

PROVIDENCE
HEALTH • EDUCATION • THERAPY



Report to
Community
2020

OUR VISION

A community where every child is given the opportunity to reach for and achieve their full potential.

OUR MISSION

Working together with the child, family and community, we support the well-being and development of all children.

OUR VALUES

Passion – We are driven to apply our skills and energy to be the best we can be.

Respect – We have respect for each other, for children and families, and for all stakeholders.

Learning – We are committed to life-long learning and continuous improvement.

Leadership – We are committed to knowledge-sharing, best practices, collaboration and innovation.

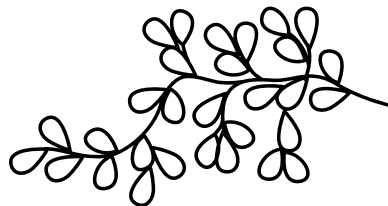


We invite you to colour your way through this Report!

This Report to Community was published in January 2021 – toward the end of a long winter and 10 months into a global pandemic. We know the activities we encourage our young students to do every day can lift everyone's mood: Colour. Read. Write. This report was designed with that in mind: **We invite you to colour your way through this Report and we hope you enjoy the Little Activity Book tucked inside the back cover!**

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We believe children deserve a joyful, supportive, respectful and safe environment that encourages exploration, learning and growth.
- We believe learning is driven by the child's curiosity and individual readiness.
- We believe in providing inclusive, integrated and engaging environments so all children have the same opportunities and experiences.
- We believe in the primary role of the family in the child's life. We recognize and support the right and responsibility of parents to share in the decision-making process for their children. We have knowledge and appreciation of family, social and cultural practices and traditions.
- We believe quality services are founded on valued, highly professional staff, and commit to the ongoing development of our staff.
- We believe in enhancing the capabilities of adults to achieve significant outcomes for the children in their care. We believe in knowledge-sharing across the early childhood development sector and engaging the community at large in supporting the developmental needs of children and building resiliency within families.
- We strive to be leaders in our field through innovation, systematic planning, evaluation and resource provision.



message from the BOARD CHAIR & PRESIDENT

Welcome to Providence's Report to the Community for our fiscal year, September 2019 to August 2020.

In our Report for the last fiscal year, we ended our message with "We are looking forward to a busy and exciting year ahead". Little did we know how busy and exciting it would be!

We began the year by significantly expanding our LEARN program to serve families left without support after a similar program in the community closed unexpectedly. LEARN students receive specialized educational and therapeutic services in their neighbourhood preschool or child care program.

We also completed work on a new Strategic Plan that sets out a clear path forward to 2024. As part of the process, we updated our Mission, Vision, Values and Guiding Principles to further guide us in the years to come.

Early in 2020, we began to hear word of a global pandemic, and on March 16th, our schools and programs closed at the direction of the Alberta government. Providence staff adapted quickly and worked closely with government agencies to continue supporting our families while maintaining the health and safety of our staff, students, and the community we serve.

Through the summer we prepared detailed plans for our students to resume in-class learning in September. Working closely with Alberta Education and Alberta Health Services, we developed plans to ensure a safe and successful return to school.

It was a challenging year for fundraising, with fundraising revenue down by 40 percent from initial expectations. With the restrictions in place due to COVID-19, we made the difficult decision to permanently cancel our annual fundraising gala. Our golf tournament was cancelled for 2020 but will return in a revised format for 2021.

Thanks to the tremendous effort and dedication of the staff, Providence was able to face this past year's challenges. We want to take this opportunity to share our deep appreciation to – and respect for – our dedicated staff who adapted quickly to the new world created by COVID-19 and remained committed to doing all we could for our students, our families and our community.

We would also like to recognize our funders, Alberta Education and Alberta Children's Services for guiding us through these uncharted waters, and to Alberta Health Services for providing guidance for the return-to-school safety protocols.

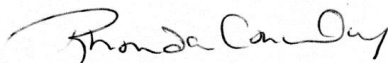
The year ahead will likely bring more unexpected challenges, but no matter what the future holds, we know we can weather the storm. Our 75+ year history demonstrates we know how to adapt to meet the changing needs of the community we serve.

We remain committed to a future where all children have the opportunity to reach for and achieve their potential. And we are grateful to our funders, staff, donors and volunteers for sharing this belief and helping to make it happen.

