



AGM – December 2020 - PRESIDENT'S REPORT

For everything there is a season, A time for every activity under heaven. – Ecclesiastes 3. We are going through a period that is unprecedented for most of us. We are living in strange and difficult times, but we continue to persevere. I am proud that we were able to offer our 10th year for Children at Risk's Camp Kaleidoscope, an all-day Summer Camp for 5 weeks, serving children diagnosed within the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The challenges to provide a camp experience were more pronounced than any other year, but the need has never been greater. Every year this would not be possible without major funding and support! For 2020 our Funders include **The Canada Summer Jobs Grant program, The King's Daughters & Sons (Ottawa City Union), The Difference Makers - Les Faiseurs de Différence, City of Ottawa, Danbe Foundation, Ottawa Community Foundation, KDS Autism Circle, 100 Women Who Care Ottawa** to name a few. Funding from many of our traditional fundraisers and other sources of support were not possible due to restrictions of Covid-19. We have seen great success from the Canada Summer Jobs program which provided much needed staffing funding to ensure the success of camp.

Camp Kaleidoscope was the 2012 winner of the very prestigious **Celebration of People Advocacy Award!** We did receive a nomination from the Nepean Chamber of Commerce Not For Profit Award for 2013, as well as both the West-Ottawa Board of Trade Finalist and the Orleans Chamber of Commerce Finalist for the Community Support/ Non-Profit Organization of the Year for 2014. We also were successful in WINNING the **West Ottawa Board of Trade 2017 Business Excellence Award in Community Development!** Our **Camp Kaleidoscope Team** – led by **Camp Director Hazel Smith** - was once again hard at work hard hiring the excellent and caring staff, completing the intake process, planning the daily events and much more.

On top of Camp K, Children at Risk continued to offer **March Break Camp** and **Saturday Fun Club** Respite Programs. Many Parents have expressed thanks for keeping these programs running. This has been a challenging year for both our children and their parents. So many programs have closed and parents are at their wits end. Having a small amount of respite on a Saturday goes a long way. We understand the struggles everyone is going through and we feel it is more important this year to provide all the support we can to assist our community. We are also continuing with a **Family Fun Night** - where parents drop off their children (ASD & Siblings) for a respite evening that provides the child with fun, activities and games while the parents have a special time to plan their own special evening on a Saturday night. This Program has been building and we have a number of Families who look forward to FFN! We are excited to expand our **Leadership Program**, now known as “**Do More, See More**”, from Camp to be offered during the school year and occasionally offer Information Seminars and Educational Workshops.

We now boast over 400 members. This means many families looking for our support and services. As we heavily subsidize the costs of our supports with money from fundraising and donations, this translates to an increasing need for funding. Currently our Funding Model is 40% Charity, 60% Family. As mentioned previously, our in-house fundraising events like the **Bowl-A-Thon, Celebrity Pumpkin Carving**, and others had to be cancelled for 2020. We do want to thank those who help with the fundraising we are able to continue offering including Raffle Tickets, Email Auctions, Donate A Car and more – funds raised by these initiatives help to supplement Grants and Donations to continue to offer programs and camps.

Working relentlessly and keeping everything together is our **Executive Director Brenda Reisch** and **Office Administrator Bambina Lemme** and Volunteers. We recently welcome a new addition to the Office - **Ashley Lopez-Mendoza**. Ashley, who has worked with us for several years at Camp K and Fun Club, now joins our Administration Team! The Board, the Membership and the Autism Community are truly thankful.

We are pleased to have returning for re-election to the **Board of Directors** for another year - **Rob Gentles, Elisa Fuller, Ron Jette** and **Paul Lacroix**. We want to thank the following members of the Board for their service: **William (Bill) Pocock, Melissa Van Alstine, Marca McManus, Alexandra Sloan Jeffrey, Graham Estey, Robert Nino**. We are pleased that Melissa Van Alstine will continue as our Treasurer.

I have decided to step down as both President and from the Board this year. I have been a board member for an even dozen (12) years. I am very proud that I could be part of all the accomplishments we have achieved over that period. I leave knowing that the charity is in good hands. The fact that we have been able to carry on and provide much needed services to children with autism and their families in this most difficult of times is a testament to the resiliency of the charity. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve and wish you all a healthy and safe new year!

Mark Lalonde, Children at Risk Board President (2008-2014 Board Secretary, 2015-2020 Board President)