



CROSSROADS

Children's Mental
Health Centre

**Help for Children.
Hope for Families.**

2
0
2
2
-
2
3

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

crossroadschildren.ca



MISSION STATEMENT

Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre works exclusively with children up to the age of 12 and their families. We are committed to developing and delivering a wide range of mental health services to help children and families struggling with severe emotional, behavioural and social challenges.

OUR VISION


Crossroad's vision is of a community where every child under the age of 12 receives treatment for even the most severe mental health challenges. No case is too complicated, complex or severe. We never give up on a child.

CORE VALUES

- Child Centered & Family Focused. Services are respectful, individualized and based on the needs of the child and family. The child (to the extent possible) and family are included as full participants in the development of the service plan.
- Community-Based. Services are provided within or close to the child's home community.
- Culturally Competent: Committed to inclusive and equitable services that provide culturally strengthening interventions to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, through direct service delivery and/or referrals to partner organizations.
- Committed to Evidence-Based and Promising Practices. As defined by research and determined by the Evidence Based Practices Committee.
- Professionally Competent. The professional competence of our staff is supported through ongoing support, training, monitoring and supervision.
- Collaborative and Partnership Focused. As a community-based organization involved with a number of partners in the Ottawa region, CCMHC is committed to fostering collaborative approaches and partnerships to meet the needs of children and families our region.



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT



It is with immense pride and gratitude that I reflect upon my second year as President of Crossroads Childrens Mental Health Centre (CMHC) Board of Directors. I have been a member of the Board since 2017, and I am honored to work alongside a dedicated group of Board members who share an unwavering commitment to CCMHC and the well-being of children and families in our community.

Undoubtedly, the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic can still be felt within our health system, but CMHC has remained nimble and adaptive to the ever-changing landscape to ensure the quality of care provided for children and families is exceptional. The Board's continues to meet virtually to uphold our responsibility for CCMHC's governance and strategic direction.

The success of CCMHC is a direct result of the caring, dedicated and exceptionally talented staff at all levels. A big thank you to each of you for your efforts, and to Michael Hone and Natasha McBrearty for their tireless efforts not only contribute to the excellence of our organization, but also to extend CCMHC's influence and impact to the broader community through their engagement with the media.

We also extend our gratitude to Lynn LaHam for her prudent financial

stewardship and wish her the best in retirement.

The Board is particularly proud of the impressive achievement of serving 2122 clients in the past year, aligned with our vision of ensuring every child under 12 receives the treatment they need for even the most complex mental health challenges. Employees breathe life into this vision daily, embracing the notion that no case is too intricate or severe – a testament to the unyielding dedication they demonstrate. Furthermore, the camp welcomed 67 campers this year, the second year since pausing due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

As we forge ahead, CCMHC remains rooted in the latest research, tirelessly dedicated to collaboration, and firmly committed to fostering robust research partnerships to fulfill the evolving needs of children and families. This year alone, the organization has developed 3 new partnerships to broaden our reach, services and supports.

Our deepest appreciation extends to each member of the CCMHC family. It is your unflagging dedication to delivering top-tier services and unwavering support to children, youth, and families that forges a more compassionate and supportive system – one that nurtures positive early development, mental well-being, and resilience across all stages of life.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nicholas Watters, President

Director, Access to Quality Mental Health Services, Mental Health Commission of Canada

Joseph Childs, Vice-President

Senior Project Manager,
Minto Properties

Stefan Hollmann, Treasurer

Finance Director,
The Micronutrient Initiative

Karen Tataryn, Past-President

Director of Mental Health,
CHEO, retired

Andrew Mendes

Psychotherapist,
in Private Practice



Aaron H. Pesa

Business System Specialist,
Blackberry QNX

Robert Cleroux

Sergeant,
Ottawa Police Service

Ashley Deathe

Lawyer,
Self-employed

Dr. Petra Duschner

Manager, Mental Health & Critical Services,
OCDSB, Retired

Lindsey Ehman

Communications Professional,
Self-employed

Joanne Baldassi

Senior Analyst,
Canadian Radio-Television &
Telecommunications Corporation (CRTC)

CCMHC is governed by a Board of Directors made up entirely of volunteers who enthusiastically commit their energy and time to our organization and the children and families we serve. We sincerely thank this exceptional group of professionals for their leadership, insight, and guidance over the past year.





MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often." - Winston Churchill

This year has indeed been another year of change and growth at Crossroads. As we moved fully out of the pandemic and continued to experience high volumes of demand for mental health services, we are constantly thinking about how to deliver the best possible care as efficiently as possible.

With our community partners, we identified a need to bolster the therapeutic component of our day-treatment services to increase outcomes. The result is that all day-treatment services for English-speaking children under 12 years old in Ottawa have been consolidated at Crossroads. This means more children are receiving services at Crossroads, lower staff-to-student ratios, and greater individualized care. Through our long-standing partnership with McHugh and the Ottawa Catholic School Board, our students continue to receive specialized education that meets their unique needs. Additionally, we are now able to tap into a multi-disciplinary team at One-Call, One-Click, which will increase access to important services like Occupational Therapy and Psychiatry.

Another exciting change at Crossroads has been the updating of our therapy spaces. With support from the Ontario

Trillium Foundation, we were able to remodel our therapy rooms to create inviting spaces for children and families. We now have a state-of-the-art sensory room where kids can take advantage of all the regulation tools available.

Our sensory room was a big hit at camp this year, which we hosted at Courtwood. Welcoming 67 campers, we danced with Love2Groove, learned about reptiles from our friends at Reptiles Rock, and took advantage of our new jiu-jitsu dojo. Through a generous donation from Outlaw Martial Arts, we have a fully equipped space for children to practice martial arts and learn regulation, social, and problem-solving skills. Stay tuned as we launch registration for our jiu-jitsu and skill-building activities this fall.

The fall also renews our focus on infant and early childhood mental health. For years, we have emphasized the importance of secure attachment early in life as the basis for positive mental health across the lifespan. With the incredible support of the May Court Club of Ottawa, we are scaling up the implementation of Circle of Security, an evidence-based practice that helps caregivers connect with the children in their lives.

Our commitment to grow, evolve, and change in the face of new research, feedback from our clients, and changes

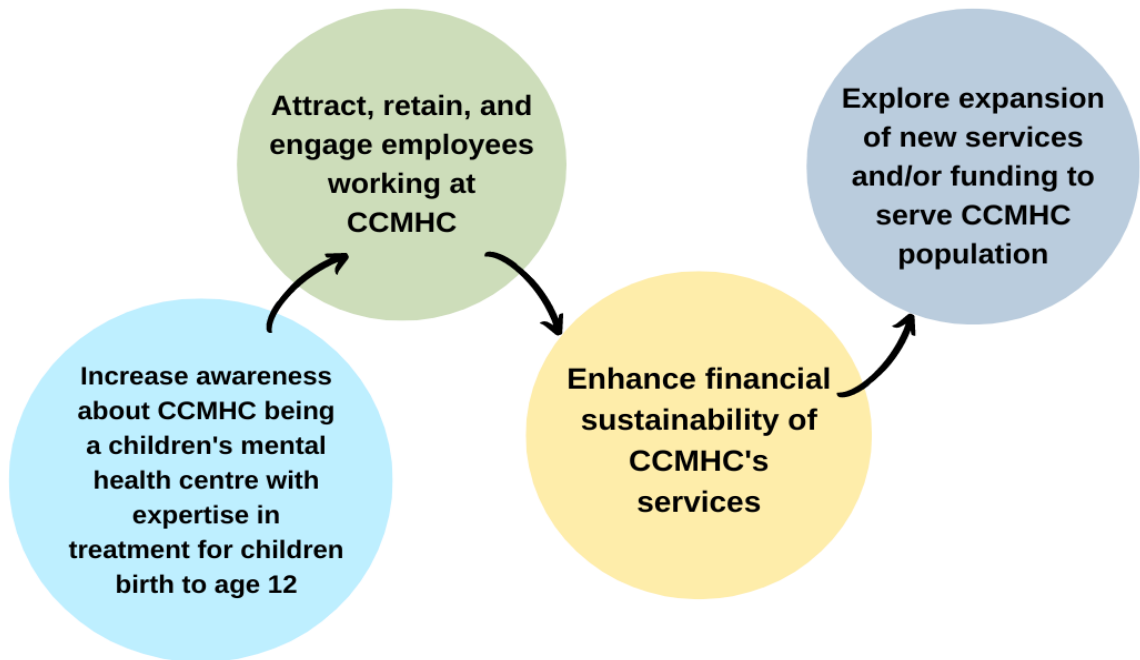


in our environment is one that our staff and board have embraced. For example, under the guidance of our research team at Carleton and the University of Ottawa (now called the School Attendance Partnership), our team jumped at the opportunity to pilot a tool that would allow us to better understand the relationship between school attendance problems and mental health, an issue that has gained relevance over the

pandemic and is important to many of our stakeholders.

