



AUTISM SOCIETY

OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

ANNUAL REPORT

2019

A summary of our year supporting the autism community in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Contents

President's Report _____	2
Treasurer's Report _____	5
Program Director's Report _____	13
Community Development Officer's Report _____	15
Fundraising Director's Report _____	17
Contact Information _____	19

President

2019 was another exciting and busy year for the society, which was made possible by our Board, our staff, our members and our amazing community. There has been huge growth in supports and programs offered by the society this year and we are hoping to continue with this upward momentum into 2020.

Funding/ Grants

In January 2019 we received a grant from Wood Buffalo Community Foundation which allowed us to hire a part-time Program Director to create and start a pilot social-respite program for youth aged 10-17yrs-old.

This was followed by a grant from the United Way in April that allowed us to expand the program to offer more social-respite days/times for children and youth age 5-17yrs-old. The United Way grant also funded our Community Development Officer position so we can offer regular office hours, continue to share The Missing Piece Project in the community and offer supports to individuals and families in the Wood Buffalo region. The Society has applied to United Way for funding for 2020-2021 to continue to support the social-respite program.

We were nominated for the Common Ground Program at Towne Place Suites by Marriott where people in the RMWB nominated 3 community organizations to receive a \$5000 donation. The Autism Society received 47% of the votes winning us the \$5000. We are so grateful to the RMWB for all their support in helping us to grow and allow us to help more members of this community.

The Society had our very first AGLC casino in July 2019. We are so grateful to all the people that came out and volunteered for us at the casino; funds from the casino were used to purchase sensory equipment for our new sensory room as well as additional sensory items to restock our Lending Library.

Camp Kids First 2019 received funding/financial assistance from Government of Alberta, Fort McMurray Public School District, Unity for Autism and Telus. In August 2019, a local group Chozen Breed MRC and their families organized a Charity Poker Run to raise money for Camp Kids First. Over 50 riders took part and raised over \$8000 to go towards making Camp Kids First bigger and better than ever!

The Wood Buffalo community continues to support the Autism Society of the RMWB by making donations, supporting our fundraisers and events and helping us to promote our events, fundraisers, etc. We send out a big thank you the following businesses and organizations that supported us in 2019: Telus, Summit GM, Prestige Jewellers, Town Hall, Sunny's Salon, Jolly Jays, Aim High, Color Me Mine, Harris Furniture, Earls and Controlled Chaos.

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Our board members, volunteers and members of the community have worked tirelessly fundraising for us. Our main fundraisers have been:

- Dueling Pianos
- Spring Seed sales
- Hanging basket sales
- Paint Nites
- Blue Streak for autism
- Prestige Jewellers raffle
- I-Phone raffle
- Benefit concert
- Rock-a-Thon
- RCL Bingos
- Toonie Swim
- 50/50 draws
- Follow the Gnome
- Cash for Christmas draw
- Poinsettia sales
- Jolly Jays fundraiser donation
- Bottle Drive
- Earls monthly bottle

Education/ Awareness

In 2019 we have held a few engagement and information sessions for families, educators, and others in the community interested in learning more about autism.

We aired the webinar version of Children's Autism Services of Edmonton's annual conference in January 2019; parents and community members attended the sessions.

Our Community Development Officer offers professional development sessions on autism-related topics for businesses and organizations in our region and is able to tailor-make presentations for specific organizations on request. She also presents The Missing Piece Project in schools in the community. This educational program is a community resource intended to promote and educate others about Autism Spectrum Disorder by creating awareness and understanding about ASD. It will cover topics of acceptance, understanding ASD and what it can look and feel like. The program is a combination of lending material and resources, facilitate training, community engagements and online resources.

The Program Director is certified with the Crisis Prevention Institute to facilitate a two-day certificate course in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention and Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports as well as several non-certificate courses for parents and professionals on the same topics.

Our Program Director is also certified to teach the PEERS (Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®) social skills program with preschoolers, adolescents and young adults.

