assessed their presenting needs and provided navigation to the most appropriate mental health service. These numbers and initiatives are a testament to the collaborative nature of the CYAC and streamlined delivery of services under one roof.



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:

276

Clients Supported Through Court
Preps & Crown Meetings:

191

Clients Accompanied to Court:

113

Clients Supported Through
Remote Testimony:

68

I want to send you this email to thank you for everything you've done for me throughout this process. I appreciate you and am very thankful for you as a person. I send the most love and gratitude to you and Jersey, thank you so much.

Don't know what this would have been with out you.
(Client)

What a beautiful validation and acknowledgement of [my daughter's] integrity, despite the vile situation. I'm so proud of her.

Nervous excited for today... I would love to see a new precedent set.. fingers crossed. Thank you for all your care and support along the way. Your guidance has been irreplaceable.

Warmest regards,
(Mother)

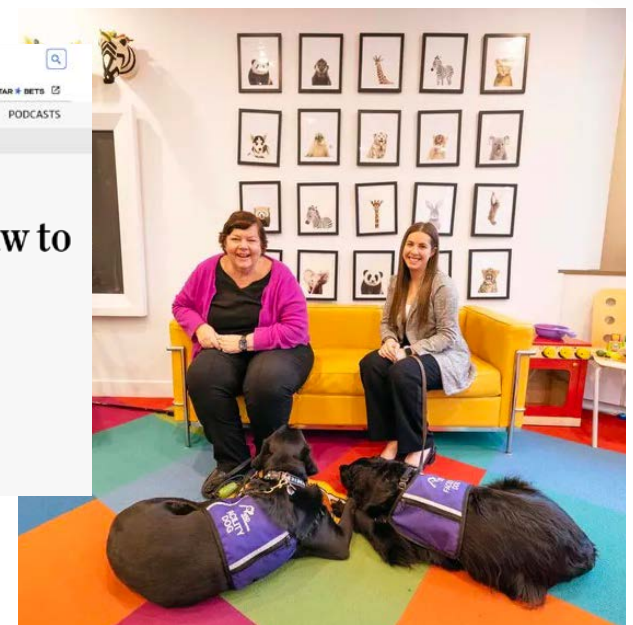
Because of the endless support of my family, my friends, and the Child Victim/Witness Program, I never felt alone. Being in the courtroom was the most traumatizing experience of my life, aside from the assault, but it was an honour for me to watch the powerful and dedicated people in this courtroom. Thank you all for helping me.

(Client)



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. 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. The Toronto Star wrote a front-page article on the BARK Program this year.



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 Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services and administered by Boost CYAC.

Technology has transformed how society communicates and shares information. As a result, access to technology and its uses have increased among all members of society, including children and youth. Recent studies show that children are adopting these technologies from an early age, thus becoming an integral part of their lives. Increased accessibility, unfortunately, has also translated into increased opportunities for exploitation.

As the administrator of the ICE Program, Boost CYAC, over the years, has connected thousands of victims and their impacted family members across Ontario to short-term counselling.

Referral for Victims:

161

Referral for impacted family members:

178

Total number of referrals received
(January to December 2022):

339



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 re-establish safety.

PEP
TALK A Prevention
Education Program

Evaluate, Improve & Innovate

In 2022 we completed a four-year grant from the Public Health Agency of Canada, in partnership with the University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work to conduct an evaluation of the *PEP Talk* Intermediate prevention program.

1,552 grade 7 and 8 students from the Toronto District School Board and St. Michael's College School received full programming with 251 youth participating in the research evaluation. (See infographic next page for more details)



Financial contribution from



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Students who received *PEP Talk*
prevention programming:

971

Training Workshops Delivered:

28

Professionals Trained:

1,212

Community Crisis Response
(CCR) Sessions:

9

Professionals Supported through
CCR program:

110

Webinars Delivered:

9

Webinar Participants:

586

Pep Talk™ Intermediate Program

BOOST CHILD & YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRE

- An innovative gender-based violence prevention program for young adolescents
- Early adolescence is characterized by intense relational and biological changes, with sexual exploration and initiation of dating
- These developmental milestones add risks, but also opportunities to establish a foundation for long-term healthy relationship patterns

What is PEP Talk™ Intermediate Program?

