



01



Boys & Girls Clubs



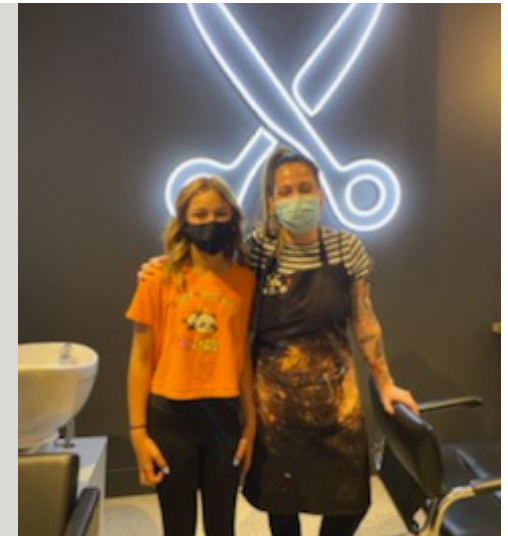
Big Brothers Big Sisters

Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Edmonton & Area

2020-2021 Annual Report

BETTER TOGETHER

Our agency acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for Indigenous, Inuit and Metis peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.



01



Message from the President & Executive Director

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The last year has challenged every single one of us. The global pandemic forced us into circumstances that required adaptation and resilience. We've learned to cope with isolation, work remotely, and create virtual programs. We've missed out on hugs and handshakes but we've learned to appreciate and value each other more deeply. If we've learned one thing from this pandemic, it's that the people in our community are looking out for one another. As we've considered the impact that prolonged isolation has had for many of our families, we've felt incredibly supported by corporations, funders, donors, volunteer, and staff – all who have stepped forward to ask, "what do you need?" and "how can we help?" Donations have been generous and solutions have been creative. It's during times of great adversity that we witness our strength of character, and what we have seen at BGCBiggs has moved us deeply.

We're inspired by the thousands of volunteers that continued to show up for the kids and youth in our programs. Thank you for shifting so seamlessly to virtual hangouts and socially distanced meet ups. Thank you for recognizing that mentoring never stops, and for providing the support our kids needed now, more than ever.

We wish to thank our staff who pivoted so quickly to ensure that families, youth, children, and volunteers all continued to receive the support they needed. Thank you for creating solutions to address the problems we faced, and for adapting programs to provide the best services possible. We appreciate your creativity, your flexibility, and your optimism in spite of the hurdles placed in your way. Thank you for always showing up with good humour and resilience.

Thank you to our funders, donors, and community partners who have been with us every step of the way. When initial lockdowns occurred, many of our families lacked the resources they needed to adapt to lockdowns and at home school. Some of them experienced job loss, and food scarcity. All of them faced emotional uncertainty as virus rates dropped and spiked. Our community partners such as the Family Centre, the Food Bank, and School Boards rallied to provide resources and offer relief in any way they could for our families in need. Your support during these unprecedented times has been invaluable and has shown us that supporting kids never stops. This past year has taught us that we care for each other, no matter the circumstances. Thank you for affirming and re-affirming your support for us time and time again. We express our sincerest thanks for your generosity, compassion, and good faith in our programs and the people we serve.

