



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



# OUR PROGRAMS & LEADERSHIP



## PROGRAMS

Bailiff Services,  
Eastern Region

Day Treatment,  
Toronto

Developmental Services,  
Toronto & Pickering

Kennedy House  
After School Program,  
Toronto

Kennedy House Youth Centre,  
Ajax

Kennedy House Youth Shelter,  
Toronto

Residential Services for Adolescents,  
Toronto

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cindy Bruce-Barrett  
*Chair*

Philip Longaphie  
*Vice-Chair*

Melissa Coulson  
*Treasurer*

Jeremy Mullin  
*Secretary*

Bryon Cohen

Ryan Ehrenworth

Chitra Gnanasabesan

Julie Kish

Leyland Muss

James Rosenthal

Victor Tuba

## SENIOR MANAGERS

Shelly Jaigobin  
*Executive Director*

Sergiu Balaj  
*Human Resources Manager*

Louis Davis  
*Superintendent,  
Kennedy House Youth Centre*

TBD (new hire in progress),  
*Manager of Shelter Services*

Rosalinde Douma,  
*Clinical Manager*

Anika Saheli,  
*Finance Manager*

# LEARNING RESILIENCY

Looking back on the past 12 months, we are so impressed by how everyone at Kennedy House — our staff, our board, and our clients — continued to demonstrate resiliency and dedication in the face of yet another challenging year.

We are proud of our amazing staff, and the way the team always went above and beyond to handle every situation with grit and compassion. We are humbled by the dedication of our board members, who were always available when called upon. And we are impressed by our clients, who became stronger and more resilient each day, as you'll see by some of their success stories on these pages.

Although the coming year will undoubtedly bring new challenges, we're also confident that it will bring successes, thanks to the foundational work we've carried out over the past year. A few highlights:

- We engaged in meetings with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) and the provincial Minister of Finance. Our goal is to increase funding so we can address retention and recruitment challenges by ensuring our staff are paid a living wage.
- We successfully negotiated a new collective agreement with Unifor, which will help ensure stable staffing for our Brock Road and Galloway Road residential programs.
- We underwent a rate review process with the MCCSS for Kennedy Road and Galloway Road. If approved, a higher per diem will enable us to provide much-needed program enhancements.
- We supported community need by absorbing into the Kennedy House Youth Centre the remaining clients from the Brookside Youth Centre when it was closed. We applied to the Ministry to have the additional operational costs covered and have adjusted our budget for the future to reflect a more realistic financial outlook.
- We secured a Trillium grant to support our post-COVID work at the shelter and are encouraged by the possibilities afforded by this financial support.

We were also delighted last year to welcome new members to our Board of Directors, which continues to grow and diversify. This is important for an established organization like ours, which has had a stable, long-term board for so long. Our Legacy Committee is looking at how we can further prepare for a smooth succession to a new generation of trusted stewards.

Not only did our work continue through the pandemic, it became more urgently needed. We are encouraged knowing that recognition and support for all we do is stronger than ever, assuring that we can continue our important work of supporting youth in their journey.



Shelly Jaigobin, *Executive Director*



Cindy Bruce-Barrett, *Chair of the Board of Directors*

# WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Need has grown and so has our impact. This past year we were able to provide essential support to more youth, helping them take the next steps in securing education, employment, and housing.



266

young people experiencing homelessness found a warm bed in our supportive shelter



62

youth in our care embarked on job training



37

youth in our programs started education

65

clients

took a step towards independence by starting a job

38

Shelter clients moved into a stable home

3

youth graduated from high school



5

clients

in our residential program transitioned to the next phase of their lives

69

youth in custody received supportive care



241

clients in custody or detained under the Youth Criminal Justice Act received a ride and a supportive companion for court dates, transfers, and appointments

"I really enjoyed my stay with Kennedy House.

It was a supportive environment and has encouraged me to progress in life. I received necessary life skills like budgeting, time-management, etc. And through the help of the staff, I was well prepared to finally move into a place of my own."

—Sashana, Former Kennedy House client

# HARM REDUCTION APPROACH HELPS YOUTH

At Kennedy House Youth Shelter, an innovative harm reduction strategy builds trust and helps protect young people struggling with addiction.

