



ANNUAL REPORT



2023-2024





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1.0 Message from the Chair

Message from Chairperson Dr. Paul Roumeliotis

The past year was a time of change, challenges, and opportunity during which we renewed our commitment to foster positive change for Canadian families by supporting the organizations and individuals that serve them.

Our focus was on building capacities, providing support, and working in partnership. We are proud to have expanded as a hub of information for 4000+ subscribers and growing. We added a number of materials to our rich repository of carefully curated and co-created resources in the past year and saw more than 30,000 downloads of our digital materials. Through our webinars and other professional development opportunities, hundreds of family support practitioners built their knowledge, skills, and confidence in key areas such as early childhood development, perinatal mental health, vaccines, dementia inclusion, and intergenerational programming.

As Canadians face another challenging year, we are determined to be the association that best meets the needs of our member organizations and the families they serve. Towards this end, over the past year, Families Canada has worked hard on developing a new Strategic Plan that would take the organization into the future. Our extensive consultative process meant we heard from our members, partners, funders, collaborators, board, and staff on what the current realities are and what the future priorities need to be.

Over the next few years, we will be updating our membership model to be as engaging and inclusive as possible and to reflect the diversity of family support and family serving agencies across Canada. We will continue to foster partnerships and alliances, and we are committed to curating information and developing resources and training based on the latest science and evidence. Under our new strategic plan, we will work towards building an association that is agile, responsive, and sustainable. Thank you to the board and staff, our partners and collaborators, and most of all to our members for your insights and invaluable contribution in shaping Families Canada's future.

I hope you enjoy reading about what we have achieved so far and invite you to join us as we embark on this next chapter of Families Canada.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis
Chair, Board of Directors

2.0 Our Team

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, Chair

Kelly E.M. Stone, Director

Lisa Gall, Director

Stephen Sliwa, Director

FORMER DIRECTORS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We would like to thank all our past Board Directors, staff, and volunteers for their valuable contributions in the previous year: Robert Brown, Marisa Capano, Emily Kenny, Latona Nicholson, Rym Bousсенane, Sherry McLean, Randy St. Louis, Maria Khoushnood, René Ramirez Aguilar, Marg Romanow, and Jennifer Gordon.

CURRENT STAFF & VOLUNTEERS



Zindu Salih

President and CEO

Rebecca Balcerzak

Director of Programs

Tola Fakolade

CFO

Peter Roumeliotis

Marketing and
Communications Manager

Ledy E. Tredre

Finance Officer

Alisson Garcia

Finance Assistant

Jesica Santos

Membership and
Administration Officer

Bushra Rahman

Project Officer

Taylor Jia

Project Officer

Stefan Kurbatfinski

Project Officer

3.0 Vision and Mission Statement

VISION



A Canada committed to building **strong families**.

MISSION STATEMENT



To champion the priorities, policies and programs that **build the strength** of Canada's families.



4.0 Approaches to Working with Families



4.1 Children's Rights

International and Canadian Child Rights Partnership

2022-2023 - Funded by Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council



Led by Toronto Metropolitan University (Formerly: Ryerson University), Families Canada participated in a new initiative that supports our commitment to Children's Rights as an underlying approach to much of the work we do. In order to explore and better understand the connection between children's rights to participation and protection, this project involved partners, scholars and practitioners from Canada, South Africa, Hungary, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Cyprus, Mexico, Thailand, and the United States.

Project Objectives:

- Expand conceptual models for intergenerational partnerships.
- Investigate processes for fostering intergenerational partnerships to support child rights, including youth activism.
- Identify and develop relational practices (intergenerational, decolonial, cross-national, cross-cultural, ethical) that can reform and stimulate research, public policy, and practice to support child rights.
- Explore and analyze child rights education environments and how they support or hinder our understanding of child rights among children, as well as intergenerational partnerships.

Project Impact:

- The ICCRP has brought together young people with lived experience, 37 researchers, and 30 partner organizations from universities, NGOs, major human rights institutions, and governments in Canada and in multiple countries across the Americas, Africa, Europe, Asia, and Oceania to explore critical questions in realizing children's rights.

4.0 Approaches to Working with Families, CONT.



4.2 Trauma- and Violence-Informed Approaches

Alliance against Violence and Adversity (AVA): Health and Social Services Research Training Platform for System and Population Transformation in Girls' and Women's Health

2023 - Funded by the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR).