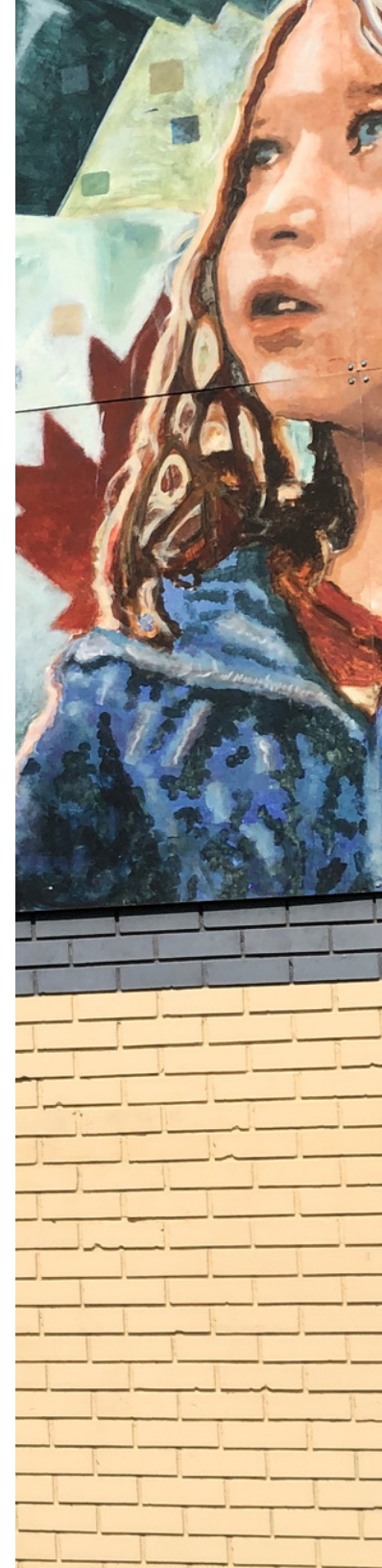
Sincerely,



Makale
Susan Makale
BGCBiggs Board President



Liz O'Neill
Liz O'Neill
BGCBiggs Executive Director



Board Members

We express our overwhelming gratitude for all those who serve as board members and committee members. Thank you for sharing your time and talents with us. Your support is crucial to the success of our agency, children, and families.

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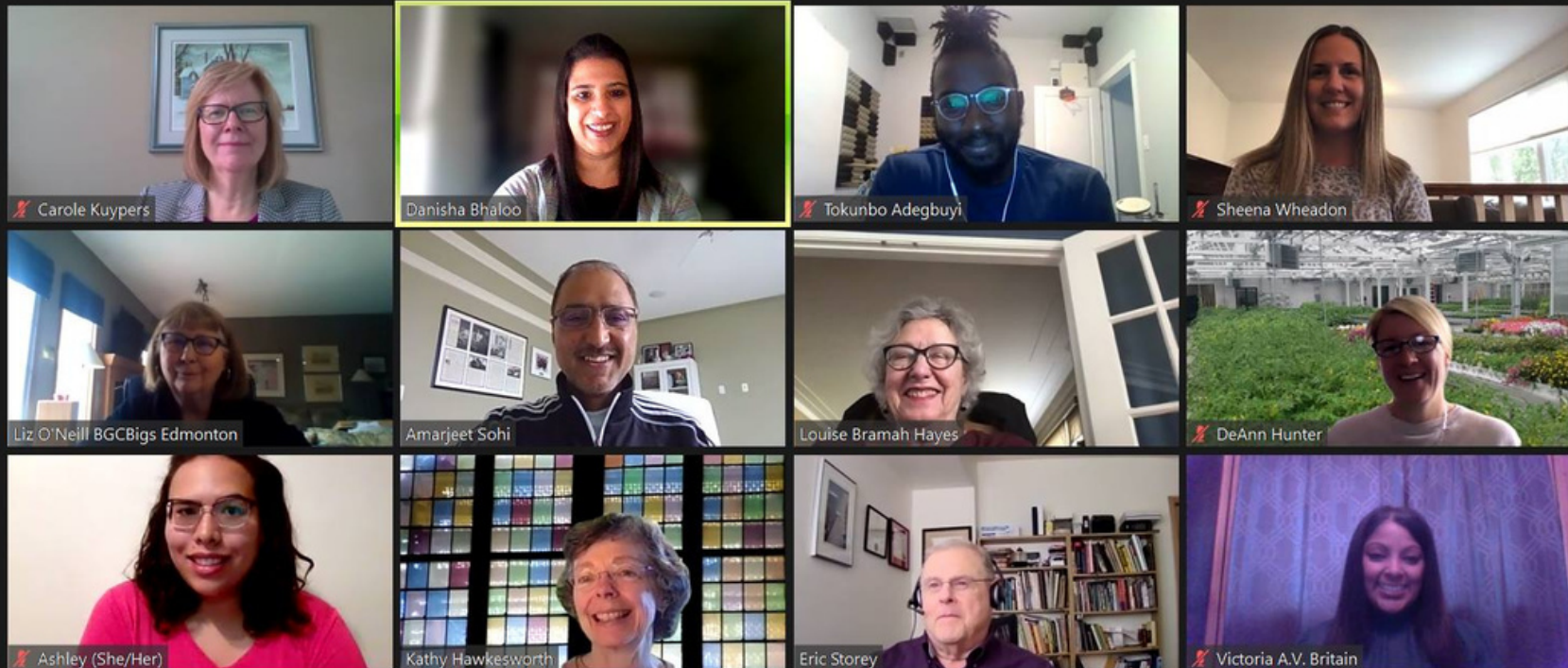
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Louise Hayes