Sensory-Friendly and Family Events

Some of the amazing sensory friendly events we have been able to provide this year are; family tubing at Vista Ridge, picnics in the park, family fun day at Jolly Jays, family social evenings, weekly sensory jump time at AIM High Trampoline park, Christmas party, dog sledding, etc.

In April we held our annual Toonie Swim, Blue Streak for autism, our 1st Annual Benefit Concert, Prestige Jewellers Autism acceptance day, and the Rock-a-Thon to raise autism awareness and acceptance in our community.

Community Collaborations

K-SNAP is a fully inclusive program, in partnership with Fort McMurray Boys and Girls Club and Support 4 Moms focusing on peer play and adaptive sports. K-SNAP gives children the opportunity to interact with other kids in a semi-structured setting that promotes forming cooperative relationships and exploring different sports and games that are adapted to their needs.

Fort McMurray Public District invited our Community Development Officer to come into their schools to facilitate The Missing Piece Project and Fort McMurray Catholic School District invites our Community Development Officer to speak at support group meetings.

Wood Buffalo Regional Library has collaborated with the Society to create social programming for children, youth and adults with disabilities in our community.

The Hub Parent Resource Centre reached out to the Society to create a Low-Sensory Play Time for young children with autism or sensory challenges that require an adapted environment to enjoy play.

Challenges in 2019

The Autism Society of the RMWB's main challenge continues to be recruiting and retaining volunteers and board members to help us continue in our growth in the community. Funding is also a challenge for the still new non-profit agency that does not receive any regular government funding but relies on grants and fundraising for day-to-day operating costs.

Looking Ahead to 2020

2020 is going to be an extremely exciting year! With the opening of the new office space, being able to provide the community with the sensory room, the growth of our social- respite program, the starting of our new adult program, and our continuation and expansion of our Missing Piece Project are just a few of our major focuses for the upcoming year. We are already looking forward to this years Annual General Meeting to tell you about all the successes we are going to have in 2020!

Corinna Pitzel-O'Hanley **President**

Gerrie-Ann Fielder **Vice-President**

Financial Statements

**Autism Society of the RMWB
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
Year Ended Dec 31, 2019**

REVENUE	2019	2018
Sales Revenue		
Gift in Kind Donations	101.90	711.00
Donations	23,620.35	9,713.29
Donation With Receipt	29,640.21	50,493.25
Fundraising Income	34,646.92	54,705.00
Casino Funds	34,788.37	0
Sale of Merchandise	3,332.32	14,606.72
Interest Revenue	96.13	17.24
Membership Income	300.00	219.12
Tickets for Member Events	3,156.00	8,817.16
Respite Care	42,639.00	0
Program Fees	9,770.00	0
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,489.25	26.00
Deferred Income Camp	-41,416.54	
Total Other Revenue	<u>142,163.91</u>	<u>139,308.78</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>142,163.91</u>	<u>139,308.78</u>

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

EXPENSES	2019	2018
Cost of Operations and Fundraising		
Program Expense	3,077.48	
Advertising	252.49	568.26
Entertainment	2,000.00	10,336.56
Catering / Food	1,954.49	4,512.54
Rentals	1,102.50	2,676.25
Decorations	148.00	1,399.81
Educational Services	11,787.90	909.73
Fundraising Expense	<u>6,469.15</u>	<u>770.53</u>
Total Fundraising Costs	23,714.53	21,173.68
Respite Care Expense	5,362.98	6,712.57
Merchandise for Sale	<u>3,189.03</u>	<u>14.19</u>
Total Cost of Operations and Fundraising	35,344.02	27,900.44

