

President's Report:

Our 2020-2021 operating year was one of if not the most complex and challenging we have ever endeared. The logistics of operating a community facility that was accustomed to serving nearly 100 youth daily in-house during a global pandemic was nothing anyone could have prepared us for. As a social, not for profit enterprise, our successes come from interacting with the youth we serve. We needed to adapt to ensure that we made ourselves and our services available to the best of our ability remotely.

With the continuation of Covid-19 and accompanying public health mandates, we had to strategically alter our operational plans. We chose to look at how we could better service the members of our immediate community during this unprecedented provincial state of emergency. As a not-for-profit entity, the regular operational challenges such as providing the services we are so well know for, securing funding and staff retention were more difficult to manage than ever. Most of our in-house fundraising initiatives had to cease and we had to rely on adaptive and cost cutting measures to help make ends meet.

As child and youth poverty rates continue to escalate, food insecurity during Covid 19 is more prevalent than ever. Our staff has been able to develop and implement a mobile food services program that has seen us deliver several hundreds of meals and food hampers to those in need. In addition, we have amended some of our core programming from an in-person perspective to a digital model. We delivered Chromebooks to some of our youth's households so we could continue to reach out virtually to those in need with ZOOM meetings and events. We offered online educational supports, delivered arts and crafts kits and supply crates to help keep our youth engaged.

As provincial restrictions eased, we were able to welcome back a portion of our youth to 111 West Street. Regulated by the new in-person youth care ratios, we soon began to realize that caring for these youth at the capacity we were once accustomed to simply was not in the best interest of both staff and youth alike. Quality engagement and proper care can only be delivered when ratios are manageable. The need to expand is paramount and we are continuing to network with community partners, public schools and all three levels of government in hopes we can continue to grow our community footprint and allow all youth the opportunity to safely partake in the services we pride ourselves on.

The needs of youth within today's society are fluid and ever changing. Not only acknowledging but also celebrating inclusion, diversity and ethnicity are critical to child and youth development and I am very pleased to report that our own Board of Directors has recently formed its very own Diversity and Inclusion Committee to help encourage and promote awareness.

A prominent saying at the BGCCB is, "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child". Well it takes far more than a strong and engaged Board of Directors to operate and fund this building. It takes an entire community, a truly dedicated and tremendously selfless staff, hundreds of volunteer hours, and most importantly, the youth themselves. I want to thank each and every one of you, both past and present for getting us to this point of our entity and I very much look forward to the new heights and successes you achieve in the years to come.

Respectfully Submitted

Board Chair, John Wolodka