



clements centre

for FAMILIES

Sundrops
Child Development

Adult
Community Living



Annual Report

2020-2021

© Clements Centre Society

From the CEO and Board Chair



A blue ink signature of Dianne Hinton.

Dianne Hinton
Chief Executive Officer



A blue ink signature of Leslie Welin.

Leslie Welin
Board Chair

An AGM is a retrospective look at the past year – and what a year it has been. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, systemic racism, and inequalities continue to challenge all of us. At the same time, there has been an opportunity to develop deeper understandings of ourselves, other people, and our relationships.

Throughout the learning that took place in 2020-2021, Clements Centre Society reaffirmed its vision, mission, and values of equity, accessibility, inclusion, and autonomy. Senior management and staff worked to ensure that the children, youth, adults, and families we serve had connections to services. We are reminded of the saying that, “If Plan A doesn’t work, the alphabet has 25 more letters,” and Clements demonstrated ingenuity and dedication to find plans that worked for folks.

The generosity of funders and donors has been crucial to ensuring programs and services. From government ministries continuing to fund services, to community members opening their wallets for pandemic supplies - and funding a bus so young people could get out into the community - to contractors and suppliers supporting our newest building, Stanko-Casswell Place, we are truly thankful.

Showing that we truly are “better together,” social service organizations in the Cowichan region focused on the wellbeing of people and the community. Clements continues to collaboratively work with others - from programs addressing childcare and support, to community youth programs, to adult employment and housing. The Society is honoured to be a part of this caring community.

Our AGM report highlights Clements’ impact on the lives of folks we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your lives.

Our Mission

We bring hope, belonging, and independence to children, youth, and adults with developmental needs and their families by offering programs and services that promote participation and engagement

Our Vision

The Clements Centre Society envisions a community in which all individuals are included, valued, and celebrated

Our Values

EQUITY

All people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect

ACCESSIBILITY

All people should have access to needed services that achieve maximal outcomes

INCLUSION

All people are entitled to live and participate as full citizens in the community of their choice, with the same rights, obligations, and responsibilities as other citizens

AUTONOMY

All people must have their personal autonomy protected, with every effort made to nurture and enhance self-determination

Finding 'Our Happy' Again

Some people have smiles that light up the room. And, if you have ever met Kody, you will know – his smile lights up the entire community.

Kody and his family have received support from Clements Centre since he was just 10-months-old, when he began working with a Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP).

Now an active 25-year-old young adult, Kody continues to work with an SLP while also attending Clements' programming and various other extracurricular and recreational activities in the community.

Over the past two decades, Clements has become Kody's home away from home, and the friends he has made have become like his family.

For the first few months of the pandemic, Clements had to press pause on the program Kody attended. It wasn't long after that his mom, Sandy, noticed he had "lost some of his happy," and she knew something had to shift.

"After three or four months at home, people started slowly going back to programming, but we as a family decided that, with Kody's immune system, it was just too soon to go back. Kids with Down Syndrome are four times more likely to contract COVID, and ten times more likely to die from it."

Sandy reached out to Clements to see if there was anything the organization could do to get Kody back into programs without compromising his health.

"He was such a busy kid prior to COVID. He was in a program five days, and a then a sport every night, and other things like Operation Trackshoes and Special Olympics... then all of that just stopped. I was getting worried about him not having his peers around."

Working together - and with Kody's wellbeing as the focus - Sandy and representatives from Clements were able to find available program space where Kody could be with one other friend and a single staff member. The pair was able to go on hikes, take yoga and dance over Zoom, and get back to that sense of community and togetherness, while keeping their risk of exposure low.

"I was shocked and grateful that we were able to support Kody in this way. We just ran with it and worked with the staff to help create something for them - and it was really good. It helped him find his happy again."



“**I was shocked and grateful that we were able to support Kody in this way ... it helped him find his happy again.**”



Raising the Vibration of Joy One Puppet at a Time

When the pandemic first began, Carmen Barclay Hamm noticed a certain heaviness descending on the community and was compelled to do something about it.

Carmen is the Coordinator of the Cowichan Childcare Resource & Referral (CCRR) Program at Clements Centre for Families. CCRR provides support, referrals, and resources to families to help connect them with appropriate childcare and assists providers to ensure they are providing the very best care possible.