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

EXPENSES	2019	2018
Total Payroll Expense	113,043.50	21,230.86
General & Administrative Expenses		
Accounting & Legal	3,344.92	103.75
Advertising & Promotions	532.16	2,642.70
Business Fees & Licenses	20.32	27.39
Cash Short/Over	56.02	70.10
Courier & Postage	28.35	66.43
Insurance	1,083.00	1,025.00
Interest & Bank Charges	940.34	158.14
Wild Apricot Charges	757.97	0.00
Paypal Charges	28.86	0.00
Square Charges	23.27	0.00
Office Supplies	647.86	5,774.92
Miscellaneous Expenses	200.00	59.47
Rent	16,347.79	2,548.43
Repair & Maintenance	16.76	0.00
Gaming Expense	3,835.91	2,030.00
Telephone	3,815.10	2,965.00
Travel	8,658.00	3,162.34
Utilities	1,516.98	2,094.30
Charitable Activities	25,421.28	0.00
Total General & Admin. Expenses	<u>67,274.89</u>	<u>22,727.97</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>215,662.41</u>	<u>71,859.27</u>
NET INCOME	<u><u>-73,498.50</u></u>	<u><u>67,449.51</u></u>

**Autism Society of the RMWB
Statement of Financial Position
Year Ended Dec 31, 2019**

	2019	2018
ASSET		
Current Assets		
Cash	84,555.34	96,339.36
Accounts Receivable	6,322.00	
Total Current Assets	<u>90,877.34</u>	<u>96,339.36</u>
Capital Assets		
Office Furniture & Equipment	0.00	
Accum. Amort. -Furn. & Equip.	<u>0.00</u>	
Net - Furniture & Equipment	<u>0.00</u>	
Total Capital Assets	<u>0.00</u>	
TOTAL ASSET	<u><u>90,877.34</u></u>	<u><u>96,339.36</u></u>
LIABILITY		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	2,469.35	0
EI Payable	-189.28	
CPP Payable	550.82	
Federal Income Tax Payable	<u>631.81</u>	
Total Receiver General	<u>993.35</u>	0
Total Current Liabilities	<u>3,462.70</u>	0
Deferred Income		
Deferred income - United Way	23,157.24	
Deferred Income - Kids Camp	36,701.40	
Deferred Income - Respite	<u>4,715.14</u>	
Total Deferred Income	<u>64,573.78</u>	
TOTAL LIABILITY	<u>68,036.48</u>	0

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

EQUITY

Society Equity

Retained Earnings - Previous Year	96,339.36	28,889.85
Current Earnings	-73,498.50	67,449.51
Total Society Equity	<u>22,840.86</u>	<u>96,339.36</u>

TOTAL EQUITY

<u>22,840.86</u>	<u>96,339.36</u>
------------------	------------------

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

<u>90,877.34</u>	<u>96,339.36</u>
------------------	------------------

Autism Society of the RMWB Budget for 2020

REVENUE	Current funds	Kids Camp Retained
Sales Revenue		
Gift in Kind Donations	500.00	
Donations	20,000.00	
Donation with Receipts	20,000.00	
Fundraising Income	30,000.00	34,000.00
Grant Income	87,891.00	22,000.00
Sale of Merchandise	4,000.00	
Gaming Funds	6,500.00	
Casino Funds	20,000.00	
Interest Revenue	17.00	
Membership Income	220.00	
Tickets for Member Events	3,000.00	
Respite Care	45,000.00	
Program Fees	9,700.00	
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,000.00	
Total Other Revenue	<u>247,828.00</u>	<u>56,000.00</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>303,828.00</u>	
EXPENSE		
Cost of Operations and Fundraising		
Advertising	300.00	
Entertainment	2,000.00	
Catering / Food	1,000.00	
Rentals	1,500.00	
Decorations	200.00	
Miscellaneous	150.00	
Fundraising Expense	4,500.00	
Total Fundraising Costs		9,650.00
Merchandise for Sale		3,000.00
Freight Expense		0.00
Total Cost of Operations and Fundraising		<u>12,650.00</u>

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Payroll Expenses

Wages & Salaries	\$	179,277.00
El Expense		3,726.00
CPP Expense		7,900.00
WCB Expense		1,300.00
Employee Benefits		0.00
Subcontractor		0.00
Total Payroll Expense		<u>192,203.00</u>

