



AUTISM
HOME
BASE

IMPACT

ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2022 10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



OUR GROWING COMMUNITY

Celebrating **10 YEARS** of Service



Ten years ago, a handful of families in Clarington, pooled energy and resources to create a social club for autistic adults.

Each family chipped in \$100 and divided the workload. They recruited a volunteer board, incorporated as a charity, and began to fundraise.

They rented the local gym and met weekly for 2 hours of pick-up sports and a swim.

What a relief! They were out of the house, active and connected to a supportive community. This was a unique and special kind of respite where moms, dads and siblings could share a social experience alongside the autistic adult in their life.

These past ten years have flown by. We have shared experiences with over 300 participants. We have welcomed volunteers, staff and community supporters.

Today we are future focussed, reflecting the lived-experience of our inclusive community.

OUR VISION

**Autistic adults and their families lead rich, active lives
in an accepting, supportive community**

OUR MISSION

**To create opportunities that inspire our autistic
and neurodivergent community to discover new interests,
develop social skills and networks, and live their best lives.**

2013 - 2022

2022 Year in Review

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Thank you for the opportunity to serve autistic adults and their families, as governors of this unique and innovative charity.

Over the past ten years, we have built a solid foundation with processes and systems in place for long-term sustainability.

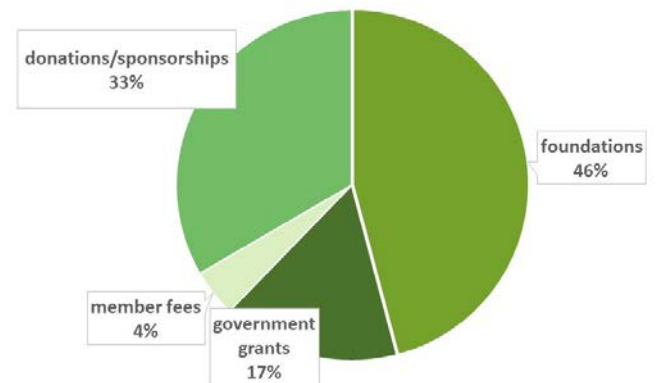
We weathered the pandemic, despite conditions that decimated our community-based service model. We prevailed because of your dedication to remaining connected to each other. And because of our donors, funders and partners who gave us flexibility to retool and recover.

We thank the staff who remain steadfast, creative and resilient through unprecedented challenges, increasingly complex needs, and service demands.

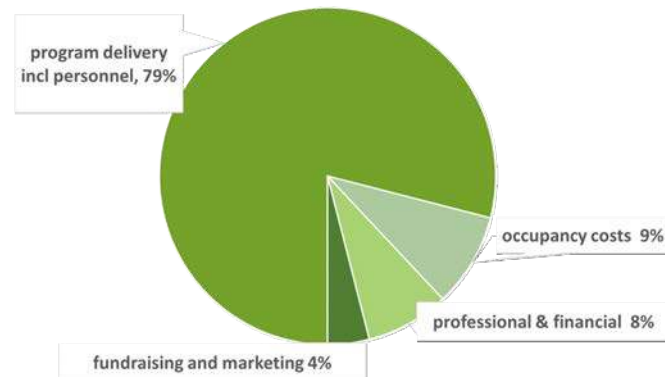
Thank you to the stakeholders who contributed to our strategic planning process this year. Your insights are invaluable. You are focussed on the future. Autism Home Base is forward thinking too, building an inclusive community where we can thrive and grow. As always, stronger together.

Lynne Lyon, President
Adriana Micanovic, Secretary
Brenna Ireland, Treasurer
Terry Batley, Past President
Fred Horvath, Director
Gordon Humphrey, Director

REVENUE



EXPENSES



The audited financial statements along with board and management reports for the fiscal year ending Oct 31st, 2022 are available for the Annual Members Meeting to be held at 6:30 pm on Thursday, Feb 16th 2023.



Strategic Priorities 2023- 2025

Our strategic plan was developed over the course of a comprehensive five-month planning process made possible through support from Ontario Trillium Foundation's Resilient Communities Fund. The process included: a community survey, two facilitated stakeholder focus groups, a full day board and staff retreat, priorities and outcomes discussions, staff consultations, and board approval.

This plan sets a course so that by 2025, Autism Home Base will be a recognized thought leader in the sector with a strong regional and digital presence. We will be poised for continued growth with a solid infrastructure of people, funding and systems. Autistic adults and their families will experience enhanced mental and physical health and report a sense of community belonging.

AFFECT

To make a meaningful difference

- advance high-quality offerings that reflect self-determined goals
- inspire whole family wellness and vision to live our best lives
- expand community-based, virtual and hybrid program options
- enhance qualitative tracking and share outcomes to build support

REACH

To serve more individuals

- deepen partnerships with educators including post-secondary partners
- support other service providers in developing inclusive practices
- grow our digital presence and community impact across Ontario
- be a voice for our community promoting acceptance, appreciation & inclusion

CAPACITY

To ensure long-term sustainability

- invest in our people
- promote and reward opportunities for members to 'give back'
- develop and steward community supporters and ambassadors
- secure annualized core funding
- expand new and existing revenue streams and models

Key Partnerships

Over the past decade, we've been supported by hundreds of individual community members, businesses, service clubs, private foundations and project grants.