Sheena Wheadon

Tokunbo Adegbuyi

Victoria Britain



Dennis Goddard



who we ARE

Agency Impact - Mission

BGCBigs is a community- supported organization committed to the healthy development of children, youth and their families by providing safe places, positive relationships, services and opportunities to develop personal strengths and interpersonal skills that enhance their long-term success in life.

who we SERVE

3,400+
CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVED

2020-2021

1,300+
VOLUNTEERS GAVE THEIR TIME

2020-2022

120+
STAFF

Anti-Racism Statement

BGCBigs is dedicated to supporting thousands of children and youth across our communities that we serve.

Many of the young people we serve and the volunteers we support represent communities that are and have been affected by racism.

We are committed to the ending of the societal and systemic racism that has been built upon years of complacency and acceptance of the status quo.

Racism simply cannot be tolerated in any form, in any way.

Three of our core values - Belonging, Respect, and Speaking Out - are central to our approach of inclusion in our organization. It is imperative that we work hard to take responsibility to lead, and to help demolish the inequities that racism has created.

Our goal at BGCBigs is to ensure that our children, youth, and families are supported to have access to opportunity.

Our youth have the right to be full participants in society and to walk without fear of racism.

We cannot stand by - we will have the difficult conversations and open dialogue that are necessary to move forward to build a just society for all.

We at BGCBigs are committed to being an active part of the solution.

Mentoring Improves

Social-Emotional Competence through

- Relationship skills
- Social awareness
- Responsible decision making
- Self-management
- Self-awareness

Mental Health & Well Being through

- Positive identity
- Mental wellness
- Social inclusion & empowerment

Educational Engagement & Employment Readiness through

- School connectedness
- Commitment to learning
- Enhanced constructive use of time

CHILDREN WITH A MENTOR ARE



27% less likely to start using alcohol

46% less likely to start using drugs

37% less likely to skip a class

52% less likely to miss school

78% of former "littles" or mentees who
came from a social assistance
background don't rely on social
assistance as adults.



The Children's Circle is a devoted and caring group of people who see the potential in our children and youth and want to offer them the best possible chances for success. We honour those who have included BGCBigs in their estate plans with a future gift or have made an outright gift to our Endowment Fund. Thank you for entrusting us with your legacy. It truly takes only one person to make a difference in the life of child, and your generosity is making a difference for many.

Testimonial from a Millennial Legacy Donor

The minimum donation to start an endowment family fund is \$10,000 a number which our donor wasn't able to give immediately. The Edmonton Community Foundation provides a platform for anyone to give over time – allowing up to 10 years to make the minimum donation before the interest is paid out to her recipient charities.

For her 30th birthday she began raising money in small amounts every month so that within the next 10 years she would reach her initial goal of \$10,000, and a portion of that money would go back to BGCBigs. 6 years later, two weeks after her 36th birthday, she received a letter from the Edmonton Community Foundation saying that she had surpassed her initial goal of \$10,000! She couldn't believe it! She shares,

"Today, my fund is over \$10,000 and no longer emerging. It's real. Interest will go out every year to support my community. And this will continue to happen FOREVER, long after I'm gone. And I will support future generations. That's what matters."