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

General & Administrative Expenses	Operating	
Accounting & Legal		3,500.00
Advertising & Promotions		500.00
Bad Debts		0.00
Business Fees & Licenses		30.00
Cash Short/Over		0.00
Courier & Postage		50.00
Amortization Expense		0.00
Family Events		5,700.00
Insurance		1,083.00
Interest & Bank Charges		600.00
Wild Apricot		200.00
PayPal Charges		30.00
Square Charges		30.00
Kids Camp		16,600.00
Office Supplies		1,000.00
Property Taxes		0.00
Motor Vehicle Expenses		0.00
Adult/Monthly Info Sessions		2,400.00
Miscellaneous Expenses		100.00
Missing Piece Bins		6,010.00
Rent		24,924.96
Repair & Maintenance		0.00
Telephone		3,600.00
Travel to ASA meetings		5,236.00
Travel (General)		3,000.00
Utilities		3,600.00
Gaming Expense		1,600.00
Volunteer Expenses		700.00
Charitable Activities		14,400.00
Total General & Admin. Expenses		<u>80,493.96</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE		<u>299,746.96</u>
NET INCOME		<u><u>4,081.04</u></u>

Program Director

Social-Respite

We started our social-respite pilot program in January 2019 for youth aged 10-17yrs old. Initially we ran for 1-2 evenings each week but despite lots of interest from parents' registrations remained low until March when numbers started to increase steadily. By the time we received United Way funding in April to expand the program we were running consistently 2 evenings each week with 4-6 youth attending.

With additional funding, the opening of our 'Program Room' and hiring additional staff in May we were able to offer 3-4 sessions each week for children and youth aged 5-17yrs-old.

By December 2019 the program was running 6-10 sessions each week with over 30 children and youth registered!

Children and youth enjoy group respite which encourages learning and practicing social skills such as; making friends, maintaining friendships, communicating with peers, conflict resolution and good sportsmanship. Also, activities are planned to encourage the development of life skills such as choosing and planning activities, money management, etc. The program is intended for children and youth with autism and/or other social communication disabilities but is also open to anyone facing barriers in attending other youth programs in the community.

Children and youth refer to the program as 'Club', 'Sensory Club' or 'Friend Club'. In the coming months we will start engaging with the children to decide on an official name for the program.

Camp Kids First

Camp Kids First ran for four weeks during the summer of 2019 and fifty-eight children were able to attend with support. Camp was based at Christina Gordon School and campers enjoyed activities and daily field trips in our local community. Some of the places they visited were; Clearwater Horse Club, Aerial Adventure Park at Vista Ridge, Color Me Mine, MacDonald Island, Fire Hall #1 and Gregoire Lake.

Children and youth enjoyed arts & crafts, sensory play, games, Lego, movies and outdoors play as well as visits from our local Reptile Rodeo to meet snakes, lizards and other exotic animals.

Planning is underway to make Camp Kids First 2020 bigger and better than EVER!

Paula Bowen

Program Director

Community Development Officer

2019 brought a transition and expansion of the previous Ambassador program. Through funding from United Way and the decision of the board to continue with the program through society funds the roll of the Community Ambassador became the Community Development Officer. The transition created more clarity of the roll and duties within this position. Continuing with parent and individual transition supports and increasing the community education and outreach, we were also able to expand our resources and connect with a more diverse group of community organizations. A stronger relationship was created with other social profits with the ability to be a working partner in inter-agency groups such as YConnect, Assets In Action, Executive Director Round Table and the Regional Inclusive Committee.

The office hours did reflect an increase in walk in traffic and allowed the accommodation for more one on one meetings during business hours. Having flex time built into the position created opportunity to connect with people at a time of their convenience as well as the benefit of being able to offer more group presentations in the evenings. We continued to attend public markets and events with our sensory story and information table throughout the year, gaining more public exposure.

There was a substantial increase in the number of requests for information, support, navigation services and community interest. The growth of this program is only made possible with the ability to have a position dedicated to community growth that offers a consistent delivery of services. At the end of November 2019 framework was put in place for the creation of Adult Programming and that work has led to, through the Program Director, the first phases of an active program.