In the beginning, with a registered non-profit structure in place, we were eligible to receive a community grant from the **Municipality of Clarington**. With that funding, we organized our first program offering, a weekly meet up at the gym before the accessible swim hour at the Diane Hamre Rec Centre in Newcastle.

By 2017, to keep up with steady growth in service demand, we held our first fundraising event. **Tribute Communities** stepped up as our lead corporate sponsor. Grants received from **Unity for Autism** and **Ontario Trillium Foundation** transformed our charity from grass roots origins. We hired our first part-time staff and partnered with **Trent University Durham GTA** to study the impact of our social and recreation offerings on the lives of autistic adults as well as their long-time family caregivers.

We are proud to note, repeated partnerships with these leaders was leveraged to attract support from other private foundations, corporations and municipal governments. In 2021, we received a five-year pledge of support from **Elexicon Energy**.

Funding from The Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF) with Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) and **Durham Community Foundation** helped offset extra costs incurred through the pandemic.

Ontario
Trillium Foundation

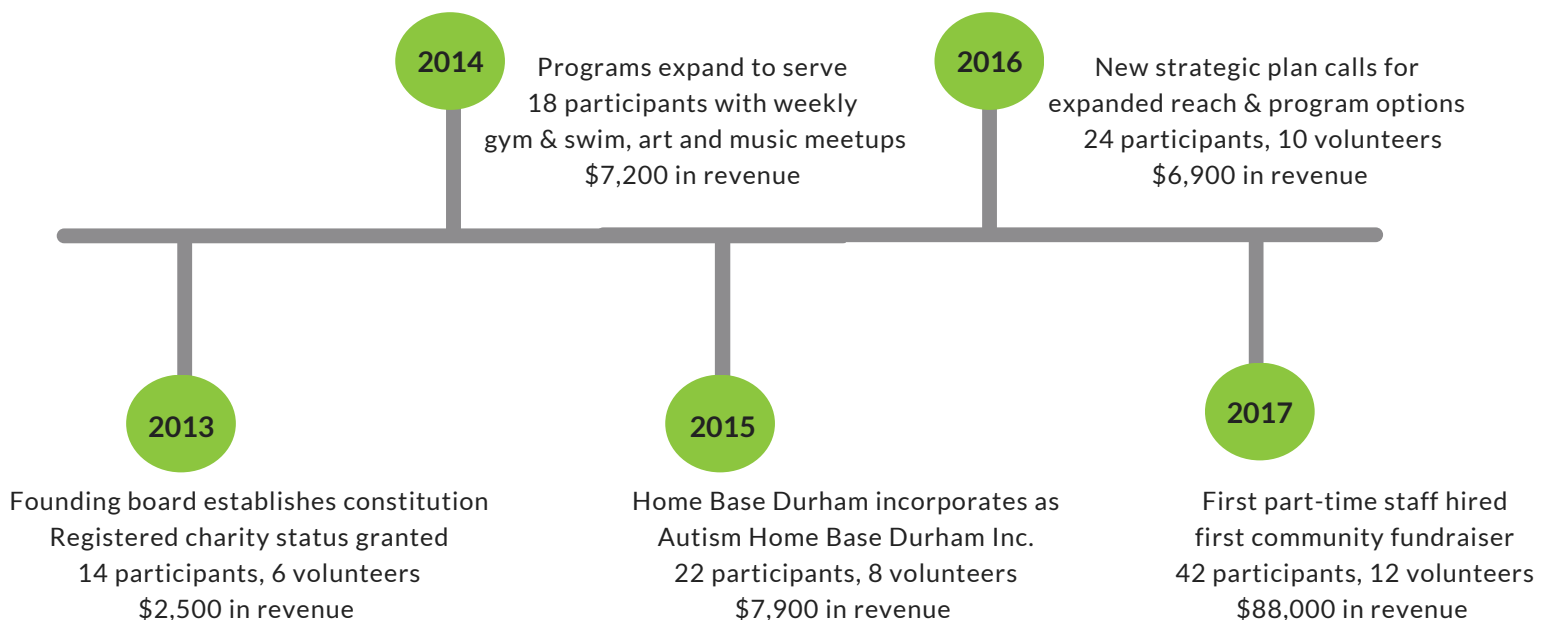


Fondation Trillium
de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



10 YEARS



A MILLION MEMORIES



2019

150 participants,
30 volunteers
\$120,000 revenue
Programs in Peterborough

2021

Summer Palooza program pilot
Placement & summer students
support program delivery
Zen Room added to the Hub

2018

84 participants, 24 volunteers
Program delivery expands to Pickering,
Whitby and Oshawa venues
145 Meet-ups for 3,780 program hours

2020

4,000 sq ft Hub opens in Bowmanville
Global Pandemic hits
Program delivery goes on-line & hybrid
First caregiver symposium held virtual
2nd part-time staff added

2022

ExerGaming equipment and JaysCare
come to the hub
one full time + 3 part-time staff team
200 participants, 51 volunteers
\$414,000 in Revenue

2022 in Review - Winter



As autistic children become adults and leave school, their aging parents often become their sole support.