Sincerely,



DAVID BOUCKHOUT
Board Chair

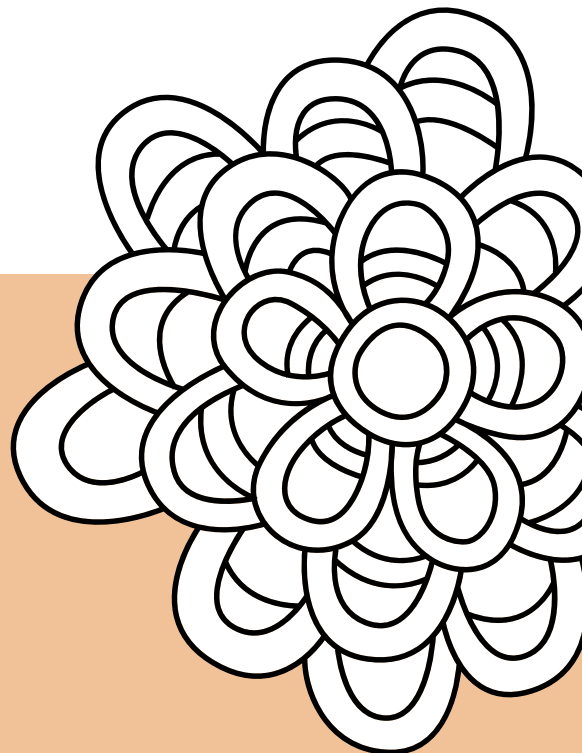


RHONDA CONWAY
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our PROGRAMS

School-based Programs

Providence offers two unique Alberta Education-funded program streams: those based in our own schools across Calgary and those based in approved community preschools or child care programs (our LEARN Program).

Both programs are designed to support children who may not be meeting typical developmental milestones. To attend, a child must qualify for special education funding (Program Unit Funding (PUF)) through Alberta Education.

Programs based in Providence schools include:

- Early Intervention
- Preschool
- Junior Kindergarten
- Kindergarten

Our Schools

- Windsor Park (Main and Administration)
- Beddington
- Falconridge
- Hawkwood
- McKenzie Towne
- Midnapore



Our LEARN Program is delivered in the community. Each child receives support directly in their child care program through scheduled therapy sessions and/or consultations from our LEARN team members, providing an approved program as outlined by Alberta Education.

Community-based Programs

Our Community Services team delivers several programs in the community:

Supported Child Care (SCC) Program

The SCC Program supports eligible child care programs to successfully meet the developmental needs of all the children in their care. Our program coaches provide information, resources, coaching and professional development.

The SCC Program is funded through Alberta Children's Services and delivered by Providence in the Calgary area. It is free to access for licensed child care programs, approved family day homes and out-of-school care programs.

Contracted Therapy Services

Providence therapists provide therapy services to independent and charter schools on a fee-for-service basis.

Providence also delivers therapy services as a partner in the Calgary and Area Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD).

In 2019-2020

852

students were
registered in our
school programs.

The LEARN program
supported over

50

students in their
neighbourhood schools
across Calgary.

Our SCC
program
coaches
supported

75

child care programs over a
one-year period, supporting
283 child care professionals
who were caring for more
than 2,000 children.

Support from Day One

As a young boy, Curtis was bullied at school because of a speech delay. When his son, Oliver, was showing early signs of a speech delay, he and his wife Holly knew they needed to do something. “I didn’t want Oliver to go through what I did,” says Curtis.

One of the biggest issues was Oliver’s inability to communicate. He was attending a day home, and his dad feared he wouldn’t be able to tell them if anything bad was going on in the home, and he wouldn’t be able to identify himself in an emergency. Oliver couldn’t express his day-to-day needs such as needing to use the washroom or being hungry. Less than five percent of Oliver’s language was understandable, and his frustration was building.

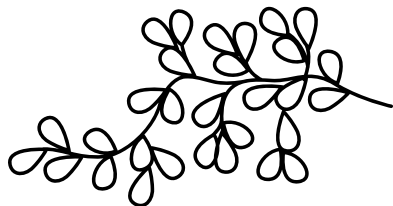
Government funding provided some support – but it wasn’t enough. A speech language pathologist working with Oliver recommended Providence.

“The entire Providence staff helped our family from the first day we walked in the door,” shares Curtis. “The routine of bus, school, bus, and home provided security and structure, and his communication skills improved rapidly.”

