

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



BUILDING BLOCKS FOR BETTER LIVES

**Westcoast
Family Centres**





MISSION

Westcoast Family Centres Society strengthens relationships between children and families and between families and their communities

VISION

Demonstrating leadership in strength-based family support services within communities

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ★ We are guided by the best interests of the child in all that we do.
- ★ We believe in the strength of family.
- ★ We treat all families with dignity, respect and compassion.
- ★ We respect the uniqueness of individuals, celebrate diversity and promote understanding.
- ★ We believe working together strengthens our collective ability to make a difference.
- ★ We believe children and families grow and develop in healthy communities.
- ★ We believe community is developed through the relationships we have with the families we serve, our community partners and each other.
- ★ We are a progressive, flexible organization responsive to client and community needs.
- ★ We value lifelong learning, experience and education and are committed to the highest degree of professionalism.



MESSAGE

Westcoast Family Centres (WFC) constantly pivoted throughout the year to ensure that our client families and communities were supported and connected. The agency developed new programs to support families. As parents, we first-hand felt some of the challenges of “pandemic parenting” and we were beyond humbled to witness and hear the amazing work of our front-line staff and how they supported clients through these challenges. The pandemic was not easy for our clients nor our front-line staff, who were navigating the challenges personally and professionally. I want to acknowledge all members of the leadership team for charging forward and our front-line staff workers who everyday showed up and supported their clients and adapted to service. Thank you, your dedication does not go unrecognized by the board, leadership team, and community.

This past year, we offered everything from prenatal support, to supporting teens including a workshop series for youth with developmental disabilities. We continued to develop new program streams that augmented current services that we provide. Programs such as

the Local Food Hub, Youth Lighthouse Project, and our Healthy Family Support Line. The Support Line was available for families facing fear and anxiety during the pandemic, this was a one-time funding from the federal Emergency

Support Funds. We recognize that our shift to virtual services created a barrier for some of our families as technology is a privilege. Therefore, with the help of our community partners and donors we provided refurbished phones with data plans so that they could access our services. The pandemic did not stop WFC from being innovative, collaborative, and productive.

COVID 19 crisis made it imperative for WFC to reconfigure how we

support families and gave us the opportunity to transform them and as a result created greater productivity. Our year ahead will be moving from the crisis to learning what has worked well so far - such as virtual options when it fits best for a client and looking strategies to keep our staff engaged through different working styles.

To continue to support WFC mission and vision in supporting families we created a volunteer committee of community leaders to support brand awareness, fundraising goals, and understanding community trends. The

Community Development Committee was instrumental in pushing forward our Holiday Hamper Campaign. During this campaign, Family Counsellors identify families in need and together with donors, we provide customized Hampers to each family. Hampers are full of essential items for parents and their children, such as clothing, household items, personal care items, toys, and much more! The success of this program year after year would not be possible without both our donations to the WFC Holiday Hamper Fund and from the help of our Holiday Hamper Helpers! In 2020, we had over 100 Holiday Hamper Helpers take time out of their day to purchase and create a customized Hamper for a family in need.

It was a timely set of events that led to the re-accreditation of the agency, we are excited to have excelled in this process! The board and leadership team reflected on our continuous growth, celebrated our successes, and together developed strategic priorities for our agency to focus on as we steer forward, our priorities are as follows:

LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS

We are committed to the development of our staff, leadership, and community for the purpose of developing high quality programs for families

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

We are trained and trusted to support all family members and we make meaningful connections between people and the diverse communities we serve.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

We ensure long-term financial stability and strong financial organizational systems.

STRATEGIC GROWTH

We respond to emerging needs in the communities we serve, with an emphasis on expanding programs serving vulnerable children, youth, and their families.

QUALITY AND CARE

We treat each employee, volunteer, and client with respect and dignity and continuously evaluating our programs to meet best practices.

In closing, we are looking forward to the year ahead with our new strategic priorities in place.

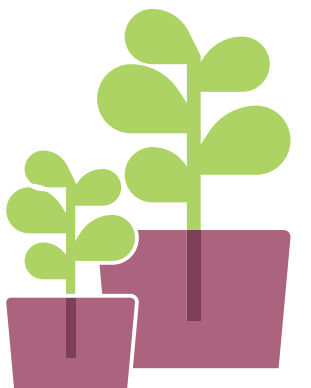
Sincerely,



ANN KUTCHER
Chief Executive Officer



LUDOVIC SIOUFFI
Board President



“

I have benefited greatly with the tools provided by our worker to help me with understanding and helping my children cope and deal with this process of separation

—WFC Client

ABOUT US

Our story

Westcoast Family Centres Society began providing services in 1984 with a dedicated group of 10 staff and 9 board members. Our philosophy and objective is to provide support to vulnerable families to the benefit of all their members. Between 1985 and 1989, we grew from one to four locations: North Shore, Tri-Cities, Ridge Meadows, and Vancouver.

