

SUPPORTING , ENCOURAGING, BUILDING: *Children, Families, Communities*



# Annual Report

2014—2015

## Report of Executive Director and Board Chair

First of all, a big thank you goes to all staff. Faced with ongoing cost pressures, staff resolved to find increased efficiency in order to preserve the service levels the community had been receiving in the past. To meet this challenge we reduced our management and supervisory infrastructure. The impact was greater workloads for the remaining managers and supervisors as well as adjustments by staff in the programs to the new structure. The response from staff has been amazing. Not only have we continued to provide a high level of service to the community within a balanced budget, there has been a growing and accelerating level of innovation within the organization. The commitment by staff to make this work has been remarkable. With out current staff complement, we served 917 children and families this year.

In Vancouver, we have entered into an agreement with Sunnyhill Children's Hospital to conduct comprehensive psychological assessments for children at risk of Complex Developmental and Behavioural Conditions. We are on track to complete fifty plus assessments in our first year and are looking to expand the service to others parts of the Lower Mainland and to other funders. We have introduced pediatric care for the children served at the Alderwood Family Development Centre. Also, new this year is the Healthy Together nutrition program for families and Triple P parent education.

In Surrey, we completed the first phase of our pilot in the area of intimate partner violence. Supported by funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development, we worked with Options Community Services and Family Services of Greater Vancouver to deliver a group program for couples who are at moderate risk of conflict. The program is designed to create a safe home environment for couples and their children. It was developed in consultation with Dr. Sandra Stith of Kansas State University and we are greatly encouraged by the preliminary results. The team is now working on the creation of a Centre for Domestic Peace. This could prove to be a groundbreaking initiative to reduce intimate partner violence and its effects on children.

We received funding from the United Way to do after-school programming at three inner-city schools in cooperation with the Surrey School District. As well, this year we sent twelve children to the lovely Zajac Ranch for a multi-day camping experience. A big thank you goes to Anne Rowland whose support also made it possible for children to participate in the Horse Power program.

The Board of Directors continues to be an inspiration for the organization. They foster and hold firm our vision of improving the lives of children and maintain unwavering support for the development of quality and needed services for them. The Board meets regularly to ensure the organization is achieving its long term objectives and fulfilling our promise to the community of better lives for children.

Thank you to all our funders who make the work possible and who share in the successes. The Ministry of Children and Family Development have been incredibly good to work with, as we build a common vision of how to support children and families. Thank you to the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver School District, Vancouver Coastal Health, the City of Surrey and the Surrey School District with whom we jointly deliver services. We want to thank also, all the individuals, foundations and businesses who have joined together with financial support to improve the lives of children.

We look forward to the coming year with enthusiasm, increasing aspiration and hope as we work together to build the best futures possible for those children who need our help today.



Elizabeth Demner  
Chair of Board of Directors

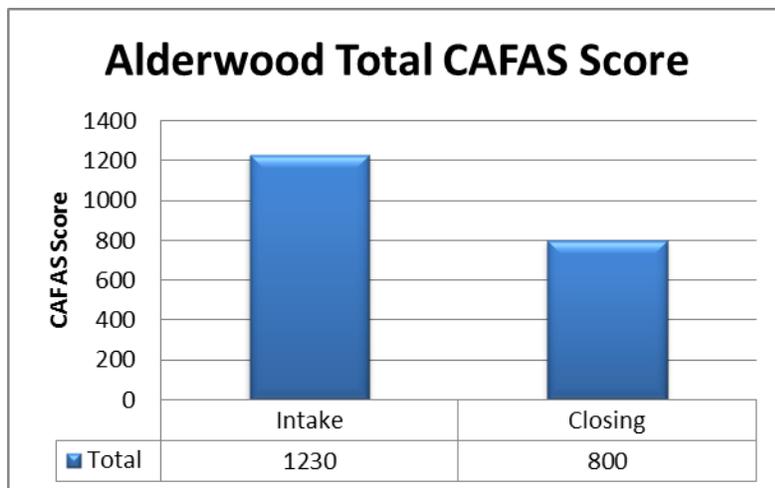


Dennis Dandeneau  
Executive Director

## Program Highlights and Achievements

### Alderwood Family Development Centre

This year Alderwood continued to focus on service innovation and reaching and/or exceeding our contracted service delivery targets. This year we served 39 families and provided 7,000 hours of direct support service, 733 hours of therapy, 82 hours of parent education and 760 hours of children group therapy. As a result, our Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment (CAFAS) outcome measure, demonstrated the clinical improvements children made after participation in our service. See graph below:



In addition to positive gains in functioning, children also experienced stability and permanency in placement with 76% of children maintaining the same placement from start of service to the closing of service. In addition, 16% of children returned from foster care to family care. Children's participation in their community schools also increased from 63% attending full time before coming to Alderwood, to 93% attending school 6 months after closing with

Alderwood services. Not only did children make improvements to their functioning after services at Alderwood, but also 90 % of our families reported in the satisfaction surveys that their family has changed for the better as a result of Alderwood. In addition, 88% of children stated their experience at Alderwood was positive.