“Even through the COVID lockdown this past year, the support was immense,” Curtis adds. “Oliver was always so excited to see his school friends on the Zoom circle times and to get packages at the door.”

After two years at Providence, Oliver is now enrolled in kindergarten in his neighbourhood school, has lots of new friends and loves to play hockey.

Photo credit: Sarah Siddens Photography, Porch Portraits Project



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Setting a Path to 2024

We completed work on a new Strategic Plan in the fall of 2019, setting a clear path forward to 2024. The main areas of focus will be: Growth, Innovation and Influence.

Based on the current local and global environment, we will be focussing on Innovation and Influence in the short term.

A full copy of the Strategic Plan is available at: www.providencechildren.com/about-us/financial

LEARN Program expansion

With the sudden closure of a similar program in September, Providence responded quickly to expand our LEARN Program. We then worked to ensure a smooth transition to LEARN for those children and families affected by the closure.

“Providence is an excellent school and we could not be happier or more grateful for everything they have done for our child. The progress in his development we have seen in the last couple of years is fantastic.” ~ *A Providence parent*



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR CONTINUED

COVID-19 Response

Early in 2020 we began to hear word of a global pandemic, and on March 16th, our schools and programs closed at the direction of the Alberta government. Providence staff adapted quickly and worked closely with government agencies to continue supporting our families while maintaining the health and safety of our staff and the community we serve.

From March to June, our school classroom teams kept in touch with our families on a regular basis and continued to support them through a virtual learning platform. In addition, they created packages of learning and therapy materials that included lesson plans with suggested activities and crafts and organized a process to have them picked up or delivered safely to our students.

Kindergarten graduation looked different this year, with an outside 'photo booth' set up for our graduates to pick up their certificate and have a picture taken to celebrate their big day.



Our Community Services team adapted to delivering therapy on-line, which required an investment in specialized cameras and microphones – and a steep learning curve on how to use it all!

Our program coaches in the Supported Child Care Program created and delivered monthly resource packages to the child care programs still operating. They also developed a weekly e-newsletter for child care professionals. It contained resources, strategies and tips on how to best support the children in their care in this unprecedented situation.

A Safe Place to Thrive



Shortly after their son Ezekiel was born with Down syndrome, Sharon and Kevin made the decision to move to Calgary from Peace River to be closer to services and the support of family.

Although there was a period of adjustment as they navigated the new world of community and government supports available to them, and as extended family learned how to best support them, they have now discovered a wider sense of community here in Calgary - and Ezekiel is thriving.

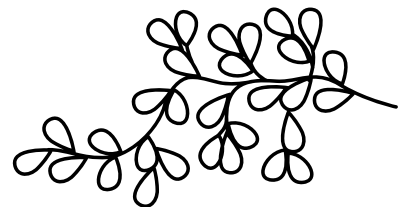
Initially Sharon was angry when people stared at Ezekiel or made comments about his disability. She was surprised at the limited perspective of some people, but now, she says, "I understand that people are often just afraid or have never had any experience with people with Down syndrome."

Sharon's sister suggested that Ezekiel may find a stimulating environment at Providence. After Ezekiel had negative experiences with a daycare program and after being rejected by every day home, his parents were anxious. When Ezekiel started at Providence, Kevin stayed with him for the first week of school - he was afraid for his son. It took Ezekiel about a month to adjust, and now he can't wait to go to school; he is always happy to walk through the door.

"It is always obvious the entire team at Providence cares," says Sharon. "Providence has been able to offer so much to Ezekiel, including compassion and kindness and an accepting group of classmates."

"It is a very safe place for him to learn socialization," she adds, "and we now use the same strategies at home that he learns in the classroom."

Photo credit: Sarah Siddens Photography, Porch Portraits Project



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR CONTINUED

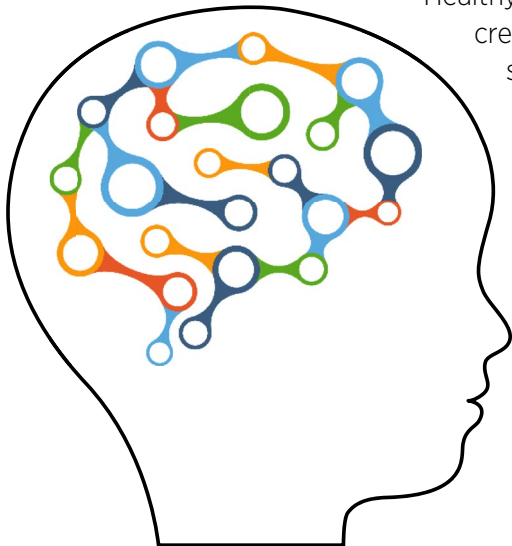
Trauma-Informed Practice Implementation Framework

As part of our commitment to excellence, learning and continuous quality improvement, we identified in our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan three areas of best-practice service delivery to integrate throughout the organization.