Although the harm reduction approach has been around for a while, it is relatively new at the Shelter. Dan San Gabriel, Program and Housing Supervisor at Kennedy House, has been a champion of the harm reduction strategy, having learned about the approach before he started at Kennedy House in 2018. He emphasizes that harm reduction is not a *program* but a *philosophy*.

## SEEING THE PERSON

“The premise of harm reduction is to remove the stigma surrounding drug use and how it’s perceived, to be better able to understand the person and provide support,” he says. “When a client is struggling with addiction, we meet them where they’re at.”

The approach helps by keeping clients safe, and by building the trust that can lead to positive outcomes in the future.

Putting the harm reduction philosophy into place begins by not turning away young people who use drugs — something that goes against the policy of some shelters.

“Instead of denying access to the shelter if we find drug paraphernalia in their belongings, we acknowledge that the person is struggling and needs support,” explains Dan.

A key goal is then to ensure the youth’s safety by educating them about safe use, such as using clean tools and practicing the buddy system to deal with emergencies. Staff

are trained to identify an overdose and administer naloxone if necessary.

## COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Using the right language is also important because the words we use reveal innate biases. For example, describing someone who is no longer using a drug as being “clean” implies that they were “dirty” before. Instead, staff use vocabulary that validates the person’s feelings and their struggles. As Dan explains, “Harm reduction requires people to check their own biases.”

When they feel accepted and respected, many clients will open up about why they started using drugs and the underlying issues they are dealing with.

Dan cites an instance where a young woman at the shelter eventually revealed traumas she’d suffered, which included sexual assault and bullying. He was then able to refer her to appropriate counselling to help her deal with her past.

“By making clients feel accepted and more comfortable, we can help them get the help and support they need, which is what makes the harm reduction philosophy effective,” says Dan.



# SUCCESS STORIES



## BACK TO SCHOOL WITH MINDFUL MONDAYS

Students who are struggling in a traditional classroom enroll in the Kennedy House Day Treatment program to receive extra support in school. A new Mindful Mondays program was developed to help students make the transition back into school mode each week after the two-day weekend break. Students engage in mindfulness exercises and self-reflective activities such as guided imagery and peaceful art projects.

## CELEBRATING SMALL VICTORIES

One of our clients at Manse Road achieved an important life skill goal — learning to independently do their laundry from start to finish. Many of us take our ability to complete everyday tasks like this for granted. At the Kennedy House Residential Program, such achievements are milestones to be celebrated.



## SAFE TRAVELS, FRIEND!

This year we said goodbye to a much-loved client. After seven amazing years, he has transitioned to a new home closer to his family and community. The Brock Road program will miss his hugs and Tigger jumps. We'll miss hearing him sing songs in his bedroom — and maybe stealing cookies in the middle of the night! We celebrate him and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavours.

## EXPRESSING HIS TRUE SELF

"Jason" (not his real name) came to Kennedy Road Residential Program due to a conflict with his parents. He was timid and shy, and avoided expressing his true self.

Since joining the program Jason has built a strong rapport with staff and clients, which has enabled him to be more open about who he is. Eventually, he felt comfortable enough to disclose that he identifies as gay.

Jason has indicated that he's interested in learning more about the LGBTQ2+ community, and staff have started working on an LGBTQ2+ Client Board to help increase his self-confidence and encourage self-expression. Today Jason loves creating fun videos and skits for staff and his peers.

## MARKING A TRANSITION

Ajay has been with Kennedy House since 2019. In October 2021, he transitioned from our adolescent home to our adult developmental service home, Brock Road.

Ajay is a joyful and cheerful young adult who brings happiness and laughter wherever he goes. He enjoys making staff laugh by telling jokes, singing songs, colouring pictures for others, and jumping on the trampoline. His charismatic personality and sense of humour are unforgettable.

He continues to grow and succeed in his life skills. Keeping shining bright, Ajay!

## RESPECTING THE MANY FORMS OF DIVERSITY



Understanding, embracing, and respecting diversity in all its forms is important to the staff and residents of the Galloway Road Program. Here are two recent examples of how we put that into action.

To show our support for our many different abilities, we released blue balloons for Autism Awareness, watching them soar into the sky. We hope that knowledge about autism continues to soar as well.