As we continue to change, one thing remains the same: our unwavering commitment to the children and families we serve. Thank you to our board, our staff team, our community partners, funders, and our client partners for helping us change and grow to deliver the best possible care.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES




WE NEVER GIVE UP ON A CHILD.





RESEARCH



CCMHC continues to collaborate with an experienced team of researchers and students at U Ottawa and Carleton University. This exceptional group of individuals is led by Dr. David Smith, Ph.D., C. Psych., Professor; Dr. Jessica Whitley, Vice-Dean and Professor of Inclusive Education in the Faculty of Education; and Dr. Maria Rogers, Ph.D., C. Psych., Clinical Psychologist, and Professor in the Department of Psychology at Carleton University.

With a Partnership Development grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the research team is actively engaging the community in discussions regarding the reciprocal relationship between school attendance and mental health, substance use health, and addictions. Because 'what gets measured gets done', we are focused on developing and implementing the SNACK, a tool that will help us better understand the scope and reasons for school

attendance problems. Additionally, thanks to a funding opportunity provided by the Emerging Asocial Society (SSHRC), the team conducted a scoping review of school attendance in youth.

CCMHC has also been involved in a significant research initiative with Dr. Weiss and Dr. Lee. Together, we are evaluating the Secret Agent Society:OR program for children with neurodevelopmental disabilities, with a specific focus on the impact of CBT-based interventions on parent-child relationships and family well-being.

With various publications and conference presentations this year, including participation in the International School Attendance Network conference in the Netherlands, our small but dedicated research team is making a notable contribution to the mental health and well-being of children and families.



Help for children. Hope for families.

THANK YOU

TO OUR DONORS



W.P. Scott
Charitable
Foundation

Thank you to these organizations and corporate donors for their generous support. Their donations to our programs and services directly help children & families in our community.



SPECIAL THANKS



Outlaw Martial Arts for their generous donation and for all of the work involved to fully equip our new jiu-jitsu dojo.

Mr. Scott Jordan for his frequent and very generous donations.

Mr. Robert Thornton for donating his vehicle to **Kars 4 Kids Canada** and for choosing Crossroads as the receiving charity.



Megan Cain

James Clarkin

COBBS BREAD

County of Carleton Law Assoc.

Julie Giachino

Graham Jones

Cassie Lemaire

Heather Mace

Natasha McBrearty

Martin Montreuil

Lincoln Moss

Stephen Murphy

Cherry Murray

Taryn Newsham

Holly Overhoff

G

R

A

T

E

F

U

L

Opti9 Technologies

David Passman

Carrie Payne

Jennifer Pearen

Stephanie Petkiewicz

Pledgeling Foundation

Karen Rainboth

Rebecca Richardson

Raymond Robertson

Kate Whitley

Melanie Wissink

Kaitlyn Yates

Annemarie Roodal

Help for Children. Hope for Families.



PROGRAMS

Home-Based Program

The Home-Based program provides children and families with the opportunity to learn and apply new skills in their everyday living environment to address complex social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. In 2022-2023, the Home-Based team supported over 300 families. Referrals to in-home treatment services include self-referrals as well as referrals from primary care, community partners, 1Call1Click, the Children's Aid Society, and Coordinated Access.

Intensive Services

Intensive home-based services provide therapeutic support and treatment for children who have been identified as having psychological, behavioural, social, emotional and/or self-regulation needs that require an intensive level of intervention. Children in this program receive multiple flexible visits per week that are specifically

tailored to meet their individual needs.

Single Sessions and our Child & Family Clinic

Almost **1,500** single sessions were provided by our Child and Family Therapists and Senior Child & Youth Workers on [CounsellingConnect.org](https://www.CounsellingConnect.org) and at our Child & Family Clinic. These single counselling sessions are for families seeking help for their infant, toddler, or child's social, emotional and/or behavioral challenges. Services are delivered in-person, by video or telephone, depending on the family's needs and preferences. Often this one session is enough to meet their needs.