In addition to our Family Preservation & Reunification services we offer the following programs:

- ★ Supervised Access and Visitation
- ★ Home Support and Resources
- ★ Clinical Counselling, Play Therapy, & PCIT
- ★ Co-Parenting Support
- ★ Early Years Services
- ★ Healthy babies: Pregnancy Outreach Program
- ★ Child and Youth with Special Needs
- ★ Transportation for Children & Youth in Care
- ★ Local Love Food Hub (2020-2021)
- ★ Family Support Line (2020-2021)
- ★ Youth Development Program (2020-2021)

As a community-based non-profit organization, we are the best known for our work in offering programs and services for children and families who have experienced difficulties for children at risk and for parents looking for additional support.



Our Locations

VANCOUVER

THE LINK - A FAMILY SUPPORT CENTRE 2780 E BROADWAY, VANCOUVER

Our Vancouver Head Office is located on the shared, asserted, and unceded (or ceded in the case of Tsawwassen First Nation) territories of the of the Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw), Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəyʼəm), and Tseil-Waututh (səlilwətaɬ) Nations, as well as other Indigenous People with rights and responsibilities in and around this area.

TRI-CITIES

206 MANNING AVENUE, PORT COQUITLAM

Our Tri-Cities office is located on the shared, asserted, and unceded (or ceded in the case of Tsawwassen First Nation) territories of the of the Kwikwetlem, Tsleil-Waututh (səlilwətaɬ), S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō), Qayqayt, and Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəyʼəm) Nations, as well as other Indigenous People with rights and responsibilities in and around this area.

RIDGE MEADOWS

22323 - 119TH AVENUE, MAPLE RIDGE

Our Ridge Meadows office is located on the shared, asserted, and unceded (or ceded in the case of Tsawwassen First Nation) territories of the of the Kwikwetlem, Tsleil-Waututh (səlilwətaɬ), S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō), Qayqayt, and Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəyʼəm) Nations, as well as other Indigenous People with rights and responsibilities in and around this area.

NORTH SHORE

203 - 111 LONSDALE AVENUE, NORTH VANCOUVER

Our North Shore office is located on the shared, asserted, and unceded (or ceded in the case of Tsawwassen First Nation) territories of the of the Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw), and Tseil-Waututh (səlilwətaɬ) Nations, as well as other Indigenous People with rights and responsibilities in and around this area.



Performance and Quality Improvement

Westcoast Family Centres Society has achieved national accreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA). COA evaluated all aspects of WFC programs, services, management, and administration. The standards driving accreditation ensure that services are well coordinated, culturally competent, evidence-based, outcomes-oriented, and provided by a skilled and supported workforce. WFC actively participates in meetings with community partners and government to evaluate service trends, client needs and

seeks to bring in new services as needed and appropriate. We have a peer led PQI (Performance and Quality Improvement) (Performance and Quality Improvement) committee, quarterly they meet to assess, evaluate, and improve policies and practices to ensure they are effective, meet accreditation (industry) standards, and align with our agency's mission, vision, and policies. Currently WFC has successfully passed the reaccreditation audit and continues to uphold the best practices in the sector.



FAMILY SUPPORT RESPONSE SERVICES



1,208
Families



25,783
Service
Hours

Family Support Services

WFC has provided goal-oriented home and community-based service with multiple components to prevent out-of-home placement and reduce risk of maltreatment. This also includes planned process of reconnecting children in out-of-home care with their families. Our Family Preservation & Reunification Programs and Family Development Programs offer service primarily to families at risk referred by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

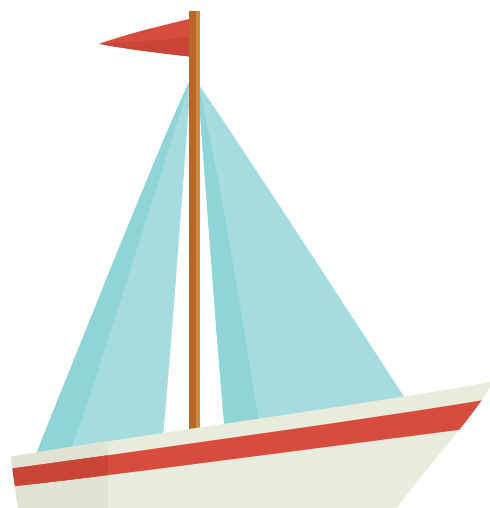
Families are face substance use issues, mental health challenges, trauma, addiction, home insecurity, gender identity and/or violence, neglect, and abuse.