- A gender-based violence prevention program for 12-14 year-old students
- 11-module program aimed at helping youth build positive, healthy relationships and preventing abuse and violence

Modules:



Self-esteem



Communication



Getting help
& barriers



Building
friendships



Gender
stereotypes



Healthy
vs unhealthy
relationships



Abuse &
violence



Consent



Legal rights &
responsibilities



Choices &
consequences



Summary &
self care



- PEP Talk™ is delivered by **Prevention Educators** from Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre throughout schools in the Toronto area
- PEP Talk™ goes beyond rudimentary sex education in school settings and delves deeper into the complexities of relationships - both dating and peer relationships

Prepared by Ramona Alaggia, Leslie McCallum & Duane Singh



How do we know PEP Talk™ works?

- PEP Talk™ was evaluated by researchers working out of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto
- Significant changes were found in **awareness of gender stereotypes, sexual consent, past peer victimization, social support, and awareness of consent**

Paired sample t-tests showed statistically significant differences **between pre and post scores** in the following areas:

- Increase in positive attitudes toward establishing consent
- Increase in self-efficacy and confidence in asking for consent
- Increase in awareness of harmful sexual consent norms
- Increase in reporting and recognition of past peer victimization
- Decrease in traditional gender stereotyping

Results also show statistically significant difference **between the intervention and control groups** in the following areas:

- Intervention group showed an increase in positive attitudes toward establishing consent
- Intervention group showed an increase in reporting and recognition of past peer victimization
- Intervention group showed an increase in social support from both parents and peers
- Intervention group showed an increased in awareness of dating violence prevalence

What does this mean for practice and implementation?

There is emerging evidence for the efficacy of PEP Talk™ Intermediate Program. The program has the flexibility to be delivered on-line when in-person is not possible. The program continues to be delivered in schools, with implementation plans to expand throughout Ontario, Canada.

Enthusiastic 'buy-in' from key actors in school systems, teachers, administrators and parents have all contributed to the success of the program.

Most importantly students say:

- “When we talk about communication, I thought it would be easy but it wasn't. When we talk about consent and abuse, I find it eye opening.”
- “I got a lot out of PEP Talk. We talk about heavy topics but we need to talk about them.”
- “Thank you for all of the information. PEP Talk really gives me a Boost.”



BOOST
CHILD & YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRE

FACTOR-INWENTASH
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Public Health
Agency of Canada

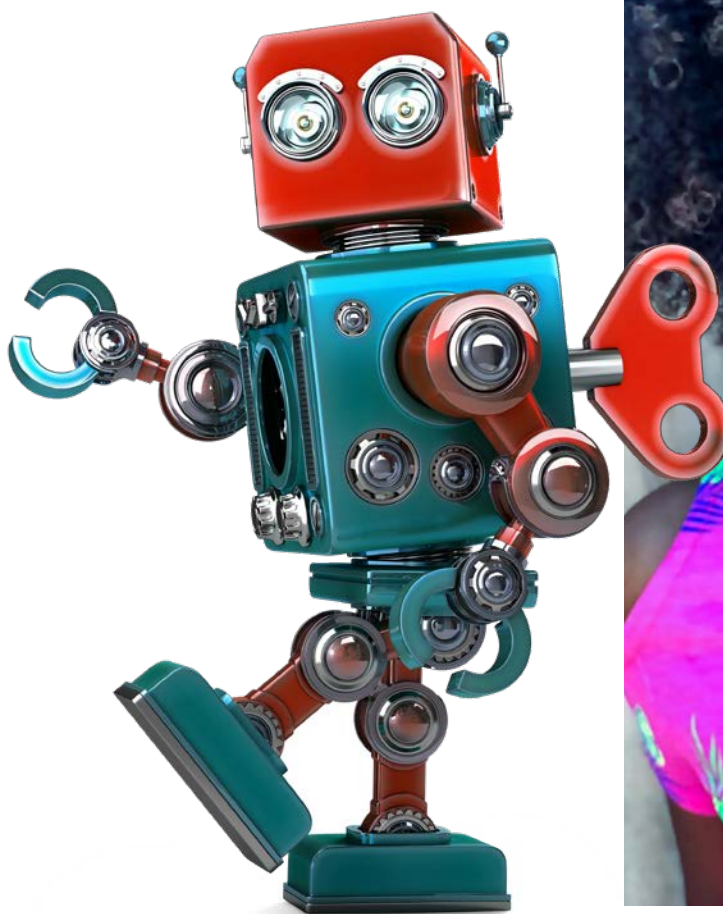
Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Assessment Directed Therapy