Other key innovations to Alderwood include adding child pediatrician, Dr. Barb Fitzgerald, to the assessment team. Alderwood also participate in offering Healthy Together, a national research program on childhood obesity, in Vancouver. Triple P Parenting and training in PAX, both evidence-based educational programs, were also undertaken. Staff training in trauma informed approaches also continued. Our ongoing support from St. George's, with Each One, Teach One; Southlands Riding Club, with Horse Power; and the Wolridge Foundation, with our Hot Lunch program, also continued.

**Key Worker Parent to Parent Support Program**

This has been a year of tremendous growth for the Key Worker Program. Innovations to service were undertaken and our contracted output targets were reached and/ or exceeded.

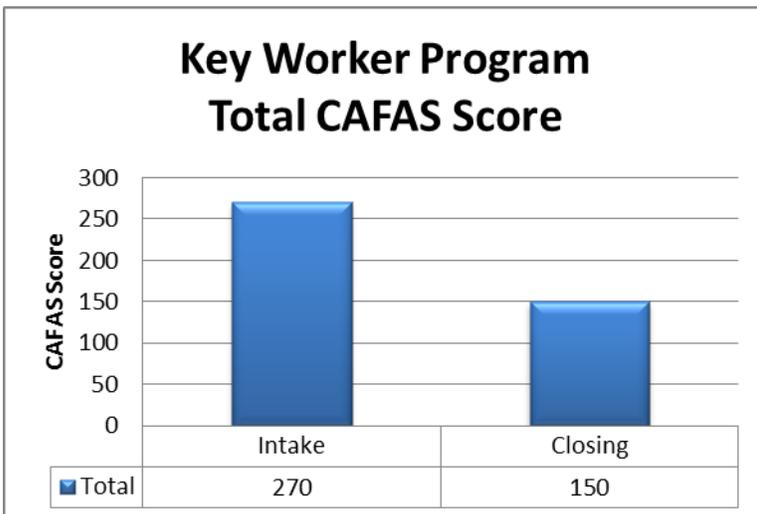
The Key Worker Program took the lead in offering Healthy Together, a national research project on childhood obesity funded by Health Canada. Partnerships were forged with the Vancouver School Board and Pacific Immigrant Resource Society to provide this unique program. Results of Healthy Together, headed by University of British Columbia School of Health, will be released in 2017 after the three-year research initiative is completed.

In addition to participating in national research, The Key Worker Program also partnered with Sunny Hill Children’s Hospital to delivery children’s developmental assessments. To support this initiative, the Key Workers have been moved into Bridge House, to work more closely with child psychologist, Dr. Julie Deroches. Innovations to current practice include supporting families through the CDBC assessment process rather than waiting for the assessment process to be completed before Key Worker services are offered.



Children involved in the Key Worker program were also able to participate in and benefit from the Zajac Ranch experience. This unique community initiative provided opportunities for children to attend a 4-day overnight camp experience in Mission.

This year the Key Worker Program served over 50 families, with over 900 hours of direct support hours, 100 hours of children’s groups, 70 hours of parent group education and 30 hours of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder education to 350 community members. The Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS) measures the clinical gains made by children between intake and closing. The graph below presents the improvement children made after participating in our services. We look forward to another year of unique opportunities to support our families, innovate our service and improve the lives of our children.



### Cedarwood Family Program

The Cedarwood Family Program provides a range of mental health focused services, including highly specialized clinical and support services to help families cope successfully with the very demanding requirements of raising children with significant and persistent behaviour challenges. Available services include counselling for individuals, couples, and families; parent coaching; parent groups; case management; art therapy; play therapy; school liaison; referrals to community resources; children groups; and a waitlist support group.

The program is designed for families with children aged 12 and under. Cedarwood accepts referrals made through MCFD in Surrey, Langley, Delta and White Rock.