We believe that by incorporating these practice frameworks into the work we do, we will ensure we are striving for the best possible outcomes for the children and families we work with. They are:

- **The Alberta Family Wellness Initiative – The Brain Story Certification**

In 2018-2019, we began the process of incorporating years of research on brain development into how we work with children and families. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that the things we experience in the first years of life affects how our brains are built.



Healthy, positive interactions between children and caregivers create sturdy brain architecture and a strong base that can support more complex structures later in life.

Beginning in September 2019, completion of the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative's 30-hour Brain Story certification became a requirement of employment for all Providence staff.

- The Neurosequential Model in Education (NME) training by Dr. Bruce Perry

Building on the Brain Story science, a cohort of Providence staff completed the intensive NME certification in 2018-2019 and another cohort completed the training this fiscal year. NME training helps educators better identify and support students who may have experienced trauma. The toxic stress resulting from traumatic experiences can have long-term negative consequences on both physical and mental health.

- Natural Supports Framework

Providence is working with The Change Collective (a Calgary coalition of social service agencies) to adapt their Natural Supports Framework to focus on young children and their families.

The Natural Supports philosophy encourages individuals and families to develop and contribute to a life-long network of supportive family, community, and peer relationships to promote resiliency, social integration, and positive development.

“I love how engaging and welcoming all the staff are towards all the kids. I have watched how they greet each and every child by name and ask how they are doing. They make all the kids feel loved, wanted and accepted!” *A Providence parent*



A Change of Plans

House sold: Check. Move to PEI for retirement: Check. House bought: Check.

Return to Calgary and raise the grandchildren: Check.

Kim* and Paul had their retirement planned in PEI. They had saved enough money to live comfortably and to be able to care for aging parents. They also planned for occasional trips back to Calgary to visit their daughter Marissa and their three grandchildren, even though their relationship with Marissa was . . . challenging.

When Kim got the call the children had been taken away from their mother, she immediately flew to Calgary while Paul closed up the new house and prepared to drive their vehicle back to Alberta. Both were determined to keep their grandchildren out of the foster care system.

Kim and Paul had adopted Marissa out of the foster care system when she was 10 years old. She has fetal alcohol syndrome, ADHD and attachment disorder. Now a young adult out in the world, Marissa functions at a level well below her chronological age.

As soon as Kim arrived in Calgary she took custody of her three grandchildren, aged 5, 4 and 11 months. Finding a place to live proved to be a challenge – with three small children and no proof of employment to show landlords, she eventually rented a house just south of Calgary.

Up to this point, Kim and Paul had little direct contact with the children. They were shocked to learn the details of their life with Marissa and to see how far behind they were in their development resulting from trauma, abuse, neglect and malnourishment. They have come a long way in just a few months, but they have a long way to go.

Kim and Paul have been able to provide the safety, stability, routine and nutrition the children needed so badly, but, Kim adds “it has been challenging trying to navigate the government and other services the children could benefit from. The COVID-19 situation certainly hasn’t helped.”



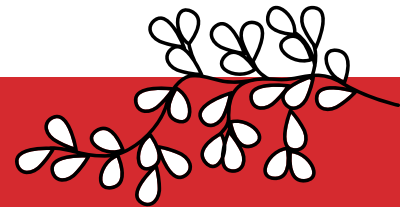
One of the first things Kim did was enroll the two oldest girls at Providence. She knew Providence could handle the significant needs of Lilly and Rose: both have behavioural challenges and are very active.

“Providence has provided so much,” says Kim. “In addition to speech therapy, the girls have benefitted greatly from the routine and structure, but most importantly, the understanding and compassion from all the staff.” The Providence team understands the effect of trauma on young children and design their programs according to each child’s needs.