If you're interested in being a Children Circle Member, email

Danisha.bhaloo-shivji@bgcbigs.ca.



<https://bit.ly/Children-Circle-2021>

Family Resource Networks

Family Resource Networks (FRNs) provide prevention and early intervention services and supports for children 0 - 18 years of age. Networks provide a range of services and supports that focus on strengthening parenting and caregiving knowledge, social support, coping and problem-solving skills, access to community supports and resources, improving child and youth development, building resiliency, and fostering well-being. Through a hub and spoke model of service delivery, services are provided in geographic areas and in various cultural communities across the Greater Edmonton Area. BGCBiggs has a total of 6 spokes with the Edmonton and Area Family Resource Networks, to which we provide Youth Mentoring as a service, including Sherwood Park/Strathcona, Stony Plain/Spruce Grove/Parkland County, Edmonton North Central, Edmonton West, Edmonton Southeast, and New Canadian, Immigrant, and Refugee services. Thank you to the Government of Alberta for your continued funding for our children and families.



All in for Youth

For the past 5 years, BGCBiggs, along with many other All in For Youth (AIFY) partners and stakeholders, have worked tirelessly to ensure that children and families with complex needs in vulnerable school communities have access to wrap around school based-supports. In the last year, we have adapted in order to continue providing services and supports amidst the pandemic. Many of the partnered Corporate mentoring programs moved to supporting kids in a virtual capacity. We shifted our recruitment efforts in order to recruit volunteers who could support children and youth virtually via a Virtual tutoring, mentoring, or reading math, and children and youth previously involved in in-person out of school time programming moved to virtual programming after school as well as in person support groups at recess and during lunch time blocks. It has become very apparent over the past year, that the need to remain resilient and versatile as restrictions and guidelines fluctuated. We are always striving to be sure that we are offering support to children and youth in the best ways to ensure that they received what is most needed, in the safest way. Thank you to United Way of Alberta Capital Region and The Family Centre for this important partnership in our community.



Indigenous Education and Reconciliation



Over the past year, our agency has worked in partnership with the staff at Bent Arrow to provide thought leadership and skills enhancement to our staff, volunteers, children and families. Our organization recognizes that reconciliation is not an end itself but a process of change that is needed in our city. We have been fortunate enough to have Bent Arrow leading us to design meaningful and relevant service delivery that addresses the needs of Indigenous youth in our city. With their support, we have begun conversations, relationships and partnerships within the Indigenous community and organizations to ensure that we are creating culturally appropriate services and ensuring sustainability in our practices.

In 2020, BGCBigs served 770 Indigenous children and youth in our mentoring and after school programs and we have 52 indigenous mentors in our agency. Our hope is that our children become active, productive, financially self-sufficient members of society, and that they pursue further education, have healthy family and social relationships, and are contributing citizens.

Kid Food Nation

Every year, BGC Canada hosts "Kids Food Nation," a national recipe contest in which kids across the country share their love of good food by submitting original, healthy recipes that highlight their culture of their Canadian Pride. From hundred of entries, 26 winning recipes are chosen.

We were thrilled when Dongdao Xio, one of our Duggan club members, was selected as the winner of Kids Food Nation Recipe 2020! As part of his prize, Dongdao received a tablet, a recipe stand with a pen, a marble cutting board, a KFN Chef's jacket, a KFN apron, KFN cooking utensils, a set of Cooking Class Recipe Cards, a KFN notebook, and a BGCC Tote Bag. The day he received his prize he cooked for the whole family. BGCBigs is grateful for the programs we have that inspire kids to chase their dreams. Dongdao can't wait to attend the Virtual Cooking Class hosted by National later this year, to learn more about what it takes to be a master chef.



**Dongdao Xio, Duggan club member
and Kid Food Nation Winner 2020**

Thank You...You were there for Us

Over the past year, we have had to respond quickly to the new challenges each and every one of us is facing, and we have been adapting quickly to the needs of our community. We have been amazed at how quickly we have been able to pull together our efforts with all of our partners and for that we thank each of them.