This past year, Cedarwood served 188 families. Following are the numbers of direct service hours provided this past year:

- Cedarwood Langley Family Therapy Program: 626 hours
- Cedarwood Expressive Therapy: 603 hours
- Cedarwood Family Program: 1172 hours
- Cedarwood Group: 237 hours

Cedarwood also offered 65 group sessions over the past year.

### Communities Caring for Children

Communities Caring for Children offers the *Right from the Start*(RFTS), *COPEing with Toddler Behaviour* (CWTB) and *Triple P Positive Parenting Program* (TrippleP) to Surrey Families with children 0-6years of age. All programs are open to all community members and are self referral with no cost to the participants. Childminding and bus tickets are offered to those needed and refreshments are served at every group.

These groups are offered three times a year; Spring, Fall and Winter at various locations in Surrey. With partnerships with Surrey schools, City facilities such as libraries, and connections to the faith community, we offer these programs in various venues. We are currently working on a plan to serve the vastly growing community of Clayton Heights, working collaboratively with community members to secure some of the limited space available.

The enhancements that we made to RFTS last year continues to grow, the feedback we have received has confirmed the need and has helped us engage other community professionals to come share their expertise with our participants.

We are having continued success with our partnership with Guilford Rec Center and the 'My Zone' program in providing Parent Education for children in the 'middle years', 6 – 12 year old range. This program has been made possible through a grant from the Vancouver Foundation. Through the 'My Zone' recreation programs we invite parents to participate in a monthly session where the families have dinner together and then discuss topics of interest that pertain to parenting concerns. This is facilitated by a family counsellor and by two outreach workers whose role is to identify any families who may require more services. Many of those who participated were immigrant families. With this success we are currently working on expanding this program to the Newton Rec Center My Zone program.

This year 332 families and children were served through the Communities Caring for Children Program, providing a total of 264 parent group hours. Our success comes from our committed and skilled facilitators, child-minders and the community partners we work with.

Our involvement expands over several Surrey communities and keeps us actively engaged in what is happening with regards to 'early years' programming and needs. We achieve this by being involved in community events such as the Surrey Early Years festival, Cloverdale, Guildford and Newton Public Health 'Baby Time' and Kensington Prairie Family Fair. Furthermore, we are active members and regularly attend the Children's First and Middle Childhood Matters tables. These connections facilitates our ability to respond to the needs of the community.

### Educational Transition Centre

As we complete our fifth year working collaboratively with the Surrey School District and MCFD, we continue to grow within the classroom and our community. Our continued and always increasing community relations have offered our students many activities that would not otherwise be available. Our team is comprised of SD36 Classroom teacher Brennan Hanson, SD36 Education Assistant Darcy Bird, and TCF Program Coordinator, James Stumph.

- Success 1: Continued success of inter-agency relationships. Our new teacher Brennan Hanson has fit quite well with the classroom staff and students. Brennan brings youth, energy and patience to our team. Darcy has found value working with the students this year on incorporating her strengths and interests. Darcy is a personal trainer and has overseen course completion for two students on their way to complete PE 9. Darcy's love for food has also helped two students complete Foods and Nutrition 10 this year.
- Success 2: One of our students received 22 weeks of free guitar lessons through our bursary at Long & McQuade.
- Success 3: One of our students was picked to go to Disneyland for the day. Dreams Take Flight.
- Success 4: Community Connections: Since the beginning of the school year, we have been able to connect and establish ongoing relationships with several businesses in the area. Surrey Ice rinks allow Surrey students and staff to ice skate free of charge. Dell Lanes Bowling Center has given ETC a special \$5.00 - three game deal any day of the week.

Other connections that already exist through TCF include, Kids Up Front and free swimming at any Surrey pool. Several students have gone to sporting events and cultural events courtesy of Kids Up Front. Activities include, Canucks 3x's, Whitecaps 3x's, Women's World Cup 2x's. One Republic concert, BC Lions 3x's and more. Timms Community Centre has been a great resource for after school activities with the students. Foosball, air hockey, shuffle board, board games, pool, ping pong and the weight room are a few of the activities we can participate in for only \$2.00 a year. A student's mom commented, "Thanks for introducing Timms to my son. His father takes him there on a regular basis and this has grown their relationship."

- Success 5: Credits towards school course completion. Students have been able to complete courses while attending ETC. This speaks to the confidence, self worth, and supportive environment the staff provides the students. We have had the most course completions this year. Students received credits for Math 10,11, PE 8,9,10,12, Foods & Nutrition 10, Career Planning 10.
- Success 6: Workplace readiness – We had three students complete work for money. We also created a Student carwash that brought in over \$100. The carwash was a valuable life lesson that taught the students about money, expenses, time management, customer satisfaction, hard work and more.