One day a Galloway resident approached staff and said they wanted to release orange balloons to bring awareness for Every Child Matters. "I feel like people aren't talking about it anymore and Every Child Matters is important to me." We engaged with the youth about their feelings and together developed a plan of action. We encourage everyone to keep the conversation going, to make it known that Every Child Matters.

"Working with young adults with disabilities has been rewarding since the day I started at the Brock Road program. These young adults are all so unique and just steal my heart away!"

—Abigail S., *Developmental Services Worker*

# HOW SMALL STEPS LED TO GREAT SUCCESS

The everyday habits we develop are important because they can lead us to either an unhealthy way of living or a healthy one. One of our clients has shown that determination to make positive lifestyle choices can make a big difference.

## TWISTS AND TURNS IN THE ROAD

At the start of 2021, this client engaged in several unhealthy habits, including smoking, drinking, and ordering large amounts of food from a delivery service. As a result, she gained a lot of weight and struggled to walk due to her body mass and lack of stamina. She took little pride in her appearance and demonstrated poor behaviours with staff.

In September 2021, our client had some good news: she was accepted to Humber College for Child and Youth Care. Despite being diagnosed with an intellectual disability, she made the Dean's List in the first semester.

Unfortunately, that fall she also received bad news: she was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

## MAKING BETTER CHOICES

As devastating as this diagnosis was, it prompted her to take action. She quit smoking and drinking and lost nearly 80 pounds. She worked with a dietitian, who helped her create weekly meal plans, eliminate take-out orders, and increase her fruit and vegetable intake. She also became more physically active and now walks 35 to 45 minutes each day, as well as doing other forms of exercise.

The changes didn't stop there. The client developed a stronger connection with her family and reconnected with her faith, which has supported her through her college journey.

Her hard work over these many months has paid off. She still checks her blood sugar levels twice a week, but she no longer needs to take medication to control her diabetes. Moreover, she has developed stronger connections with others, takes greater pride in her daily routine and appearance, and has a more positive outlook.

This young woman continues to grow as an individual. She has set positive goals for the near future, which she will most certainly achieve now that she has taken a healthier, happier path in life.





# OUR HOUSE THRIVES ON ROUTINE

Roshni Patel, Program Supervisor, talks about life at Brock Road Residential Program and the strategies that keep clients safe and happy.

## WHO ARE YOUR CLIENTS AT BROCK ROAD?

We can accept up to six males, age 18-24, who have developmental or intellectual disabilities. Right now, all five (one recently left and his space is being filled) happen to have autism, and three are non-verbal.

Four of the young adults require one-to-one staffing to support their day-to-day needs. The other attends school during the day.

## WHAT IS DAILY LIFE LIKE AT THE HOUSE?

These clients thrive on routine! We use several techniques to maintain it, while respecting the individual preferences of each person.

We have a visual schedule that illustrates the approximate times and preferred activities for each person, from the time he wakes up until bed.

The large, fenced yard is an important feature of daily life. It's a place to enjoy activities such as the trampoline and water play — for example water toys and the sprinkler — which provides a sensory experience that's soothing to people with autism.

The clients also sit down to dinner together each day. Everyone has his own place at the table, and they enjoy being together for some "down time."

## WHY ARE SOOTHING ACTIVITIES SO IMPORTANT?

Both food and music bring the clients back to baseline — a place of calm.

They all come from different cultural backgrounds, and you can see that they enjoy hearing music from their own culture because they'll sway and move when we play it.