Stollery Foundation

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Stollery for their generous donation of \$80,000 annually for 3 years to increase capacity and innovate our Volunteer Recruitment, Leadership, Fund Development, and Digital Transformation efforts. Through this support, we have partnered with Volunteer Alberta on an research report on the "Future of Volunteerism" to help us better meet the needs of our volunteers and our children in the future. In addition, we are working with United Way of Alberta Capital Region and Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations on an environmental scan of the Future of Fundraising in Edmonton. We are also re-designing our website, the first place of contact for our children, families, volunteers and donors, as part of our Digital Transformation Strategy. Lastly, we are intentionally creating a leadership framework to build capacity of our frontline staff within our agency to ensure they grow as leaders within the social impact sector.

Toy Mountain

This past December we were so grateful to be the charity of choice for Bell Media's Toy Mountain campaign presented by Trail Appliance. This year's Toy Mountain Donations raised a total of 3,360 toys and \$16,017 in gift card donations. This holiday season was a very unique one and with the support of Toy Mountain we were able to deliver over 2,000 toys to children and their families. Thank you to all those who provided donations. Your generosity will not be soon forgotten as children and families received the priceless gift of kindness.



Meet a Match

The Herman family enjoyed outdoor activities and spending time exploring their community, so when their mom, Kyrie, began experiencing sudden and unexplainable health complications, their active lifestyle changed significantly. Many exhaustive and often disappointing doctor's appointments later, Kyrie was finally diagnosed with a rare genetic connective tissue disorder called Ehlers Danlos Syndrome.

As a spectrum disorder, Ehlers Danlos Syndrome can have a myriad of symptoms that fluctuate in severity every day, which makes it a difficult and unpredictable illness to manage. As the Herman family struggled to come to terms with this new diagnosis, Kyrie decided to apply for a Big for her two children, Cadence and Holden, in the hopes that they would be matched with caring mentors who could provide them with the active lifestyle they had been missing and a listening ear as they navigated new and sometimes upsetting circumstances.

Cadence (13), was matched to Shaundra, a caring and compassionate business owner and student. During their very first meeting, the connection was instantaneous. Together, they have done escape rooms, trampoline parks, visited the corn maze, and gone for milkshakes. Cadence loves having someone to talk to and has relied on Shaundra as a support system and friend.

Early in their match, Cadence was also diagnosed with Ehlers Danlos, and as her symptoms worsened, she was often required to use a wheelchair.

Kyrie was nervous that Shaundra would feel overwhelmed by the diagnosis and the complications involved, but her fears were soon put to rest.

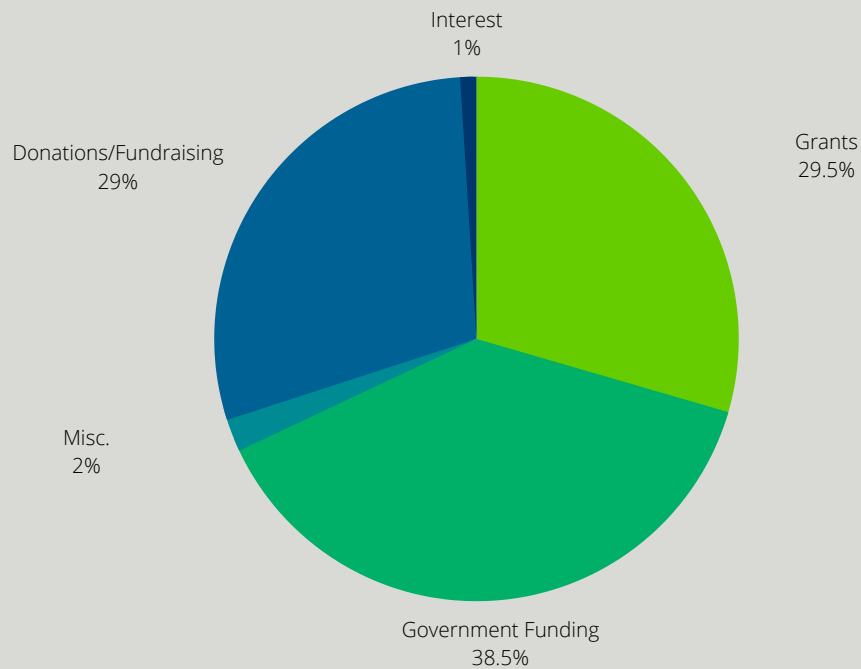
Shaundra has proven to be reliable and caring, which is something that Cadence especially appreciates as her peers are often less understanding. She tells me that having a mentor is "just someone I can go out with... it's like a friend, but better!"