### Family Care Support Program

This year has been a period of change and renewal for the Family Care Support Program. Wayne Sydorчук, Program Director and Nancy Holland, Program Supervisor retired along with Michael Kingscott, Family Counsellor. Helgi Remmelg has taken on the role of Director/Supervisor, Michelle Laschiazza has joined the team as a family counsellor to replace Michael Kingscott, Kiilea Saunders Mason is on temporary assignment as a family counsellor covering an extended medical leave, and Ronda McLachlan has joined us on a permanent basis as well. A fantastic team to be working with!

We have taken this opportunity of change to look at the overall program and decided to make some changes at the program level as well. The Family Care support program has 3 types of services. The family counsellors work directly with the foster parents; our residential support workers work one to one with the foster children; and the therapeutic day program offers a Saturday program throughout the year every second Saturday, 7 weeks of summer programs, 1 week during spring break and 1 week during the Christmas break. The family counsellors, foster parents and the residential support workers work together as a team to develop goals and strategies to improve the lives of children. When it is appropriate the children are also included to take ownership about what it is they would like support and help with.

We have built the foundation of the therapeutic day program around a program developed by Equitas called "Play it Fair". The core values are: cooperation, respect, fairness, inclusion, respect for diversity, responsibility, and acceptance. Play it Fair teaches these values not through formal education but through fun and games, the best way to reach children. It has been designed both as a preventative tool and an intervention tool. All of the staff participated in a fun filled day of training to facilitate this change. The idea here is no matter what your role you play in improving the lives of children we are using the same tools and same language to reinforce the positive changes the children are experiencing. All of the strategies and core values are also shared with the foster parents so it has truly become a team effort at all levels. Some of the children are already familiar with the program as the Surrey Parks and Recreation department have also adopted this program along with some of the Surrey elementary schools.

The Family Care Support Program services both Vancouver Coastal and Fraser South region families. We have served 73 families giving a total of 1893 hours of service to foster parents and 58 children receiving 3115 hours of direct service with the residential support workers. There have been 24 therapeutic day program days scheduled on Saturday, 7 weeks of summer programming and 2 weeks during spring break and Christmas. We register up to 16 children for all of these components. The family counsellors also provide monthly workshops for foster parents on topics such as attachment, bullying and harassment, youth addictions, grief and loss, working with children with FASD, trauma etc. These workshops are available to foster parents on our caseload as well as within the community. These are becoming increasingly popular especially with the foster parents within the community as there are few opportunities for them to get free training at this level.

### Kennedy House Assessment

Kennedy House is a staffed residential program for children 6 to 12 years old. During the past year we have had the pleasure of serving 20 children. We were very pleased to have received a Low Risk Rating for the third year in a row from Community Care Licensing Annual Inspection. This is the best rating available. Also, we received no program specific recommendation during the CARF Accreditation. This is an indication of the level of dedication and commitment of staff to the children living at Kennedy House.

Surrey Fire Hall #6 threw a Christmas party for the children at Kennedy House as well as getting them a new TV, movie tickets, and 8 new bikes with helmets. They also sponsored a Christmas hamper for one of the families. We purchased new furniture for the living room this year.

Regarding staffing changes, we have had two auxiliary staff return to Kennedy House and added a great new weekend cook. Wayne Sydorчук retired as program director after a long and successful career with The Children's Foundation. Zdeno Rusnak has ably assumed the role of Program Director. We are working to build our auxiliary staffing pool.

Staff have had to meet the challenge of serving children from across the Fraser Valley which can mean greater demand for transportation to school and supervised visits. A priority is to improve the success of overnight visits to facilitate a return home.



### Out of Care Support Program

The Out of Care Support Program provides concrete and direct support to caregivers of children in Out of Care Options arrangements and other non-traditional out-of-care placements.

The Out of Care Support Program:

- Offers a family centered approach
- Provides direct support regarding child/youth behaviours in a developmental context, such as education regarding parent-child interaction, child development, discipline and guidance, and positive behaviour management.
- Is an alternative to foster or group placement of children.
- Ensures adequate communication and liaison between caregivers, parents, school, recreation, physical care, and other resources.
- Offers services delivered in the caregiver's home and community.
- Offers group and individual support and facilitated communication between caregivers and parents/guardians.
- Links caregiver to key community services and networks of support.
- Serves families with children 0-18 years of age.