"I sat down with my CCRR team and said, 'Let's talk about raising the vibration of joy to counteract this trauma. How do we do that?' We had these puppets that everyone thought were so cute, so I asked who would be willing to put on a puppet and participate in a puppet show."

A short time later, and in collaboration with a community of childcare providers and service professionals, the Sasquatch Clan Community of Practice was born. Granny Sassy, Violet, Clover,

Rainbow, Sunny, and Coco came to life, each with their own engaging personalities and quirks.

Working alongside local artist and puppet-maker Dominica Dorazio, CCRR staff practiced and rehearsed until they were ready for their big debut.



"We would come in with all the puppets in a wagon and the children would want to know their names and all the details about them. These puppets are engaging. They're not your normal kind of puppet," reflects Carmen.

Five local childcare centers participated in the Sasquatch Clan Gatherings, and while the initial goal of 'raising the vibration of joy' was easily achieved, this was much more than just a puppet show.

The Sasquatch Clan Gatherings integrated teachings from B.C.'s Early Learning Framework— a provincial framework designed to guide early childhood educators, teachers, principles, and other early years professionals. Teachings included in-house learning for childcare providers who, in turn, brought these lessons into individual classrooms. Topics

included wellbeing and belonging, connecting with nature, Indigenous knowledge, and inclusion.

"Parkside staff were able to rethink their practice and reflect and expand through collaborative dialogue with each other and the children to notice the connections we were making though the clan gathering experiences," shares Adrianna Soler, Manager of Parkside Academy Society. **"It was a magical and curious time."**

In the weeks following the Sasquatch Clan's visits, children were faced with a "daily dilemma" on the

topics presented, and worked together to solve the problems - with the help of a puppet, of course!



"The teachings clearly reflect the principles of people building connections and reconnection to land, culture, community, and place. It creates a story and facilitates dialogue about collectively sharing

this world with all creatures, plants, trees, and nonliving entities and landforms," shares Adrianna.

The joy and teachings experienced by both children and care providers are enduring. Children still excitedly recall their visits, and sometimes, under special circumstances, the puppets are called upon to help out. Carmen recalls receiving a request for Granny Sassy's presence at a childcare centre that was struggling with bullying behaviours.

"Granny managed to have a Zoom with the kids. They came up with ideas about helping each other through tough times, looking at whether our actions were harmful or helpful."

Through difficult times came creative innovation - and the Sasquatch Clan plans to continue raising the vibration of joy for years to come.

Funding for the Sasquatch Clan Gathering Community of Practice was generously provided from Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre.

Annual CCRR STATS

325 Child Care Referrals
109 Families & 26 Providers
Assisted with Affordable
Child Care Subsidy
172 Community Referrals
38 Borrowed
Resources

CHILD & FAMILY SUPPORT THROUGH COVID

COVID was an extremely challenging time for so many and, in my opinion, those with special needs and compromised immune systems suffered the most.

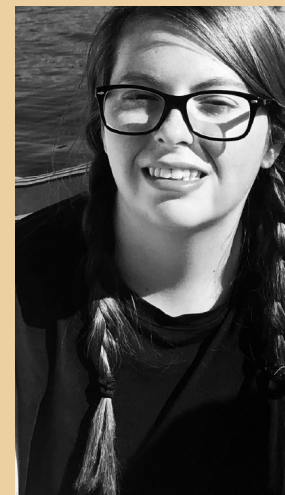
Unfortunately for my daughter Maddy, she also graduated high school during that time and it was tough for her to understand why she was not at school seeing friends or attending her beloved Friday evening Clements group.

We kept Maddy fairly isolated at our doctor's request, but as vaccinations became available, Maddy resumed some limited activities.

The team at the Sundrops Centre's Child & Family Support (CFS) program kept in touch throughout that time, updating us on COVID protocols and offering their support. One of the staff offered to come to our home and do activities one-on-one with Maddy - I can't express how important this was for her and our family. She loved having that special time with someone outside our bubble, and the activity kits the CFS team provided to families were so fun and engaging.