Our staff work collaboratively with the families to provide support and create developing goals and activities to assist in reducing risks and strengthening families and offer linkages to formal and informal community support and resource.

Within our Family Preservation & Reunification Services we offer associated services to meet the urgent and often complex needs of the families we work with. These services are developed in collaboration with our community partners and the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

This includes:

- ★ Clinical Counselling, Play Therapy and PCIT
- ★ Co-Parenting Support
- ★ Supervised Access, Visitation and Exchange
- ★ Intensive Responsive Services
- ★ Home Support Services
- ★ Resource and Concrete Needs



Play Therapy

Play is a Child's natural outlet for self-expression, children use play the way adults use words. Our experienced practitioners work with children ages

3-12 years old to explore their troubling feelings, thoughts, and behaviors by engaging in expressive play in a safe and supporting environment.

Play Therapy has been successfully used in areas such as:

- ★ Fear management
- ★ Appropriate expression of feelings
- ★ Building social skills and self-confidence

Clinical Counselling

Our Services are inclusive and open to all individuals. Our highly experienced practitioners work collaboratively with you/or your child and provide tailored services to overcome identified challenges in a safe and supportive environment. Our Services are offered at a reasonable fee and require no referral.

Co-Parenting Support

Divorce and separation can be challenging in themselves, but when children are involved, it can become a minefield of conflict. This counselling and support is designed to help parents put their anger and hurt aside and move forward in a civil way for the wellbeing of their children.



ASSOCIATED SERVICES

 **462**
Families

 **5,203.50**
Service Hours

Supervised Parenting Time

WFC has vast experience working with high-conflict families, providing parental guidance and support, and ensuring the reduced risk of emotional and physical harm toward children and youth. The supervised visitation program or often referred to as supervised parenting time is a dedicated service for parents/caregivers undergoing a custodial concern.

Our goal is to create a safe, neutral, and child-focused environment for access and visitation arrangements for children and for either custodial and non-custodial parents or relatives. Visits are provided by trained staff who are sensitive to the needs of the children, support the visit, and report factual observations.

Anticipated outcomes include:

- ★ Providing a healthy parent/adult-child interaction in complex family situation.
- ★ A provision of a safe and neutral environment for separate parenting parties to connect with their child.
- ★ Providing reports of factual observations required for mediation and/or court proceedings.
- ★ Identify and execute parenting goals to build a stronger connection between parent and child.



PARENT EDUCATION

 **180**
Workshops

 **1,850**
Participants

 **475**
Service Hours

It is through the generous support from our funders and donors, as well as collaboration with our valuable community partners, that we can offer a variety of interactive and evidence-based programs and workshops. All groups are focused on strengthening the relationship and connection parents have with their children, building parent's confidence to strengthen their family, and building deeper connections with families in their community.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the way WFC offers services,

the transition to an online platform not only expanded the reach of parents we were able to help but allowed us to offer more workshops, all at no cost to the participants.

Each workshop is run by our highly trained and experienced WFC staff who have taken the time to acquire the appropriate training, research, and materials. If parents cannot attend a group or workshop, we also offer our Healthy Families Resource Page which provides suggestions and articles to help families through their parenting journey.

Below are a few of our most popular programs run during the year:

SUCCESSFUL CO-PARENTING

Successful Co-Parenting is a 5-week program that helps parents currently going through a separation or divorce learn strategies and tips to assist them in their co-parenting journey.

MOTHER GOOSE (OFFERED IN 3 LANGUAGES)

Mother Goose is a fun program for families with children 0-6 years old that focuses on parents coming together with their children to hear stories, songs, and rhymes.