Many of our clients are grandparents who are finding themselves back in a parenting role with their grandchildren. These families have complex generational issues. Often times the children have been going through some form of trauma and require some specialized care which the grandparents feel ill equipped to handle. One of the biggest issues for these families is finances as many are on fixed incomes. They are willing to take the children into their home but are often not equipped with the necessary basic needs for the children. i.e. beds, separate bedrooms, adequate funds for food, clothing, activities etc. In order to support the grandparents advocacy has become another big piece of work to help them navigate all the systems in order to access information and resources that they are entitled to.

We are presently reviewing the outcomes with the Ministry as there have been some changes within the Ministry as far as how they are responding to these families. Currently there is one family support worker assigned to this program. This year we have served 20 families with 837 direct service hours.

## Respite Program

The Children's Foundation Respite Program provides weekend respite services to families who are caring for children and youth with Autism and other significant developmental challenges. We continue to have very committed Respite Care providers who open their homes and families to the children and families we serve.

The clients who are referred to the Respite program often come with diverse needs, but the one common element is that they are loving, committed families who are in desperate need of a break from caring for their special needs child. With offering at least one weekend a month of 48 hours of continuous care, the families we serve receive the needed break from having to mind for a child who needs constant and vigilant care. This gives them an opportunity to recoup their energy, spend time with friends and family and for many they use this time to give the needed attention to the other children they have.

There are a few families who receive two weekends a month of respite. This extra weekend is offered as extra support for those families who may be on a verge of a 'family breakdown' as the needs of the special needs child, or the ability of the caregiver are so prevailing and complicated that the extra weekend may provide the relief needed.

This break also serves the child who then gets to have a different experience that otherwise they would not have. When a child goes to respite this is an opportunity for them to engage in other social interactions and activities. For one family, only in respite care does this child experience 'swimming' as the family does not go to pools because they feel they can not manage this type of activity with their child.

We also have families where the child's behavior needs are so challenging that we need to provide another level of service where we have a child care worker do one on one out in the community. This service can be provided to those who are waiting to be placed into a family for respite, as an add on to the respite they are already receiving or for a select few it is the only service they receive as they do not require or fit the full respite service.

This past fiscal year we have serviced 24 families, in total giving 8688 of direct service hours (this translates to 1130 hours of one to one child care worker hours and 315 days of overnight respite services).

Overall the Respite program is operating at full capacity, with very committed caregivers, appreciative families who are receiving the service and very satisfied stakeholders who look to our service as a valuable resource for the community.

### Surrey Family Preservation Program

This year the Surrey Family Preservation Program served 93 families whose children are at risk of being removed from their home as a result of high child protection concerns with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The families receive four hours of service per week for three months from a highly experienced team of therapists. Feedback continues to indicate a positive response from both families and stakeholders.

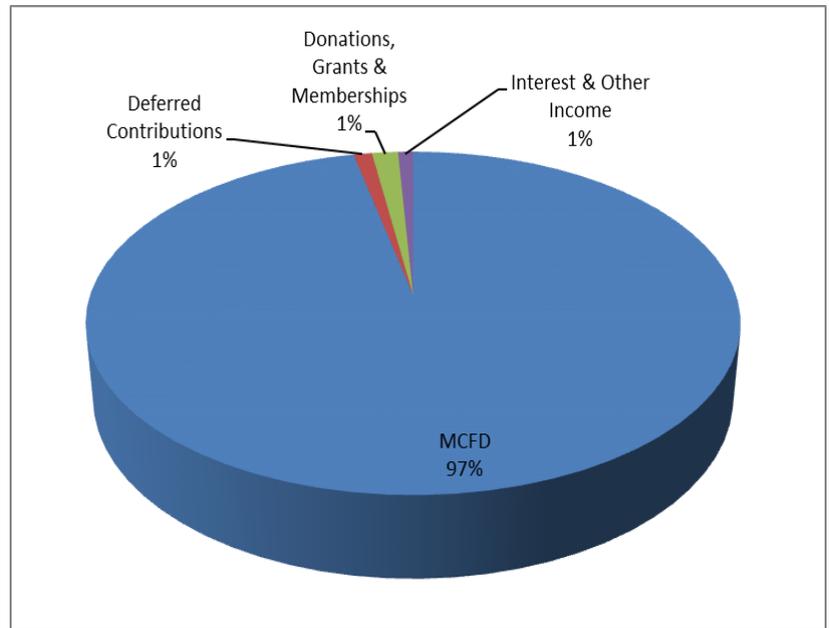
The staff of the Family Preservation Program were involved in a major project to provide couples who are experiencing high levels of conflict in their relationship and yet want to stay together with group counselling. The group, which was offered twice this past year, runs for eighteen weeks is based on the work of Dr. Sandra Stith using a model of conjoint therapy with a strong emphasis on safety and building on client's strengths. There is a strong assessment component to determine the levels of safety for the couples to ensure group suitability. Couples who had been assessed and did not meet the criteria for group participation were referred to other resources. Of the fourteen couples who were registered for the groups, four couples completed the first group and continue to attend a once a month Alumni group. (The second group which began in March 2015 is still running.) With four facilitators running each group the couples were afforded the opportunity to have one-to-one counselling if needed. The feedback from couples indicated that they preferred the conjoint model so that they both understood the same information as well as being to listen to each others experience of their relationship. This project (which had begun in the previous fiscal year) was in collaboration with Families of Greater Vancouver and Options. Both Agencies have provided facilitators and Options for the second group have provided child care and the facilities to run the group.