Led by the University of Calgary, Families Canada is a community partner on a project to train the next generation of community-engaged scholars to transform health and social services across Canada to address violence and adversity affecting girls and women.

Project Objectives:

- Strengthen and build capacity to transform community health and social services to promote the health and wellness of girls, women, and gender-diverse people, at risk and/or affected by violence and adversity over the lifecycle.
- Use a collaborative, innovative, cross-sectoral, disciplinary, and jurisdictional training platform to train hundreds of Canadian service providers and academics in the social services and community health fields working with this population.
- Make intergenerational and population impacts, and promote a positive lifespan for girls, women, and gender-diverse people.

Project Impact:

- Launched the Triadic Mentorship program, which has created a number of successful academic, community-based, and student scholar partnerships.
- Developed and published AVA online training modules on topics such as equity, diversity, and inclusion; intersectionality and indigenous research training; implementation science; and sex and gender-based analysis.
- Initiated training and engagement with international experts in health and social service transformation focused on girls and women affected by ACES, especially violence.
- Establishing the International Children's Rights Centre.



5.0 Initiatives



5.1 Financial Literacy

Empowering Women Through Financial Education

2023 - 2024 – Funded by CIBC



This groundbreaking work is allowing Families Canada to build on research indicating that many existing financial literacy programs are not accessible for women living on low incomes, especially women who have experienced trauma. Implementing trauma and violence-informed approaches to financial literacy programming increases women’s sense of safety, control and resilience while improving their financial wellness—as well as decreasing the risk of unintentionally re-traumatizing program participants.

This year, Families Canada is working with family support centres across the country to host financial literacy seminars that embed

a trauma- and violence-informed approach in its design and delivery. These seminars will be hosted by financial literacy educators on a volunteer basis and will provide learning opportunities for women living on low incomes to improve their financial literacy knowledge, skills, and confidence – all of which lead to financial wellbeing.

We look forward to connecting more family support centers with financial literacy educators who can engage participants with this new and innovative approach.

Project Objectives:

- To incorporate trauma and violence-informed approaches (TVIA) into financial literacy programming.
- To make financial literacy programs more accessible to women living on low incomes.

Project Impact:

By the end of this project, Families Canada will have:

- Hosted financial literacy seminars in at least five family support centres across the country.
- Increased awareness of the importance of financial literacy in women living on low incomes through implementing a communications campaign.
- Disseminated knowledge and shared best practices through a webinar on the topic of financial literacy in women living on low incomes.
- Developed a thorough evaluation of the project, informing future work addressing financial literacy in women living on low incomes.

5.0 Initiatives, CONT.



5.2 Intergenerational Programming

Promoting Dementia Awareness in Intergenerational Programming in Canada

2023 - 2024 – Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)



This year, Families Canada partnered with Andrew Fleck Children’s Services, the Council on Aging of Ottawa, the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, and the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County to deliver this project with the aim to reduce dementia stigma and increase the capacity of the family support sector to integrate dementia-inclusivity into intergenerational programming. The long-term goal of this project is to integrate dementia awareness in intergenerational programs across Canada through the development of multimedia resources, capacity-building activities, and awareness campaigns.

Project Objectives:

- Reduce dementia-related stigma in intergenerational programs by conducting a nationwide awareness campaign targeting service providers, seniors, caregivers, and parents of young participants.
- Encourage and support communities to be more dementia inclusive through building knowledge, understanding, and skills in dementia-inclusivity among service providers of intergenerational programs in various settings such as family support, early learning, childcare and long-term cares.

Project Impact:

Through this project, Families Canada has developed a number of valuable resources:

- 8 tipsheets available in 12 languages, outlining a variety of topics surrounding dementia inclusion in intergenerational programming, available at shop.familiescanada.ca
- 1 [Webinar](#) on building dementia inclusion into intergenerational programming
- 1 [Podcast](#) on building dementia inclusion into intergenerational programming

Increasing Service Provider Capacity to Support Seniors through Podcasting

2023 - 2024 – Funded by Employment and Social Development Canada – New Horizons for Seniors Program

For many seniors, COVID-19 exacerbated the mental and physical impacts of social isolation that they experience. As a result, many family support practitioners are looking for resources to help them better connect with seniors—both in person and online.