Kim and Paul’s retirement looks nothing like their plan, and their savings are dwindling faster than expected - but they remain committed to doing everything they can for their grandchildren. They hope to have full custody of the girls by the end of March. Alberta Children’s Services recently required the little boy to be returned to his father.

Deep breath: Check. Carry on: Check.

**Please note: names in this story have been changed.*



Each year the Providence family welcomes ‘skipped-generation’ families – grandparents raising grandchildren. Each story is unique. We acknowledge all of the courageous, patient, and deeply-committed grandparents who are lovingly raising their grandchildren.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR CONTINUED

New Funding Model from Alberta Education

Alberta Education designed a new education model and funding formula for the 2020-2021 school year. It will significantly impact the delivery of education across the province of Alberta. We received our funding formula in late May and began making the changes required to implement the new model.

What is staying the same:

- As always, our goal is to deliver exceptional service to the children and families we serve, supported by the expertise of skilled and knowledgeable professionals, to provide the highest quality of educational programming for our young students.
- Our school programs will continue to operate from September to June. Students will attend the same number of hours per day, and we will continue to have morning and afternoon programs.

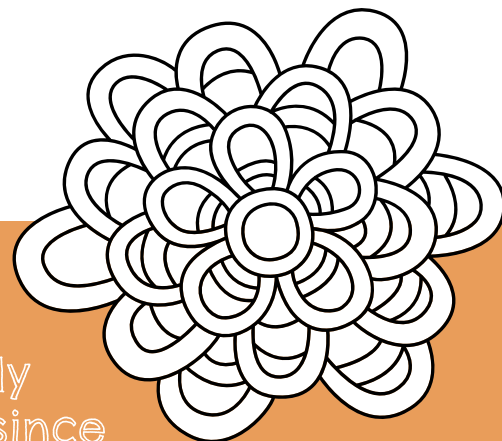


- A certified teacher will still be responsible for, and teach in, every classroom.
- Students will receive therapy support, therapy assessments and an Individual Program Plan (IPP).
- Therapeutic and educational assistants will work side-by-side with the teachers and therapists supporting our student's individual programs.
- Parent meetings and parent-teacher interviews will continue.

What will be changing:

- The new model from Alberta Education has decreased our student's educational hours to 400 (down from 530) per school year. Children will begin attending classes four days per week beginning in September 2020.
- Class sizes may increase by one or two students per class (based on complexity of class, age of the students in the class and each student's funding code).
- Therapy support and treatment will be delivered by the Providence learning team and may include small and large group sessions, consultation and monitoring, and some individual therapy treatment as required.
- Family-oriented programming (information sessions for parents outside of school hours) has been eliminated from the educational model, however we will continue to provide support and educational opportunities to parents as required.

Photo credit: Sarah Siddens Photography, Porch Portraits Project



“My son has improved tremendously in his speech and fine motor skills since he started over two years ago. I’m forever grateful for all the hard work and passion the staff put into their jobs.”

A Providence parent

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR PROVIDENCE

Thank you!

Providence would like to extend a sincere thank you to our many loyal donors and sponsors who continued their support through the year, despite the unprecedented circumstances. We are truly grateful.

We made the difficult decision to permanently cancel our annual fundraising gala. Over 18 years, the Dine & Deals Gala raised more than \$2.5 million dollars for Providence.

To replace the Gala, we quickly organized an On-line Sing-Along Family Dance Party in April, with our own Providence staff and families providing the entertainment! Thank you to all who participated.

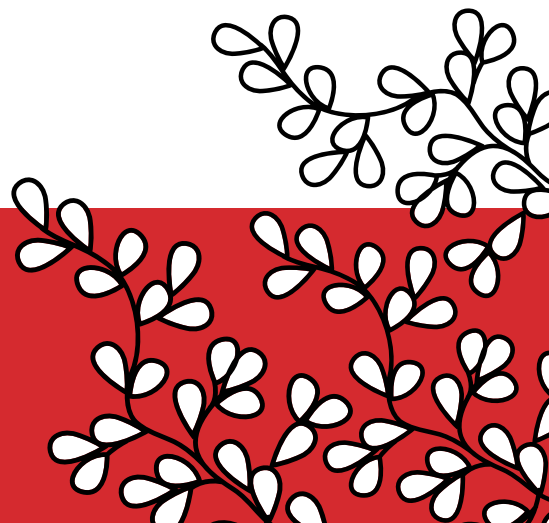


Our Wildcatters golf tournament did not go ahead in August, so we organized a sold-out Stampede Breakfast Party Pack promo. The Party Pack drive through pick-up took place on what should have been the first Saturday of the Calgary Stampede.