The people at Clements make it such a special place - they are truly the kindest, most caring people.

- Tiff Tait (Maddy's Mom)



TRUST & TRANSITIONS

For many parents of children with complex developmental needs, trusting others to care for their loved one can be a challenging, turbulent process.



The decision to support his daughter Julia's move into Clements' Marchmont House - during the height of the pandemic - was not a decision Paul made lightly. He found comfort in the attentive presence of Marchmont staff, who leaned on his expertise in learning how to provide the best possible care for 19-year-old Julia.

"It's strange having to trust other people. For me, that's hard, but it's gone very well," shares Paul. "What I really credit them with is they always listen to me, and that was something I was not used to."

Julia was born with a seizure disorder which causes her brain to be in constant seizure activity - and not all are noticeable to the untrained eye. With thoughtful collaboration, Paul and the Marchmont team cultivated a smooth transition for Julia who is now happily settled in and has become part of the Marchmont family.

Julia and her housemates, along with her father and Marchmont staff, celebrated her 20th birthday this past year with a backyard party, complete with cake and balloons.

Reflecting on the challenges and successes of the transition, Cara, Manager of Marchmont, shares, "Julia is amazing and we were so happy to welcome her. She is in good hands here."

Jordan's Story



Jordan is a kind, compassionate, and thoughtful young man who lives with two invisible disabilities.

Now 21, Jordan's young life was rife with trauma. In his early years, he was raised by his mother, who was substance dependent and experienced domestic violence. By 3 years old, Jordan's grandmother, Beth, became his primary caregiver. She worked hard to provide him a healthy and supportive environment, but the daily impacts of Jordan's disabilities and the significant trauma he faced - early experiences with his mother and later grieving the loss of his two brothers - was all too much for Jordan to cope with.

At 13, Jordan began using illicit drugs.

Following years of homelessness, couch surfing, drug use, and repeated incarcerations, at 19 years old, Jordan became connected to Clements' Supported Independent Living Program (SILP).

“At that time in my life, I was so depressed,” Jordan shares. “I thought about suicide every day. I was getting into crime, constantly pushing my luck, never knowing if the next second I’d be dead or back in jail.”

Looking back on that time in their lives, Beth shares, “You go through your 60’s and 70’s waiting for the phone to ring and wonder - are they dead or in jail? Your heart stops from stress and fear of the unknown. I don’t know how much longer I could’ve gone on if my child didn’t get help.”

Jordan’s SILP support worker became his primary support and system navigator over the next two years. Throughout that time, the SILP team helped Jordan navigate various complicated and nuanced systems: ensuring he made his court appearances and did not breach probation, acting as a liaison between Jordan and his lawyer, managing police contacts, driving him to medical appointments, and connecting him with as many community resources as possible.

“It was a relief to have a support system that was able to do things with me and get me out of the house. I knew that, worse come to worst, I had someone I could call and talk to about whatever mess I’d gotten myself into.”

In 2021, with support and encouragement from his grandmother and the entire SILP team, Jordan took the plunge and checked into Night and Day Recovery Centre in Surrey.

“Today I am 75 days sober. I live in my own apartment. I feel happy. All it takes is one person to really put their all into you and the outcome can be substantial.”

Jordan now offers peer support and is an ambassador for the recovery centre.

He shared that he wanted to be an example for his mom, to show her that there was another way to live - a life beyond addiction.

Looking back on his darkest days, Jordan is eager to challenge the stigmatization he faced throughout his life. “I feel people don’t understand that most people [on the street] don’t want to be that way - that they would change their lives if they only knew where to turn to help them.”

“The SILP team saved my grandson’s life,” Beth shares in a letter. “What he does now will be up to him, but if they couldn’t have given him the chance, he would be dead soon. There is not enough help like what Clements Centre can offer. Thank you all.”

We are deeply grateful to Community Living British Columbia for the funding they provide supporting individuals in the Supported Independent Living Program.

*names have been changed to preserve anonymity

“
Today I am 75 days sober. I live in my own apartment. I feel happy. All it takes is one person to really put their all into you and the outcome can be substantial.
”

Thank You for Your Generosity

Your gifts help to bring hope, belonging and independence to people in Cowichan.