To meet this need, Families Canada developed a podcast episode for family support practitioners in discussing how to help reduce senior social isolation by promoting seniors’ digital literacy. A big thank you to our partners Connected Canadians and Andrew Fleck Children’s Services for being interviewed!

5.0 Initiatives, CONT.



5.2 Intergenerational Programming, CONT.

Increasing Service Provider Capacity to Support Seniors through Podcasting, cont.

Project Objectives:

- To increase the capacity of family support practitioners and equip them in reducing senior social isolation by promoting seniors' digital literacy.

Project Impact:

Through this project, Families Canada has:

- Developed a podcast [episode](#) on how family support centres can reduce social isolation in seniors by supporting their digital literacy.



Engage at Every Age: Intergenerational Demonstration Sites Project

2021 – 2025 – Funded by Waltons Trust

Families Canada is proud to be involved in this collaboration, led by Andrew Fleck Children's Services, along with the Council on Aging of Ottawa and others. Over four years, this project aims to develop demonstration sites that will implement, document, and showcase best practices in intergenerational programming as a model for licensed early learning and care.

Project Objectives:

- To develop demonstration sites of best practices for intergenerational programming as a model for licensed early learning and care in 3 unique settings: 1) community based, 2) neighborhood based, and 3) co-located as part of a senior's village, including long term care facilities.

Project Impact:

Through this project, Families Canada has:

- Supported our partners in introducing intergenerational activities in 3 selected sites, which are showing great promise in bringing seniors, children, and parents together. Sites are reporting success stories and documenting developing relationships among intergenerational participants.
- Disseminated information on intergenerational programming through a series of podcasts hosted by Families Canada.
- Promoted the work of our partners through a communications campaign.



5.0 Initiatives, CONT.



5.3 Parenting

Nobody's Perfect – Virtual Training Project

2022 – 2025 – Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Nobody's Perfect Program (NPP) was adapted by partners and Master Trainers to ensure that NPP parent group sessions and the NPP facilitator training could be accessed through a virtual environment. Building on this great work, PHAC is now supporting a short-term pilot project that takes the next step in further adapting the traditionally "in-person" facilitator training to a more standardized, virtually delivered training program for new NPP facilitators to be pilot tested and evaluated.

Project Objectives:

- Identify gaps and needs in the current NPP program infrastructure and develop recommendations for addressing gaps and meeting these needs.
- Develop a more consistent NPP virtual facilitator training program that maintains the caliber of its in-person counterpart.
- Train more NPP facilitators online, taking advantage of the increased reach and accessibility that a virtual delivery method offers.

Project Impact:

So far in this project, Families Canada has:

- Conducted a Needs Assessment of the NPP program, engaging more than 110 NPP stakeholders nationwide including Master Trainers, Trainers, Facilitators, program partners, and funders, representing all provinces and both official languages.
- Produced two reports published and available for free on the Families Canada store in both English and French.

[Report 1: Nobody's Perfect Needs Assessment Developing a Standard Virtual Facilitator Training Program](#)

[Report 2: Nobody's Perfect Needs Assessment and Strategy Document - How We'll Grow](#)



5.0 Initiatives, CONT.



5.3 Parenting, CONT.

Daymark Perinatal Mental Health Project

2022 – 2023 – Funded by the Daymark Foundation

Emerging research shows that women of childbearing age have been most negatively impacted by the pandemic. Studies also show that those from socio-economically disadvantaged groups have less access to necessary support. The family support sector is uniquely situated and instrumental in providing services to women, especially in marginalized and disadvantaged communities.

To respond effectively, it is important to first understand the current and emerging gaps, opportunities, and unique needs of perinatal women who seek services from family support centers.

In partnership with Families Canada, further information gathering was undertaken by Dr. Natalie Montgomery, Dr. Reham Abdelhalim, and Dr. Kristina Kokorelias, to better understand the existing needs and gaps. A Project Advisory Group was established to guide the process and a national needs assessment was conducted as the main method of collecting data.

Project Objectives:

- Identify gaps, assets, opportunities, and barriers in the family support sector to provide mental health support to perinatal women.
- Identify existing and forthcoming programs and resources that effectively respond to the mental health needs of perinatal women.

Project Impact:

Through this project, Families Canada has:

- Consulted more than 200 individuals through focus groups and surveys.
- Identified more than 80 perinatal mental health support programs.
- Published an environmental scan and needs assessment available in the report [*Mental Health Supports for Perinatal People: A needs assessment of the family support sector.*](#)

We look forward to working with organizations across Canada to move forward the report's recommendations.