Boost's team of Child and Family Therapists, continued to offer trauma assessment and treatment services to some of the most vulnerable children and families in the city, following a traumatic event. This year four Boost Clinicians were trained in the ground-breaking therapeutic modality of Child and Family Traumatic Stress Inventory (CFTSI) a brief intervention for the peri-traumatic period (up to 90 days after a trauma has occurred). This enables BOOST to offer evidence-based service to increased families following a trauma and or CYAC investigation. Additionally Boost therapists participated in Racial Trauma Consultation with renowned consultant Charmaine Lane, to ensure that we provide the highest quality of responsive, Anti-Racist treatment to all families. ADT continues to prioritize offering transformative, treatment to children youth and families in Toronto following trauma.

Number of clients
receiving treatment in our ADT program:

55



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.

This year we saw an increase in referrals following a child abuse investigation, offering expedited trauma services to families, at targeted time, when they need services the most.

Number of clients referred to
CYAC Brief Mental Health Services:

231

Anti-Human Trafficking Program

Through our ground-breaking partnership with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, in 2022 Boost CYAC was able to develop a Caregiver Support Program offering support to caregivers when their child is at-risk of being trafficked. Our Human Trafficking Coordinator, Peer Advisor, and Caregiver Support Worker continue to provide services to children being trafficked and their families preventing intervening and offering support to children and families.

Families supported by our
AHT program in 2023:

67



National Initiatives

2022 was all about rebuilding. Whether that be new normal, new initiatives or new connections. But the focus was always doing it as a collective. Boost CYAC hosted the 6th Annual National CAC/ CYAC meeting over the span of 4 days, March 1–2 and March 9–10. This meeting was hosted virtually given the restrictions placed during the pandemic. The theme of the meeting was based in the principles of building strength and resilience together. The discussions highlighted the importance of continuing to broaden our understanding of trauma-informed care and how to imbed what we learned within our multidisciplinary teams in a culturally competent manner.

Boost CYAC hosted 9 webinars over the course of the year with a wide range of topics including anti-black racism, case tracking, forensic interviews, diversity and inclusion, victim advocacy and support and the importance of child focused settings. With 9 webinars and 586 participants, Boost has all these archived and posted to YouTube as well as on the Boost website enabling easy access to resources and education material.

Boost CYAC hosted webinars:

9

Number of participants:

586



Child & Youth Advocacy Program (CYAP)

The Child & Youth Advocacy Program (CYAP) is a voluntary service offered to all families involved with Boost CYAC for a child abuse or human trafficking 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.



Giving Kids a Lift When They Need it Most.

Smilezone Foundation creates a comforting and uplifting space for kids and their families at Boost Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

October 13th, 2022, Toronto– Children faced with the trauma of reporting child abuse are given a safe and uplifting space to report their experience and receive much needed support.

On Thursday October 13th at 10am Boost for Kids Child & Youth Advocacy Centre officially opened new Smilezones in their Toronto location.

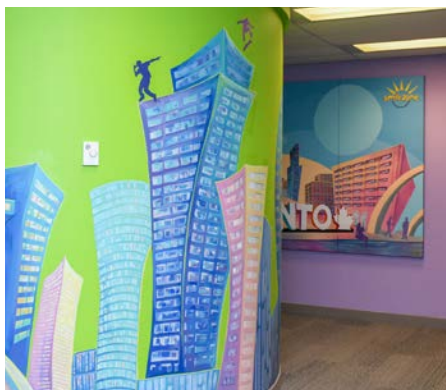
Unlike reporting in a police station which can be frightening and intimidating to children, the bright, fun Smilezones include age-appropriate themed therapy rooms and family spaces meant to provide comfort and security for children and families who have experienced unimaginable trauma.

Boost CYAC CEO, Nora Constas contends, “It goes without saying the incredible courage it takes for children, youth and their families to walk through these doors and tell their story. Boost CYAC recognizes the importance of creating a space that is welcoming and child friendly. Thanks to the generous donation from Claire and Tyler MacNamara and the Smilezone Foundation, the opening of our new spaces has given us the chance to create an environment that not only

transforms the rooms but the experiences of those who enter the space!”