Thank you for making this difference!

\$10,000+

Greg Adams
Judy Adams
Children's Health Foundation
Island Ford Superstore
Rick Hansen Foundation
United Way
Allen & Loreen Vandekerkhove
Family Foundation
Westcoast Child Care
Resource Centre

\$5,000 - \$9,999

100 Warmland Women
Coastal Community Credit Union
Duncan Volunteer Fire Department
House of Friendship Society
Krystyna Thomson
Tim Hortons
Western Communities Foundation

\$1,000-\$4,999

Bev Angus
Nancy Brennan
Duncan Lions Club
Helen Evans
Marj Kallstrom
OUR Cowichan Community
Health Network
Tacey Ruffner
TELUS
Carreen Unguran

\$500-\$999

Cedars At Cobble Hill
Dinter Nursery
Joanne Bodard

\$500-\$999 continued

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Margaret Hudson
Kevin Keir
Kinette Club of Duncan
Judith & Erdmann Knaack
Knights of Columbus
Julia & Klaus Maier
Christine Ryan
Michael Smith
Michael & Barbara Stone
Minke Vanderweide

\$100-\$499

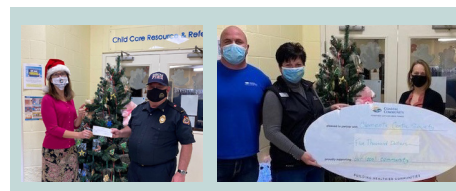
Patricia Angus
Joan Armstrong
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Laurie & Gareth Beverley
Peter Bontkes
Susan Cairns
Peter Dewaal
Duncan Christian Reformed Church
Wendy Frejd
Lois Gage
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Sue Koch
Trevor Miranda
Danielle Murphy
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Adriana Palasz
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Ken Pidwysoki
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Robin Routledge
Russell Rabby
Royal Canadian Legion #134

\$100-\$499 continued

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Sarah Simmons
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Sustaining Monthly Donors

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Dianne Hinton
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Sonia Latter
Chelsea Major
Linda Roseneck
Lyn Taylor Scott
Anna Tubman
Leslie Welin
Anna Williams



This list is based on previous fiscal year ending March 31, 2021. We have done our best to ensure this list is accurate - if you do not see your name, please contact us at 250-746-4135.

A Legacy of Dedication



*Marina Stanko Nancy Casswell
July 1996 Bobble - Jurd & Rose*

As the 65th anniversary of Clements Centre for Families approaches, this is a natural time for reflection and appreciation for all that has been accomplished over the decades. A current reason to celebrate is the opening of a new building for families served at our Cobble Hill location.

After five years of rezoning, subdividing, planning and constructing, the board and employees had every reason to celebrate. This also provided an opportunity to consider how we might refer to the new building.

The idea of honouring Marina Stanko and Nancy Casswell originated at the board level. Directors wished to honour two women who each had their own significant impact at different times in our history.

“They worked hard, and when they had the ability to volunteer, it was nice that they could use that privilege to give back to community.”

On separate occasions, both women stepped forward at particularly challenging times to take the reins - and with steady hands - to guide the agency to ensure continued supports for families.

Terri Stanko, daughter of Marina Stanko, who works with Clements as an Infant Development Consultant shares, “My parents were very privileged to be able to do the work that they did. They worked hard and...when they had the ability to volunteer, it was nice that they could use that privilege to give back to community.”

It is worth noting that both women were educators and very community minded. When asked how her mom would feel about the dedication, Sheila Coogan, daughter of Nancy Casswell reflected, “My mom would be so honoured by this. What she wanted was to be remembered for her service to community. She would be embarrassed, but deep down she would be incredibly honoured.”

STAFF MILESTONES

Celebrating 30 Years: Lorna Lawson



Lorna has been with Clements Centre for 30 years working as an Infant Development Consultant! Her wisdom, humour and knowledge of child development are legendary

with the Sundrops team. Lorna has witnessed a lot of change during her years with Clements. She has watched us grow from a small grassroots organization to the Clements Centre of today. She has flowed with change in organizational names, leadership, office space and growth of the Sundrops IDP team (from two consultants to five) as Clements Centre has grown.