5.0 Initiatives, CONT.



5.4 Early Childhood Development & Play.



French Footprints FSL in the Early Years

2023 – 2024 – Funded by Canadian Parents for French

Research indicates that early exposure to play-based French learning opportunities leads to greater social, emotional, and academic success in children. Knowing this, in addition to the benefits of early learning in general, Families Canada is committed to supporting families in maximizing the possibilities for their young children.

By partnering with Canadian Parents for French, Families Canada was able to promote options for families that feature second language learning and play, especially to families with children transitioning into school.

Project Objectives:

- To develop and disseminate evidence-informed resources for early French-language learning.
- To provide training opportunities to increase capacity and confidence of Canadian families to deliver early French language learning, even if they are not fluent in the language.
- To pilot test evidence-based virtual programming for play-based French-language learning.

Project Impact:

Through this project, Families Canada has:

- Supported our partners in launching an online training portal for early childhood educators and family support practitioners with evidence-based information and literature on early language learning theory, the benefits of bi/multilingualism, and downloadable ideas for practical and fun activities and lessons for children to learn French.
- Supported our partners in creating an online resource hub, offering key information and tools for English-speaking parents with children ages zero to five, equipping them to take on activities in French at home with their children.

5.0 Initiatives, CONT.



5.5 Support to Families After COVID-19

Increasing Vaccine Confidence Through Enhancing Capacity of Family Support Service Providers – Phase 2 2023 – 2024 – Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

During fall and winter, the flu and other respiratory illnesses increased significantly. At the same time, the Canadian population was behind on routine vaccinations. To help Canadian families stay healthy, Families Canada partnered with the Eastern Ontario Health Unit and Solutions for Kids in Pain, to provide family support practitioners with necessary tools and information to become vaccine promoters in their communities.

Project Objectives:

- Identify culturally appropriate resources that improve vaccine literacy and promote positive messaging about vaccination to families.
- Educate community-based service providers, thereby improving their vaccine literacy to address vaccine hesitancy and barriers among the individuals they serve.

Project Impact:

Through this project, Families Canada has:

- Developed multilingual tip sheets available at shop.familiescanada.ca.
- Designed and produced e-modules.
- Hosted webinars, podcast episodes and eblasts.
- Increased knowledge dissemination through newsletters.
- Conducted an environmental scan.
- Launched a social media campaign on vaccine confidence, resulting in more than 20,000 impressions.



5.0 Initiatives, CONT.



5.5 Support to Families After COVID-19 CONT.

500 Family Support Centers Stepping Forward Together 2023 – 2024 – Funded by The Canadian Red Cross Society

Like many non-profit organizations, Families Canada has experienced reduced operations and decreased revenue as a direct result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Families Canada has been in survival mode for the past three years, and is now making efforts to build back better from the effects of the pandemic. Long-term strategic planning is essential to recovery.

The goal of this project is to develop the first-ever inclusive strategic plan and membership strategy for the national association of family support centers.

By adapting the family support sector's strategic direction to better align with the pandemic/post-pandemic context, Families Canada will be uniquely positioned to support and engage with 500+ family support centres across the country. Over the next several years, we will work together to redefine how to best support families and those who serve them.



Project Objectives:

- Adapt the Families Canada strategic direction to be responsive to the post-pandemic needs of the family support sector and the 500 000 families our members reach.
- Create a membership strategy to modernize performance management through defined membership KPIs and digital tools to measure data.
- Modernize engagement and communication tools with members through a redeveloped website and enhanced digital marketing strategy.

Project Impact:

- New Families Canada Strategic Plan – to be published in Fall 2024
- Website refresh – to be completed in Fall 2024
- Membership Campaign – to be launched in Fall 2024
- New Membership Strategy – initiated and has increased members in good standing by 20%

6.0 Funders and Partners

Funders:

Partners:

Carleton UNIVERSITY
 Canada's Capital University

Public Health Agency of Canada
 Agence de la santé publique du Canada

Canadian Heritage
 Patrimoine canadien

CANADIAN RED CROSS

Daymark Foundation

Employment and Social Development Canada
 Emploi et Développement social Canada

CIBC

CANADIAN PARENTS FOR FRENCH

Carleton UNIVERSITY
 Canada's Capital University

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

EOHU
 Eastern Ontario Health Unit

BSEO
 Bureau de santé de l'est de l'Ontario

NATIONAL Family Support

Toronto Metropolitan University

Connected Canadians

Dad Central

Abilio
 Childhood Knowledge Dissemination Centre

Andrew Fleck Children's Services
 since - depuis 1911



7.0 New and Upcoming Resources

New Resources

E-Module: French Footprints

This module is created specifically for family support practitioners, introducing them to the benefits and practices of bringing French-second language training to young children aged 0-9 years. The course can be accessed at training.familiescanada.ca.