**KIDS HAVE STRESS TOO!
(OFFERED IN 3 LANGUAGES)**

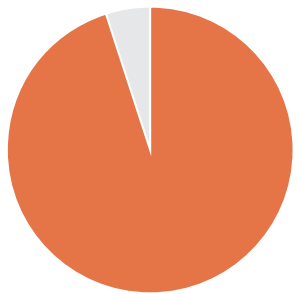
Successful Co-Parenting is a 5-week program that helps parents currently going through a separation or divorce learn strategies and tips to assist them in their co-parenting journey.

NEURODIVERSE PARENTING

Neurodiverse Parenting is ongoing group that focuses on helping parents, who have children with neurological differences (such as ADHD, ASD and Dyslexia etc.), feel supported. The group focuses on exploring common challenges, sharing ideas, and celebrating successes.

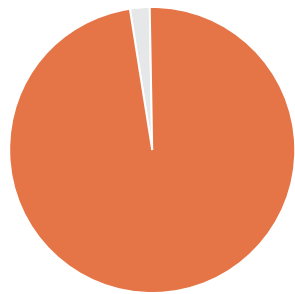
KIDS AND TECHNOLOGY

Kids and Technology focuses on the increased concern about kid’s use of technology due to the restrictions implemented by the COVID-19 pandemic. This group helps parents set healthy boundaries around technology, how to keep kids occupied without screens, and understanding technology addiction.



95% OF PARENTS

rated the group/workshop they attended as positive experiences



98% OF PARENTS

said they would most likely recommend the workshop/group they attend to another parent/caregiver

www.westcoastfamily.org/events

“

I love meeting other parents even if it’s virtual, thanks for having this during the pandemic, I needed it!

Keep on doing what you’re doing and employing such great facilitators!

Incredible group! I loved the dynamics. There was a lot of information, and it was great. Super helpful!!! Thank you.

Great advice that was completely realistic and I could use daily to support my kids development!

—WFC Clients



CHILD + YOUTH SERVICES

 **58**
Participants

 **2,320**
Service Hours

PRE-TEEN OUTREACH PROGRAM

This program supports children ages 10-12 who are engaged in problematic and/or high-risk behaviour.

The goal is to navigate the youth during a challenging time.

TRANSPORTATION FOR CHILD & YOUTH IN CARE

This program offers safe transportation for children ages 0-14 who demonstrate a range of behaviors and needs.

CHILD AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

This program offers support to improve on life and social skills for children with special needs, as well as connect children and youth with community support and resources.

Our total service delivery from April 2020 – March 2021 was 2301.25 hours of targeted 2704 contract hours serving a total of 22 Children/Youth.

 **22**
Children/Youth

 **2,301**
Contract Hours

EARLY YEARS + PREGNANCY OUTREACH

 **14,402**
Participants

 **5,148**
Service Hours

Healthy Babies Program

As a proud member of BC Association of Pregnancy Outreach Programs (POPs) we provide prenatal and early parenting support to women and their families who experience health or lifestyle challenges during pregnancy, birth, and the transition to parenting. This is offered through our Healthy Babies Program in Tri-Cities and Ridge Meadows.

Early Years Services

In partnership with community organizations in the Tri-Cities, we offer Early Years Services supporting parents with children 0-6 in the Tri-Cities Community. The programs include Family Resource Programs, Family Navigation and Outreach, Parent Ambassadors, and Parent Education and support groups.

Our outcomes:

- ★ **PROMOTING COMMUNITY BELONGING:** 83% agreed that the online programs supported them to feel less isolated and connected to the community.
- ★ **SUPPORTING FAMILIES:** 77% of respondents indicated these programs and services are supporting their well-being a great amount.
- ★ **SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS CULTURE, LANGUAGE, REVITALIZATION, AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** 50% of respondents indicated they are learning more about Indigenous teachings and cultures during our programs.
- ★ **NON-CHILD EARLY LEARNING:** 92% indicated they have more activities to engage with their child; and 90% indicated they are learning new ways to play with their child.



BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE (COVID-19 RESPONSE)

The social, economic, and emotional impact the COVID-19 pandemic had in our community in 2020 – 2021 required all organizations to be adaptive and responsive. With the new social distancing and stay-at-home measures in place, we knew we needed to do assist our community by helping families find the support they needed outside of our regularly offered services. Thanks to the tremendous support and funding from community partners, funders, and donors, we were able to offer three different programs:

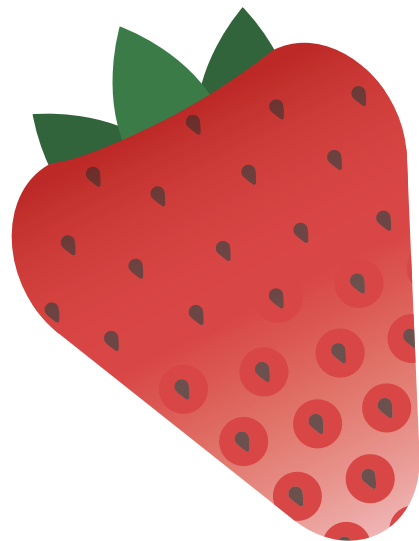
IN RESPONSE TO PARENT MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT DURING COVID-19

HEALTHY FAMILY SUPPORT LINE

The Healthy Family Support Line offered parents access to four free, one-hour sessions with a WFC Support Worker. Our goal was to service families experiencing the challenges and struggles of parenting during the pandemic. Connecting either online or through phone, parents were able to receive direct, one-to-one support on topics such as parenting needs, child development education, information about community resources, and household management skills. During the past year, we helped over 80 families throughout BC!

HEALTHY FAMILY RESOURCES

On the best of days, parenting can be tough and often leave us feeling unsure and overwhelmed. We are in a digital age of information overload; searches can often lead us on a never-ending maze of lists. We provide parents and caregivers with specific supports, resources, and activities to address the daily challenges related to raising a child, progressing a family, and connecting to your community.



IN RESPONSE TO FOOD SECURITY DURING COVID-19

LOCAL LOVE FOOD HUB

The Local Love Food Hub, in partnership with the United Way of Lower Mainland, was a unique and rewarding community initiative for WFC. The Food Hub was created to address the urgent need for food during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every week, dedicated volunteers delivered groceries, food hampers, prepared meals, frozen meals, and other essential goods at no cost to families in our community who were facing food insecurity during this time.



15,000+
Meals and backpacks delivered to the community



70+
Dedicated volunteers



Photos: Local Love Food Hub

IN RESPONSE TO YOUTH CONNECTION AND MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19

YOUTH LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT

The Youth Lighthouse Project was an initiative to support youth in feeling connected and active during COVID-19. It was apparent that the lack of ability to socialize in-person, play sports, and interact with friends had a significant impact on youth between 12-19 years old.

To assist in overcoming this barrier, we were able to offer three unique programs for youth:

1

Virtual Varsity Basketball Programs, in collaboration with **CourtVision**, offered youth the chance to learn essential basketball skills and concepts, engage with University/Collegiate level players and coaches, and connect with other youth athletes. Participants studied interactive game film, competed for prizes, and collaborated with others online.

2

My Wellness, in collaboration with **Face of Today**, provided youth participants with an opportunity to explore and develop self-care tools that supported their overall mental wellness. Participants explored the seven dimensions of wellness and developed their own self-care plans, while simultaneously connecting with youth in their local area.

3

Keeping Score, in collaboration with the **Vancouver Giants**, was a 4-week workshops series where players from the Vancouver Giants came together with youth to discuss important skills and development needed for youth to feel confident, healthy, and successful. Topics covered included goal setting, mental preparation, leadership, and teamwork.



OUR LEADERSHIP

Executive Leadership Team

Ann Kutcher: Chief Executive Officer

Tanya Valois: Associate Director

Zameena Dadani: Director of Strategic Initiatives

Wayne Wong: Manager of Research and Clinical Services

Linda Stutz: Manager of HR and Finance

Board members

Ludovic Siouffi: Board President

Shannon Svingen-Jones: Vice-President

Mikaela Taylor: Treasurer

Major Brar: Secretary

James Bahen: Director

Fran Maclean: Director

John Clark: Director

Mike Rampf: Director

Trish Wallace: Director

Community Development Committee Members

Nafeesa Valli-Hasham

Renita Lam

George Tsogas

Matena Kravariotis

Andrew Sawatzky

SERVICE RECIPIENTS + RETIREES

Staff Recognition 2021

5 Years:

- ★ Stephanie Briggs
- ★ Angel Grewal
- ★ Cheryl Overhill
- ★ Melissa Paluch
- ★ Carlyne Regier
- ★ Eden Wondim