Lorna's calm demeanor and ability to adapt to change is admirable. She has moved through the years prior to computers, faxes, the worldwide web, virtual platforms, and cellular phones. If the change benefits children and families, Lorna is on board.

Lorna is a lifelong learner and adapts her practice to reflect her learnings in areas relevant to her work - always staying true to the philosophy of family-centred care.

In addition to being a valued member of the Sundrops Team, Lorna is respected by the Cowichan Valley community for her contributions to music, the environment, and making the world a better place for all of us. Thank you, Lorna!

We are so grateful to all the dedicated and compassionate staff at Clements Centre for Families. This past year, the following staff reached significant milestones!

30 YEARS

Lorna Lawson

20 YEARS

Jackie DeJong

15 YEARS

Catherine Carter Clark

Kim McLeod

10 YEARS

Lynne Bourgeois

Melanie Paradis

Carolina Polanco

Libby Searle

5 YEARS

Tawney Ahdemar

Sara Fletcher

Jennifer Fox

Kelly Henault

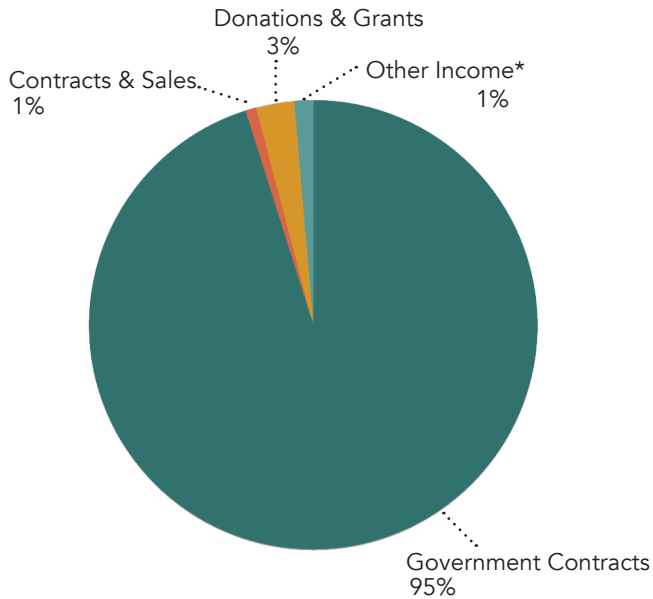
Kelsey Highsted

Susan Peterson

2020-2021 FINANCIALS

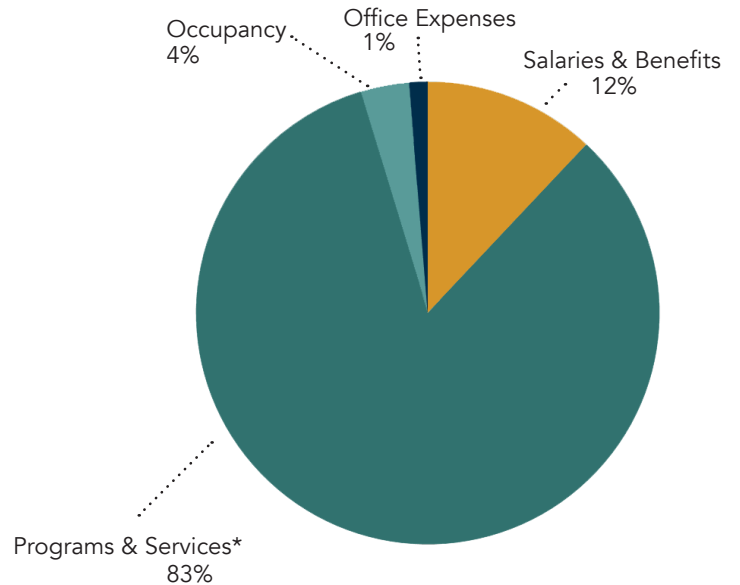
for the year ending March 31, 2021

OPERATING REVENUE



* Includes interest, fees for service, rental and misc. revenue

OPERATING EXPENSES



* Includes salaries for direct service employees

A Year in Photographs





clements centre

for FAMILIES

Thank you
for your
dedicated
support!



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