Cadence has been especially inspired by Shaundra, who is a business owner and has experience working in healthcare. Cadence wants to become a doctor someday, and Shaundra has helped her start working towards those goals. Shaundra feels similarly inspired. They were matched when Cadence received the Ehlers Danlos diagnosis, and so Shaundra has been a witness to the slow progression of the illness. Through it all, Shaundra has been moved by her Little's resilience and positive outlook. Even as challenges come her way, Cadence holds firm to her plans for a fulfilling and hope-filled future.

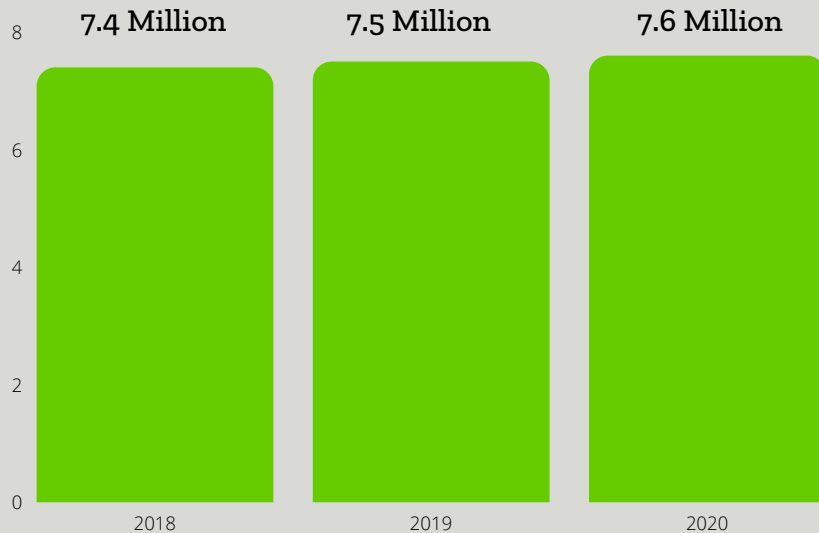
Recently, Holden (9) was diagnosed with benign Hypermobility syndrome, a precursor for Ehlers Danlos Syndrome. His Big, Rebecca, has also supported him through this experience. For a school project, Holden wrote about Rebecca and shared that she was "the best thing that happened to him last summer." Holden and Rebecca have enjoyed connecting over their shared love of movies – Rebecca has acted in the past and so Holden loves learning about her experience in the film industry. They go for walks, play catch outside, and have visited the corn-maze. They enjoy going for ice-cream and just visiting.

Both Shaundra and Rebecca have been major supports through various hospital visits and doctor's appointments. Kyrie feels incredibly grateful for the community-based program which has given her children something to look forward to and provided outlets as they navigate their health journey. Their family has been deeply impacted by the mentorship program, and it has changed their lives for the better.