Co-founder Scott Bachly shared, “When Adam Graves and I first decided to launch the Smilezone Foundation, we wanted to help each child facing illness, disabilities, or physical and emotional

obstacles to have the opportunity to continue to smile and to still feel like a kid while working through some of the hardest times of their lives. We believe every child deserves to smile and we are working to help all children across Canada facing these obstacles to do just that – to smile.”



23rd Annual Butterfly Ball Raises Over \$900,000

On May 26th 2022 Toronto charity, [Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre](#) (Boost CYAC) hosted its major annual fundraiser, The Butterfly Ball®. Under the leadership of gala chair, Claire MacNamara, the 23rd annual event raised over \$900,000.



Sean McCann, founder of the iconic Canadian folk rock band Great Big Sea and Order of Canada recipient shared his personal story of recovery and hope. “Mr. McCann’s story is one we know all too well at Boost CYAC, as children, some very young, share horrors that many of us cannot imagine,” said Nora Constas, President & C.E.O. “Early intervention is critical to their recovery and why the programs we have specially designed at Boost CYAC are so important”.



The sold-out event welcomed close to 400 guests and was hosted by Sangita Patel, host of ET Canada Weekend. Guests walked the elegant red carpet sponsored by Max Mara, exclusive fashion sponsor. The live auction was especially popular as guests bid on priceless experiences such as a three-night stay on [The Aerial](#), BVI, a private island for 26 people valued at \$150,000, as well as a three-night stay for two couples at [Fogo Island Inn](#).





Our Sincerest Thanks to Our Donors

Thanks to Your Generosity and Caring Hearts

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 our 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 the Attorney General (Ontario)
Ministry of Health (Ontario)
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Public Health Agency of Canada

Leaders – \$100,000 +

The Aune Foundation

Protectors – \$50,000+

Bazil Developments Inc.
Yannick & Shantelle Bisson
Claire MacNamara

Believers – \$20,000 +

The Lillian Meighen & Don Wright Foundation
Scotia Wealth Management
Rogers Communications Inc
Willie and Mildren Fleisher Foundation
Daniela DeGasperis
Thelma Bailey
Candice Sinclair

\$50,000 +

La Foundation Emmanuelle Gattuso

\$10,000 +

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Randy and Jenny Frisch Family Foundation

Mark & Sarah Wellings
Priscilla Low
Max Mara
Peter Thomson
Ronnie Strasser
Shelly Arbib
Mary Sinclair

\$5,000 +

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Premier Candle Corporation
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Jen Grant

Carolyn Moore Allas
Cindy Woodward
Vanessa Yeung
Stafford Developments
Jonathan Aune
Cindy Neville
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Balazs Keppel

\$1,000 +

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Vancouver Foundation
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Michael and Laila Deluce
Lori Grant
A&J Marshall Holdings Inc
Rachel Brown
Matteo Del Sorbo
Terri Hunter
Cheryl Woodin
Thomas Player
John Sabine

Special Thanks

Anne MacDonald
The BFAB Committee
52 Cichlids Aquarium Cleaning
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Constantine Yorkville Run

Donate a Car
ECHOage
Lynn Waghorne
National Service Dogs
Roger Vivier

Swerve Design Group Inc.
Toronto Polar Bear Club
United Way Greater Toronto
VCA Mt. Pleasant-Davisville Animal Hospital

**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, 2022

see accompanying notes

Revenue	2022	2021
Government Funding	\$ 2,579,294	\$ 2,812,829
Fundraising and Other	1,193,045	754,988
Project Grants	713,339	465,060
Government Emergency Subsidies (note 12)	460,787	1,003,466
Total Revenue	4,946,465	5,036,343
Expenses		
Program Expenses		
Assessment-Directed Therapy Program	865,823	928,901
Central Child Victim-Witness Support Program	294,870	286,480
Toronto Child Victim-Witness Support Program	328,916	281,833
Prevention and Public Education Program	507,365	539,965
Responding to Children at Risk Program	1,433,171	1,623,811
Internet Child Exploitation Counselling Referral Program	341,452	299,832
	3,771,597	3,960,822
Administration and Development	444,326	322,782
Total Expenses	4,215,923	4,283,604
Excess of Revenue Over Expenses for the Year	\$ 730,542	\$ 752,739

\$2,579,294



Government Funding

\$1,193,045



Fundraising and Other

\$713,339



Project Grants

\$460,787



Government Emergency Subsidies

Sources of Revenue



CHILD & YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRE

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Charitable Registration: 119039568 RR0001

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.