Noted Accomplishments in 2019

- Renewed and expanded partnership with the Wood Buffalo Regional Library.
- Worked in collaboration with the Salvation Army START program to offer educational presentations, sit on their Behavioural Review Committee and share program and event information.
- Increased work with the Regional Inclusive Committee, increasing the ability to leverage support from a diverse group of agencies all serving individuals with special needs.
- Ability to continue the SNAP program with the Boys and Girls Club.
- Created 2 more sets of the Missing Pieces Bins. Launched the first set of bins at Dr Clark School.
- Named a Partner In Education with the Fort McMurray Public School Division.
- Began working with the Emergency Services and Fire Department to assist with education, presentations and creation of sensory kits.

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

- Expanded the presentation library.
- Worked with a community group to assist with the re-creation of Special Olympics Wood Buffalo.

Next Steps

With the addition of four (4) more sets of resource bins the Missing Pieces will continue to grow and be utilized in more schools. Plans were made at the end of the year to introduce the project to two (2) more schools. This resource will be expanding to include information for siblings and resources on sexual education for schools and families.

A tentative schedule was made for special information presentations on a variety of topics for the 2020 year. Topics will include RDSP Planning, Transitions (FSCD to PDD), Guardianship and Trustee information and Launch Into Life Workshop.

We are happy to be working with Neurodiversity YMM. This relationship will allow us to share information and to help our board better understand the needs and wants of Neurodiverse individuals.

Challenges

Marketing and branding is a challenge. Firstly, our services are for all special need individuals not just those with ASD and we want to ensure our Key Messages in 2020 reflect this. Secondly, the limitations of advertising continue to hinder our efforts to get the word out. Outside of radio, which is unaffordable at this time, we are limited to word of mouth, social media and public activities such as markets and tradeshow. We will be continuing some additional training for staff in this area in 2020.

Funding is always a hurdle, however, there is concern with the economic downturn continuing and the new budget of the Provincial Government that it may become more difficult to sustain these programs and services. Through fundraising and researching grant options we hope to be in a position to once again increase services at the end of 2020.

Nicole Spring

Community Development Officer

Fundraising

The Autism Society of RMWB did lots of fundraising during 2019! We started off by hosting a paint night and having an iPhone raffle in February. In March we worked the bingo at The Legion and sold seeds for planting.

April was a huge month with two new fundraisers: the Autism Awareness Benefit Concert and the Rock-a-Thon.

For the concert, several performers came together to perform for our families and the community. Throughout the show our MCs shared facts about autism with the audience. The show ended with a finale in which some of our families participated in both singing and signing a song together with the performers. We also had a silent auction and sold 50/50 tickets at the concert.

The Rock-a-Thon challenged schools and businesses in the community to see how many hours they could Rock in a rocking chair for the month of April. They were asked to collect donations during the month as well. Christina Gordon School won the award for top rockers and the RCMP collected the most donations.

In April we also sold 50/50 tickets, sold Autism Awareness t-shirts made by Royal Tee, hosted our toonie swim at Mac Island, and had a fundraiser in which people donated money to get a Blue streak put in their hair at Sunny's Salon.

In the springtime we also did our hanging flower baskets which is always a great fundraiser!

During the summer we hosted a bottle drive and participated in our first casino fundraiser. We also did another new fundraiser called "Rehome The Gnome" in which a gnome figurine was dropped off at people's homes and they had the choice to either pay to have it removed or make a donation to have it sent to a friend's house.