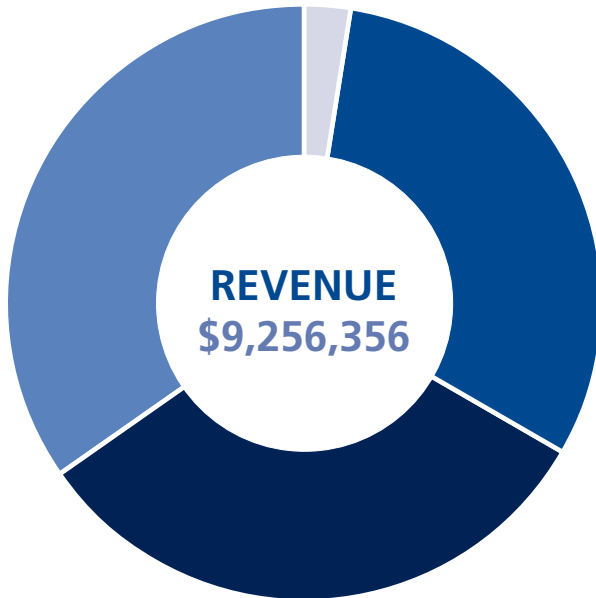
We also have a safety plan in place for each client, so that staff know how to manage a situation if someone becomes upset, to ensure he doesn't harm himself or others.

## DOES FOLLOWING A ROUTINE MEAN EVERY DAY IS THE SAME?

Definitely not! We go on regular outings, like farms visits, the bowling alley, waterfront picnics, and an ability centre in Whitby. These trips require a lot of planning. Since each person has a different tolerance for how long he can stay out, we need to have enough staff and a second vehicle so some can return home early.

Home visits are another highlight, and can last a few hours up to a couple of nights. Even when they're not spending time with their son, the parents are very involved and stay in touch with staff. We all care so much about these beautiful young people!

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY



- Federal Subsidy (0.0%)
- Fundraising/Other Income (2.54%)
- Municipal Subsidy (30.80%)
- Provincial Subsidy (32.07%)
- Children's Aid Societies (34.59%)



- Admin/Other (8.51%)
- Youth Justice (24.67%)
- Youth Programs (30.86%)
- Residential Programs (35.96%)

To receive a copy of our full audited financial statements for the last fiscal year, please contact us at 416-299-3157 or [info@kennedyhouse.org](mailto:info@kennedyhouse.org).

Charitable Registration Number #10280 7245 RR0001

# THANK YOU, DONORS!

Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue our mission of caring for vulnerable youth in the community. We appreciate every contribution to Kennedy House, because each donation helps create a brighter, more successful future for young people who need our support.

## \$200–\$999

Ann Wylie  
Can Imer  
Melissa Hillier  
Vanessa Hardy  
Faruq Rashid  
Anjanie Jaigobin  
Jean Quirin  
Katherine McCall  
Lara Mrosovsky  
Simon Cameron  
Thomas Burns  
Lisa Dempster  
Frank Jones  
Michelle Cutts  
C3 Church  
Kelly Higginson  
CHUM Charitable Foundation  
Joanne Vaughan

Rotary Club of Toronto Skyline  
Scott & Associates Inc.  
Royal Bank of Canada  
TELUS

## \$1,000–\$4,999

Alan Redway  
Christopher Carew  
The Jaigobin Family  
St. Luke's Church  
St. Barnabas Church, Chester  
BMO Financial Group  
Eva & Mike  
The KM Hunter Charitable Foundation  
The Waugh Family Foundation  
Ontario REALTORS Care Foundation

## \$5,000–\$9,999

The Kenn-Mar Foundation

## \$10,000–\$14,999

J.P. Bickell Foundation  
United Way of Greater Toronto  
Ivanhoé Cambridge

## \$15,000–\$24,999

Aqueduct Foundation  
Blue Sea Philanthropy  
Catherine and Maxwell  
Meighen Foundation

## \$25,000+



## THANK YOU TO THESE BOARD MEMBERS FOR THEIR FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

Melissa Coulson    Cindy Bruce-Barrett    James Rosenthal    Bryon Cohen    Victor Tuba



To support Kennedy House, please donate at [www.kennedyhouse.org](http://www.kennedyhouse.org) or call us at (416) 299-3157.



**Kennedy House**

404-10 Milner Business Court  
Toronto, ON M1B 3C6  
[www.kennedyhouse.org](http://www.kennedyhouse.org)

Tel: 416-299-3157 • [info@kennedyhouse.org](mailto:info@kennedyhouse.org)

  [@kennedyhouse1971](https://www.instagram.com/kennedyhouse1971)  [@KennedyHouseYou](https://twitter.com/KennedyHouseYou)

Charitable Registration No.: 10280 7245 RR 0001



**KENNEDY  
HOUSE**



**EST. 1971**