Tip sheets: About COVID-19 Vaccines – Building Vaccine Confidence Through Knowledge

As part of Families Canada’s Increasing Vaccine Confidence through Enhancing the Capacity of Family Service Providers project, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada and in partnership with the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, a series of tip sheets have been created to answer parents’ vaccine-related questions. Check them out at: shop.familiescanada.ca.



Tip sheets: People Living with Dementia

As part of Families Canada’s project, Building Dementia Inclusion into Intergenerational Programming, supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada, a series of tip sheets has been created to help increase dementia inclusivity in family programming.

The tip sheets are a free resource and are available in English, French, Arabic, Farsi, Hindi, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Tamil, Traditional Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog. Check them out at: shop.familiescanada.ca.

Tip sheets include:

- Benefits of Intergenerational Programming for Seniors with Dementia
- Creating Dementia-Friendly Spaces for Intergenerational Programs
- Developing Dementia-Inclusive Intergenerational Programs
- How to Talk to Children About Dementia
- Activities Children Can Do with People Living with Dementia
- Communicating with a Person Living with Dementia
- Addressing Common Barriers to Participation
- Helpful Resources



Book: Kibou's Light

Written with young children in mind, [this book](#) extends its hand to parents, especially those concerned for our planet’s future. The story provides parents with a gentle yet powerful tool to broach the topic of climate change with their young children, delicately paving the way for those necessary conversations that we must learn to have, regardless of how old we are or where we come from. Thank you to the authors from mochi4theplanet.com for creating this wonderful resource!



Tip sheets are also available for both [parents](#) and [educators](#), guiding children to engage in meaningful discussions about the book’s themes.

Upcoming Resources

Virtual Training Program: Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program

With the guidance of *Nobody's Perfect* stakeholders, Families Canada will be developing a standardized virtual *Nobody's Perfect* facilitator training e-learning module.

Family Education Program: Healthy Together in French

Healthy Together is a family education program that engages the entire family in addressing nutrition, money management, moving more, and family connections. This program has been shown to increase physical activity and consumption of fruits and vegetables; prevent type 2 diabetes and other chronic illnesses; and decrease screen time and consumption of sugary drinks in children. Families Canada, therefore, is proud to announce the translation of Healthy Together into French, allowing underserved Francophone families to experience the many benefits of this program.

e-Course Series: Early Childhood Development in a Time of Pandemic

Families Canada and Abilio - Childhood Knowledge Dissemination Centre formerly Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development previously offered an 'Early Childhood Development in a Time of Pandemic' webinar series in response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. This webinar series is now being offered as an e-module course series, focusing on providing evidence-based information to support young children’s resilience and recovery.



8.0 Financial Report

These statements are an extract from the complete audited financial statements of Families Canada for the year ended March 31, 2024.

The auditor, Andrews & Co, has provided Families Canada with a positive audit opinion on the 2023-2024 Financial Statements.

Project Funding and Government Contributions

Revenue from Project Funding and Government Contributions increased in 2024 vs. 2023 by \$193,968.04, representing a 23.57% increase due to incremental grants from various sources received in the year. The key grants contributing to this increase include the NPP Online Training Project, The Promoting Dementia Awareness project, the Vaccine Confidence project Phase II, along with some funding received from the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Canadian Parents for French.

Membership

Membership revenue increased by 20% compared to the previous fiscal year, which can be attributed to

introducing new membership growth and engagement strategies.