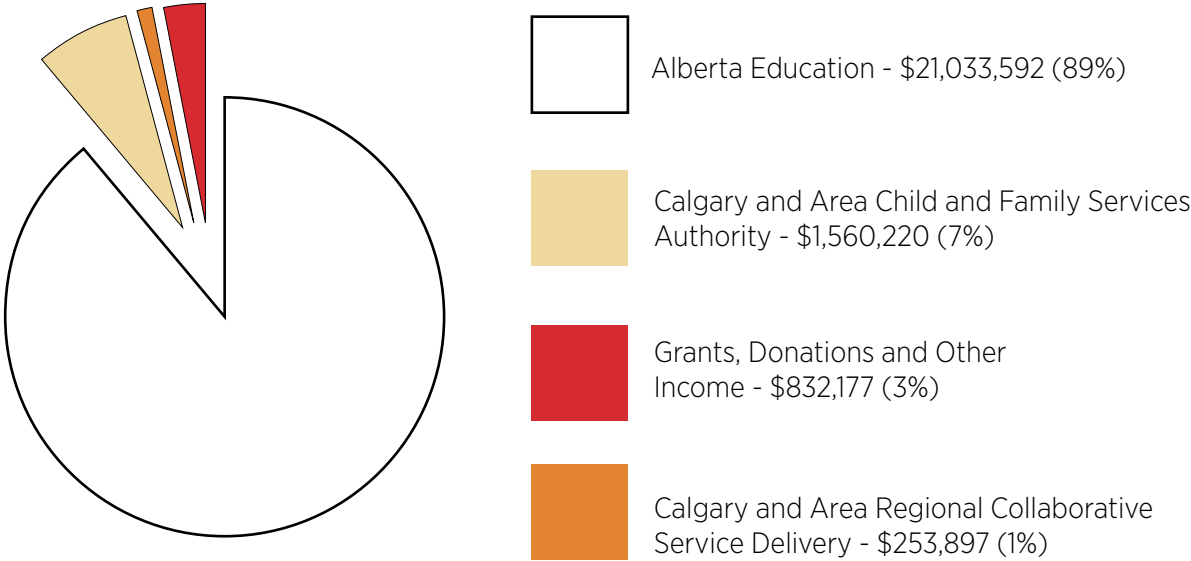
Canadian Progress Club
Club Progrès du Canada
STAMPEDE CITY

Our friends at The Canadian Progress Club – Stampede City were there for us again this past year – as they have been every year since 2014. The Club has supported many major projects including the recent expansion and renovation of our Falconridge school.