These seniors face social isolation linked to their adult child's behaviour and communication support need. Many carry the emotional weight of economic insecurity and concern for suitable long-term housing for their loved one.



Too often, parents are unable to focus on their own wellness or even perceive of the impact of their 30+ year role as a primary caregiver.

Supported by project grants from the Ontario Caregiver Association and Government of Ontario, AHB worked with Trent University Durham GTA to study wellness needs & options for parents aged 55+.



We surveyed 82 respondents and convened a ten person focus group who met to sample self-care options for caregivers.

When caregivers thought about their ability to continue to provide care in the future, aging, declining health, and a desire to focus on personal quality of life were the top three factors considered. The majority of caregivers indicated feeling isolated or having few social connections.



After sampling the programs, focus group participants reported increased levels of happiness, feelings of connectedness, and physical and mental well-being.



APRIL 2ND IS
WORLD AUTISM DAY

2022 in Review - Spring

For World Autism Day 2022, with COVID rules for gathering still in flux, AHB organized a fun, safe and inclusive Car Rally. 100 cars travelled to ten locations in and around Clarington with arts, nature, food, and action stops along the way raising over \$35,000.



ALLIES FOR AUTISM CAR RALLY

We were thrilled to welcome a small group of government and business supporters to visit the hub at a Donor Appreciation event. Our new donor wall was unveiled.

AHB was invited to attend and make a presentation at the *Innovative Solutions for Improving Quality of Life for Autistic Individuals Symposium* in Calgary in May.



Our new Digital Wall arrived, capping a series of exergaming equipment now installed at the hub to encourage members to be more active. Pedal-powered game controllers, VR headsets, Wii games, and a blaze pods training system use technology to inspire fitness through movement.



2022 in Review - Summer



Four college students joined us in June in preparation for our 8 week Summer Palooza. With additional staff, funded through a Canada Summer Jobs grant, we were able to offer supports so family caregivers and members could take a break from each other.



Special interest pods offered 1:2 support ratios for those with higher needs, 1:4 support for those who are independent in an adapted environment; and 1:6 staff/member ratios for those who thrive with a peer mentor along for community outings.

We were thrilled to work with JaysCare to introduce members to the fundamentals of baseball.

Students also helped bring our Zen Den to community events across Durham Region. Our tent offers a calming spot for neurodivergent community members to regroup during busy festivals.



As the summer progressed, we fine-tuned our Case for Support in pursuit of annualized funding and met with federal, provincial and regional representatives.

Our Summer's End picnic welcomed Mary Krohnert and the Living Room Art Studio's mobile art hive.



2022 in Review - Fall

A shortage of placement students and volunteers, and a loss of program instructors through COVID closures, presented challenges through the Fall.

Even so, virtual, hybrid, and in-person programs at the hub and in the community resumed.

Newcastle and Pickering Gym and Swims were offered at local rec centres, Peterborough and Indies members enjoyed meet-ups at local hot spots.

Creative Expressions, virtual games, and Music Madness continued on-line. Monthly games, movie nights, guys and mom's nights were back at the hub. As well as daytime arts, wellness, cooking, boxing, and music.

Monthly Sunday art & drumming sessions at the hub plus Buddies and Pals peer mentoring in Oshawa round out the week.

Our annual appeal, a Euchre tournament and bi-weekly bingos brought in much needed year end revenues.



LOOKING AHEAD

January 1st Clarington Polar Swim for Autism After 18, thanks to Hugh & Nancy Towie team!

On Saturday, March 4th we're offering a full day for Caregivers to connect and focus on self-care.

April 2nd is our annual World Autism Day Celebration. This year a lunch and reception will be held at Trent Durham GTA. We're pleased to welcome honorary co-chairs Todd McCarthy, MPP Durham and his wife Kathy McCarthy.

This Fall our exciting Car Rally for Autism returns. Stay tuned for details.

New this year, Autism Home Base presents the 'Lived Experience Autism Program' a 90-minute interactive, open discussion to support local organizations' understanding and service provision to neurodivergent community members. Together we'll demystify autism, brainstorm scenarios, and develop inclusive solutions.






We are autistic adults, largely unemployed, isolated, and living at home with aging parents.

Only ten years ago, a group of families banded together to create social & recreational opportunities to help us keep active and connected with peers.

Today we are on the Veritas List of Top 500 Fastest Growing Charities in Canada.

We are grateful for caring community members who see us and support us.



   @AutismHomeBase
www.autismhomebase.com
Admin: 289-278-3489
Hub landline: 905-419-7900
132 Church St. 2nd Floor
Bowmanville, ON L1C 1T5

a registered Canadian charity #81352 5797 RR0001