Expenditures

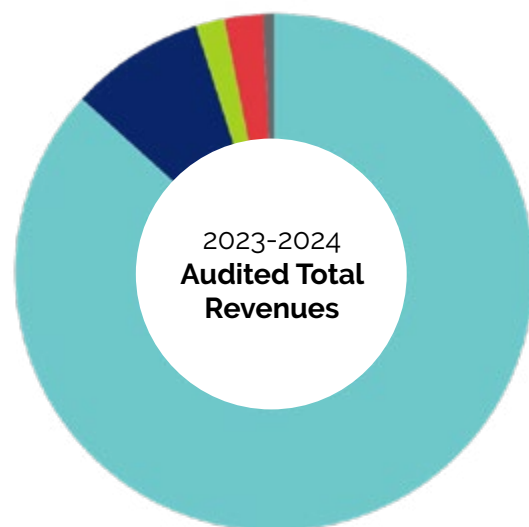
Expenditures were similar to the previous fiscal year with only a 5.64% increase, which is a direct reflection of good fiscal control and financial management. The organization took steps to reduce or control expenditures, particularly in the areas of external consultants, rent and utilities, material/supplies and other overhead expenses.

Contingency Fund

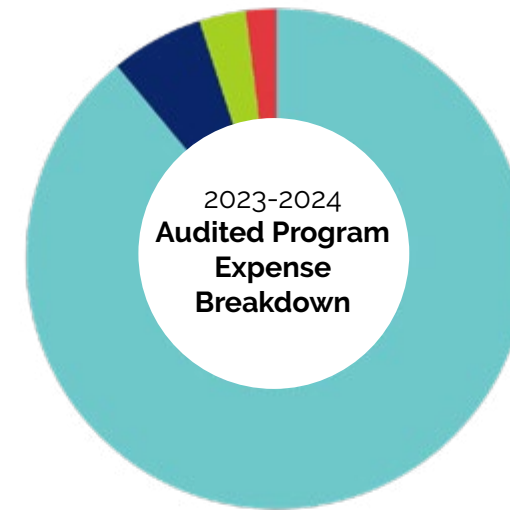
This year, the contingency fund closed at \$60,000.00. As operations allow, the fund will be increased to an amount equal to 3-6 months of core expenses.

Financial Information

The year ended March 31, 2024, resulted in net revenues over expenses of (\$11,573.25), compared to a deficit of (\$91,153.36) in the previous year. This is mainly due to revenue from several large projects which were completed by the end of the fiscal year.

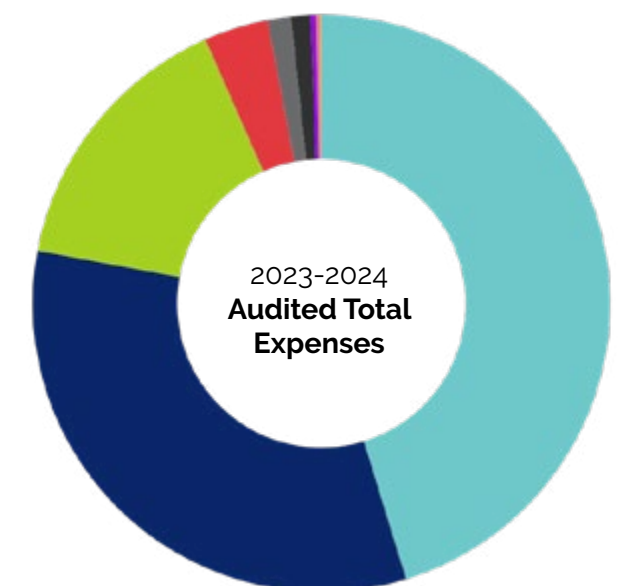


- 86.6% Project funding and government contributions
- 8.4% Publications
- 2.4% Donations and sponsorships
- 1.8% Other
- 0.7% Membership



- 89% Program expenses
- 6% Publications, products, services
- 3% Admin and overhead
- 2% Support services

- 45.3% Salaries and related benefits
- 32.7% Consultants and contracts
- 15.5% Publications
- 3.6% Rent
- 1.3% Office supplies
- 1.1% Translation
- 0.3% Insurance
- 0.2% Telephone and utilities
- 0.1% Amortization





List of Donors

We are thankful for the generous support of the following 2023-2024 donors:

- Sherry Zhao
- CIBC
- Canadian Credit Union Association
- United Way East Ontario
- Our donors who wish to remain anonymous



Connect with Us

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 [@FamiliesCanada](#)

Website: familiescanada.ca

Online Store: shop.familiescanada.ca

Training Portal: training.familiescanada.ca

Member Portal: members.familiescanada.ca