10 Years:

- ★ Samantha Louie

15 Years:

- ★ Shahla Noorani
- ★ Luz Quintero
- ★ Zinat Sajadi
- ★ Lori Sangha

20 Years:

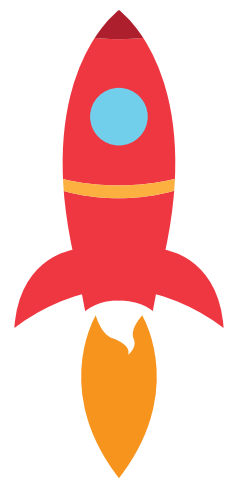
- ★ Kathy Jut

25 Years:

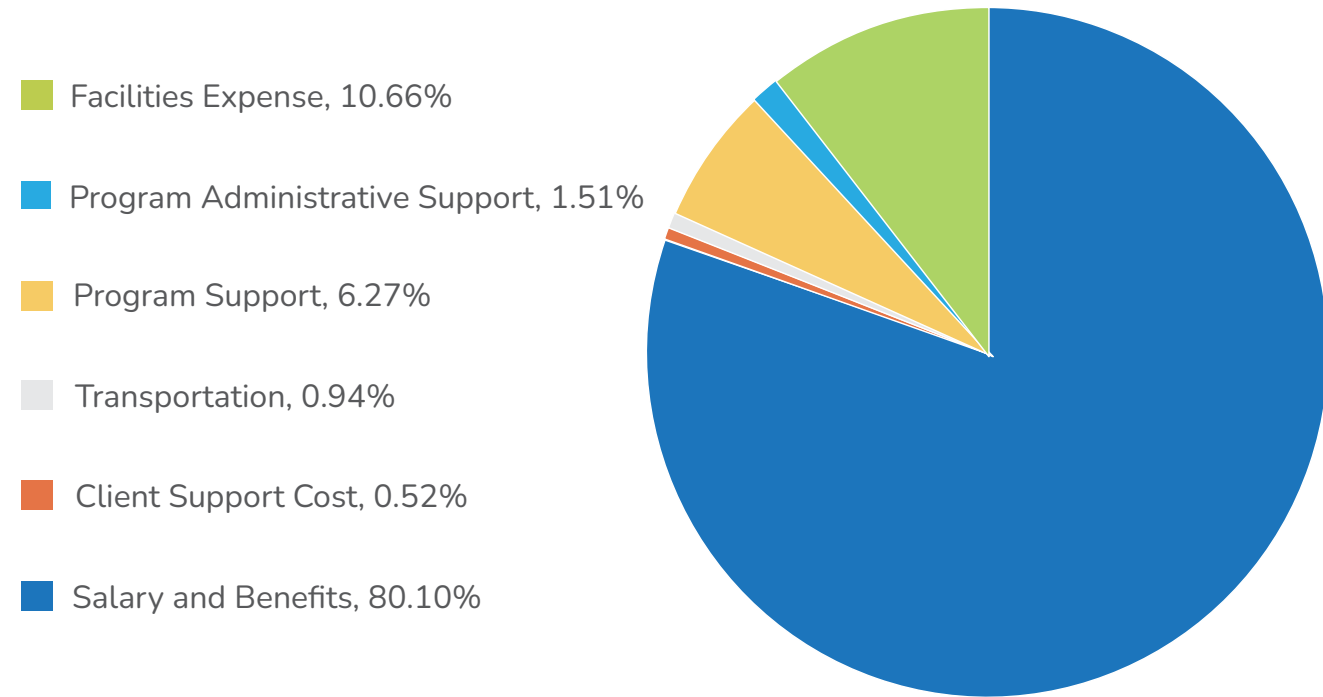
- ★ Jan Waldbillig

Retirement

- ★ Mary McCall
- ★ Anne Fitzpatrick
- ★ Aleta Bombase



FINANCIALS



“

It was so helpful to have someone to strategize with around managing my child’s needs. it was also extremely timely with this pandemic. I needed a sounding board and the fact that there was not a long wait list meant I got help when I needed it! my support worker was validating, kind and non-judgmental.”

—WFC Client

OUR FUNDERS

Our programs and services would not be possible without the generous support of our committed funders and donors. Your support has changed lives in our community.

- ★ Ministry of Children and Family Development
- ★ United Way of Lower Mainland
- ★ Public Health Agency of Canada
- ★ BC Gaming
- ★ Port Coquitlam Foundation
- ★ CKNW Kids Fund
- ★ Community Foundations of Canada
- ★ Vancouver Foundation
- ★ West Vancouver Foundation
- ★ Vancouver Coastal Health
- ★ Fraser Health
- ★ The Province
- ★ Magnet Student Funding
- ★ City of Port Coquitlam
- ★ Pro Bono Students Canada





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