our FINANCIALS

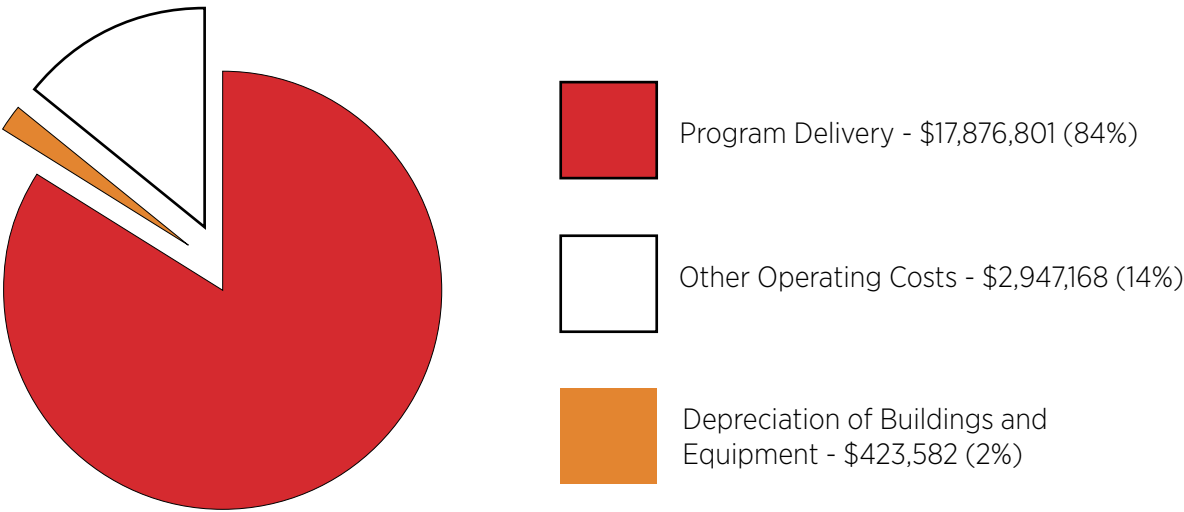
Revenue



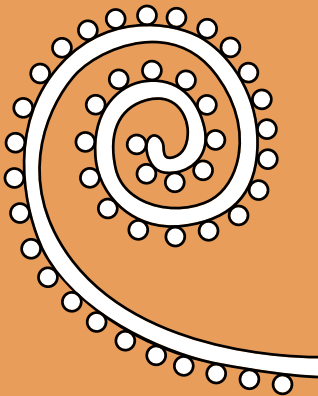
**The surplus we generated in the fiscal year ending August 31, 2020 was the result of operating expense reductions caused by COVID-19. We intend to use this surplus to offset a portion of the funding reductions we will experience over the next two - four years.*

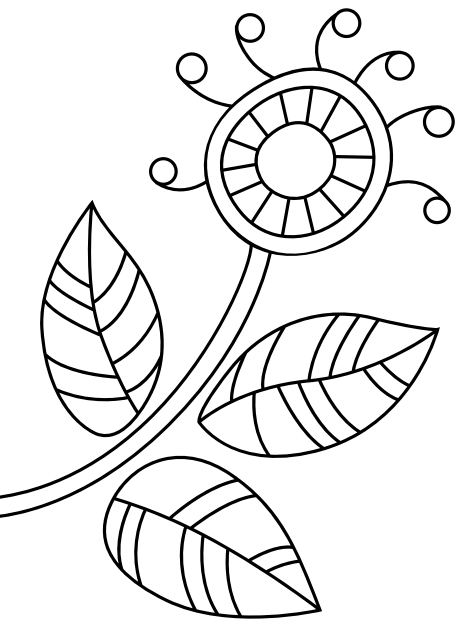
Our full audited financial statements can be found on our website:
www.providencechildren.com/about-us/financial

Expenses



“The suggestions provided are always helpful and practical. What I appreciate most is that first and foremost your team really listen to what we are experiencing before offering suggestions.”
Supported Child Care program participant

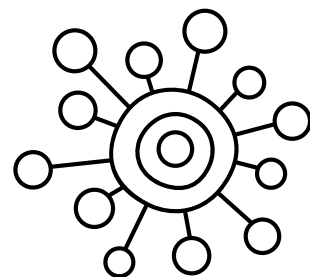




"His amazing progress gives me such

HOPE

for the future."



"I am forever grateful for all the hard work and

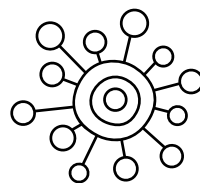
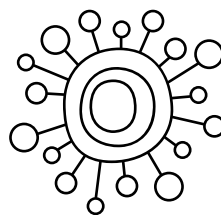
PASSION

you put into our kids."

"My son said 'I

LOVE

*you' for the first time today.
Thank you."*



Looking for the LITTLE ACTIVITY BOOK?

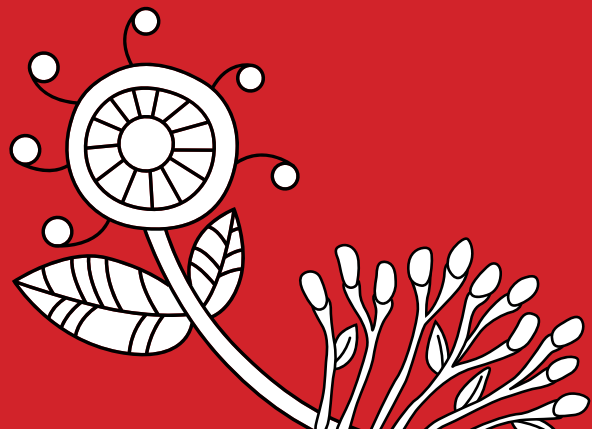
You can find it on our website:
www.providencechildren.com/little-activity-book





For more
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we
ACKNOWLEDGE

Providence gratefully acknowledges the
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provided in the production of this
Report to Community.

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