### Thetis Program

Thetis provides a child with 24/7 care through a family care home. A Facilitator gives support to the home and the child as well as emergency response. The program is new and there is much development work taking place. We were excited to provide services for one child from February 23 – March 31, 2015.

### Revenue Sources for the Year Ended March 31, 2014

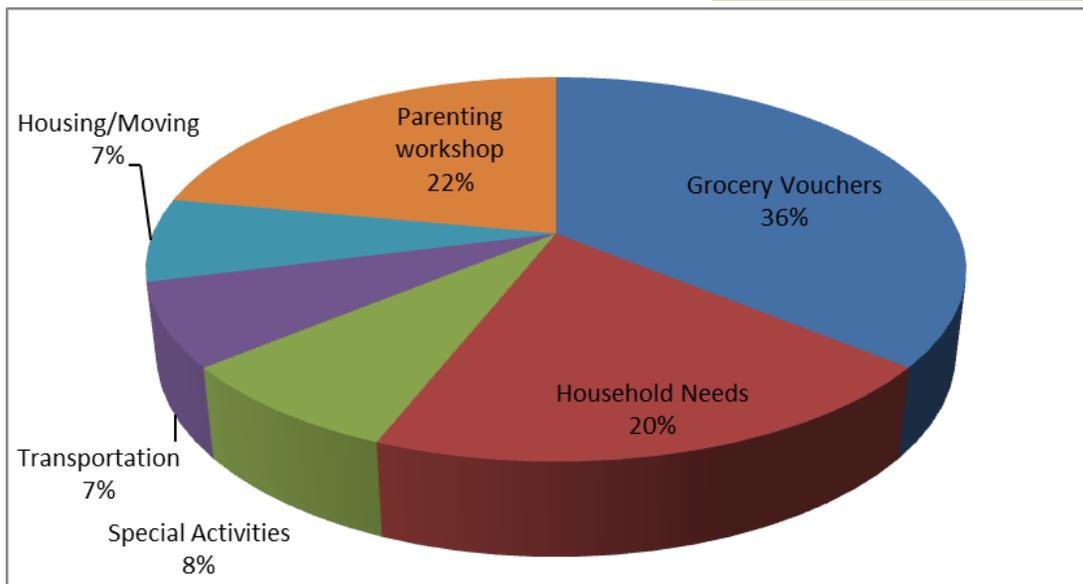
	<u>March 31, 2015</u>	
MCFD	5,036,124.00	96.56%
Deferred Contributions	55,299.00	1.06%
Donations, Grants & Memberships	78,929.00	1.51%
Interest & Other Income	45,383.00	0.87%
	<u>5,215,735.00</u>	<u>100.00%</u>



### Differential Emergency Fund Spending April 2013 to March 2014

Thank you to those donors who supported our *Differential Emergency Fund*, a resource that enables us to assist financially disadvantaged client families with urgent needs such as food, housing and childcare.

The following chart shows the distribution of Differential Emergency Funds during the past year:



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Donovan Plomp, **Secretary**

Simon Chen, **Treasurer**

John Ashbridge

Rupi Dhaliwal

Barbara Constantine

Alison Schatz

Emily Larsen

Danny Lee



## Donors

Thank you to the following donors whose financial support helped make a difference in the lives of children and families we work with:

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St. George's School  
APP FASD Society  
City of Vancouver

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**The Children's Foundation also acknowledges and thanks those who wished to remain anonymous.**



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