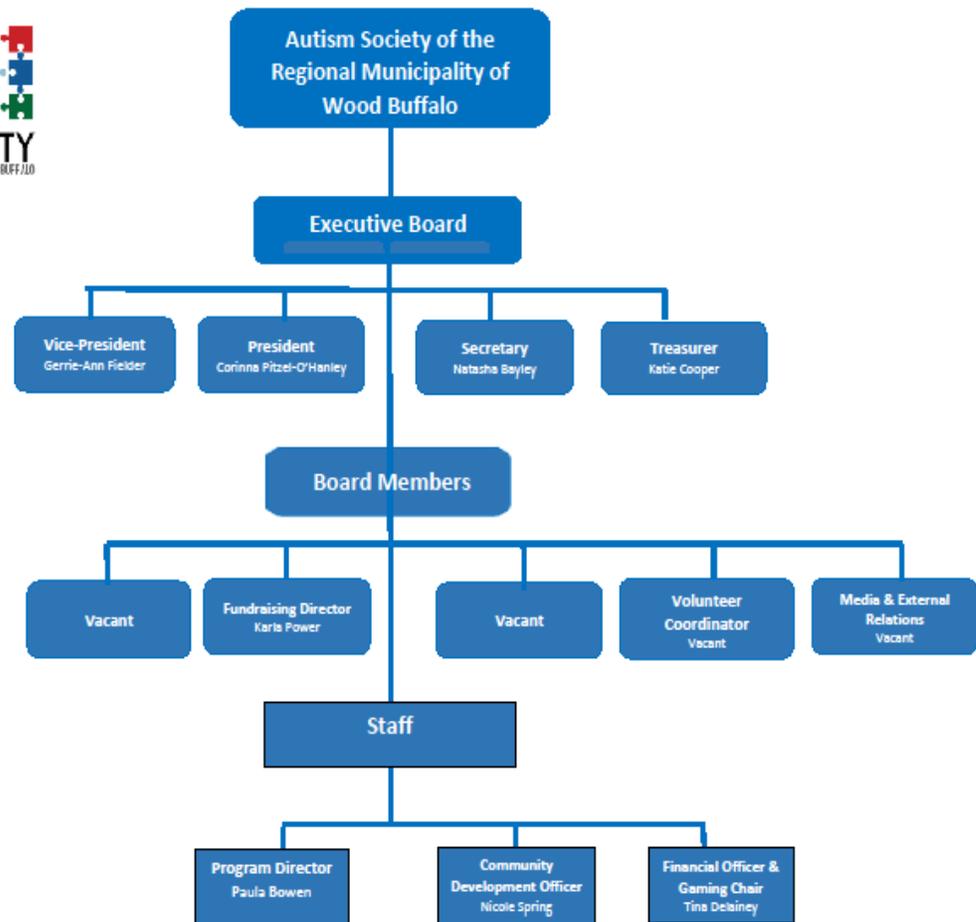
During the fall our fundraising had to be put on hold due to restrictions from the United way grant that we received. We did however do some fundraising for the United way which included a paint night, selling 50/50 tickets, and selling Christmas flowers.

The money raised in 2019 went towards many things! We built our first sensory room that is open to the public! We were able to start a respite adult program and a peers program with funds raised. We also expanded our office and we added another set of missing piece bins!

The ASRMWB totaled 1296 hours of volunteer hours this year!!

Karla Power
Fundraising Director

BOARD 2019



Mission Statement:

We strive to accommodate a support network that fosters an inclusive community by providing information, supports, awareness and programs to all those in our community affected by ASD and other barriers.

Vision:

We envision a centre in RMWB that will be recognized as the primary provider of support and services in our community and surrounding areas. Every person will have access to a center that provides the ability to bridge the gap between families, professionals, education support, and assessments. Our goal is to guide families and individuals to the supports needed at each stage of their life.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
21B-10019 MacDonald Ave,
Unifor 707A Building
Fort McMurray, AB
T9H 1S9

587-452-9334

<https://autismrmwb.org/>

Board Members

Corinna Pitzel-O'Hanley – President

president_vice@autismrmwb.org

Gerrie-Ann Fielder – Vice-President

president_vice@autismrmwb.org

Natasha Bayley – Secretary

secretary@autismrmwb.org

Katie Cooper – Treasurer

treasure@autismrmwb.org

Karla Power – Fundraising Director

fundraising@autismrmwb.org

Staff

Paula Bowen- Program Director

programdirector@autismrmwb.org

Nicole Spring- Community Development Officer

community@autismrmwb.org

Tina Delainey – Financial Officer & Gaming Chair

autismsupport@autismrmwb.org

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Thank you for a wonderful year!



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