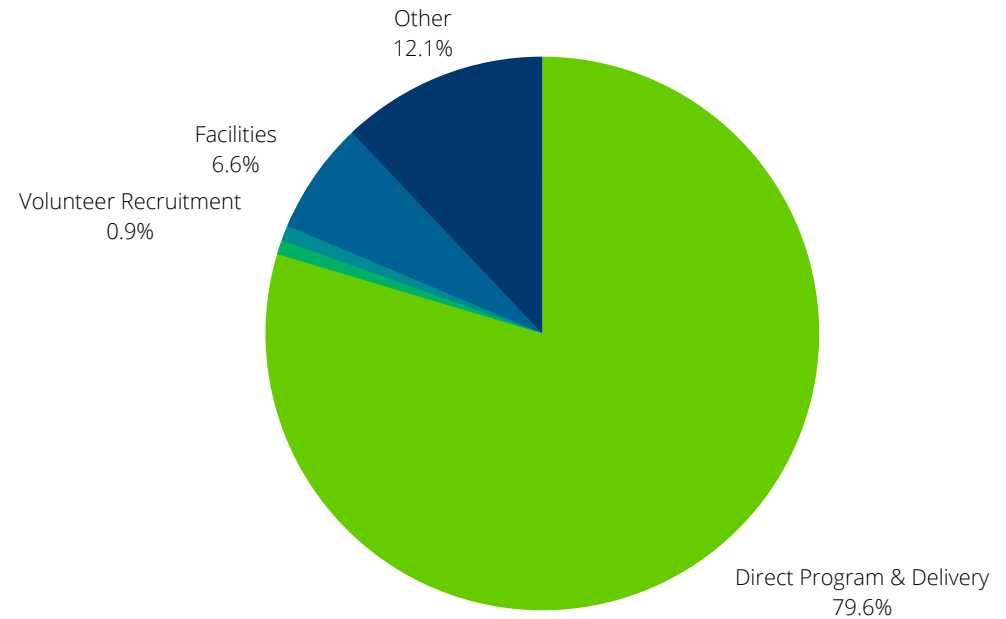
Revenue



Support to BGCBigs



Expenses



*Our detailed Audited Financial Statements are available on our website for anyone who wants more information.



Boys & Girls Clubs



Big Brothers Big Sisters

Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Edmonton & Area

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Boys & Girls Clubs



Big Brothers Big Sisters

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 of Edmonton & Area



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Meet a Match

Big Sister Miranda has put in a lot of effort to connect with her **Little Sister** Ella. She started researching mental health and LGBTQ so that she could better connect with, support, and understand her Little, who identifies with the LGBTQ community. Miranda has been educating herself about gender identity too so that her Little would feel safe and supported by her. When Match Facilitators checked in with Ella's parents, they received a glowing report. Ella's parents are so grateful for Miranda and her influence in Ella's life. They have seen the positive impact that mentoring has had in their child as Ella has become more accepting of herself and grown in self-confidence. Ella's mom said, "this is a match from heaven."

**names have been changed*



Youth Employment

Zach describes himself as having been a shy kid, quiet and unassuming. That is, until he decided to stretch himself and get out of his comfort zone. During his grade eleven year Zach attended Teen Takeover, a Job Readiness Fair organized by BGCBigs and hosted at a local high-school. He listened to panelists talk about their respective industries, attended classes geared towards improving job readiness, and signed up to receive emails from BGCBigs about employment opportunities and interviews. He walked away feeling empowered, and was even hired later that summer by BGCBigs to work as a "Summer Junior Leader." Since then, Zach has continued to receive support through our Youth Employment Program. He attended career events, gained job readiness skills, and interviewed professionals to learn more about their industry.

Since graduating, Zach has decided to pursue nursing through the LPN program offered at NorQuest College. He hopes to work with kids, and credits his experience as a Summer Junior Leader as showing him how much he enjoys working with children. He's grateful for the opportunities the Youth Employment Program has provided for him, stating, "I would recommend this program to everyone!"

With the help of generous partners like the Edmonton Community Foundation, 48 youth have received jobs, and over 230 others have received job readiness training and instruction. While Zach has increased his job readiness skill set, his confidence has also grown. He says "before the program if I had an interview, my heart would just drop. It was nerve-racking, but after doing the program I am more confident, and I don't even think I would be nervous now." We hope all youth who attend our program can experience this kind of confidence and hope for the future.

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