Counselling Connect offers free single session therapy and support groups to individuals of all ages with quick-access to prevention-oriented mental health, substance use, health, and addictions support.

[CounsellingConnect.org](https://www.CounsellingConnect.org)

Child and Family Therapy

Our team of social workers and psychotherapists provided individual and group child and family therapy services to 172 families this year. Through extensive training over the last year, we are expanding our services to better serve children who have been impacted by trauma.

Certified in the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics, members of the CCMHC team provide comprehensive trauma assessments and intervention planning for children and families. The team has also been trained to deliver Trauma-

Infant and Early Mental Health (IEMH)

We know that prenatal, infant, and early childhood experiences shape the architecture of the brain and lay the foundation for positive mental

Circle Of Security (COS):

COS helps foster secure attachment between the children and their caregivers. Offered to caregivers of children under the age of 6, its primary focus is on helping parents develop skills to discover, interpret, understand, and respond to their children's emotional needs and cues. COS is offered both as an 8-week


Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). Research shows that TF-CBT successfully addresses a broad range of emotional and behavioral difficulties associated with single, multiple, and complex trauma experiences. We have continued our implementation of Emotion Focused Family Therapy (EFFT) to support families of children with eating disorders. This is a continued partnership with lead agency trainings and ongoing clinical supervision with local experts.

health across the lifespan. We also know that outcomes improve when problems are identified and treated early. Our infant and early mental health programs include:

group intervention with a 4-week homebased option for additional support, and individually through the Homebased and Headstart program. The group format was offered virtually during the fall, winter and spring seasons this past year.

Headstart: In collaboration with Somerset West and Pinecrest Queensway's





Headstart Nursery School programs, we are delivering timely and accessible mental health services for children and families while building capacity within the early years' system. Our staff complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional screening tool to help identify areas where children may benefit from

Day Treatment

Working in partnership with the M.F. McHugh Education Centre, the Day Treatment program provides a combination of education and treatment for children who need additional skills to thrive in a regular school setting.

This past year, we continued to strengthen the therapeutic foundation of the program. Our program clinician worked closely with our OT consultant to run a sensory-strategy group in each classroom in the autumn, as a counterpart to the weekly Zones of Regulation groups run by each classroom CYW. Our CYWs also ran play-based groups in the winter months, to build relational skills, and ran spring CPS groups in their classes to continue building the thinking skills needed to thrive in a school environment.

increased support. Building trusting relationships with families is an integral component to engage caregivers in treatment where support is given to build adaptive skills, increase community and informal resources, and integrate practical caregiving skills.

Staff professional development focused on co-regulation skills, and how to best create an environment of trust and safety for every child in our care. Our Day Treatment team also worked together throughout the year on their own rational detachment skills, and on safe and effective use of self in their professional roles.

After the community announcement in February of the changes coming to the Ottawa Day Treatment system, we began working on program enhancements for the coming year. We will be adding three classrooms, for a total of eight, while also improving the client:staff ratio across all classrooms. With three staff and eight children per class, we hope to provide a deeper level of individualized treatment to each child, and to better support the needs of each family during their





time in the program. We also packed up our classrooms in anticipation of our move to a new location, within St Luke's Catholic School, where we will have more space for self- and co-regulation activities, as well as a larger clinical office for individual and small group therapy. The Day

Treatment staff team has grown to include 3 additional CYWs, for the new classrooms, and a designated Receptionist at our new location to help streamline day-to-day tasks necessary for keeping the program running smoothly. We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead!

School Based Mental Health (SBMH)

Working closely with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and the Ottawa Catholic School Board, the SBMH team delivered mental health services in 14 schools across the city. The SBMH team provided 1-1 treatment to students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 and collaborated with the schools to implement Collaborative Problem Solving strategies as a way to help students bridge the gap when there are lagging skills. Treatment focused on individualized goals, addressing social and emotion regulation skills, and included engaging with caregivers to ensure that families were connected to meaningful community resources to support success.

Camp Have Funnors

This year CCMHC was excited to offer our annual summer camp on-site at our Courtwood building. Camp was staffed by experienced

Child and Youth Workers/Social Workers with a high staff-to-camper ratio to provide meaningful interactions and ensure that each campers' needs were met, accessing specialized spaces such as our Occupational Therapy room. We were able to make use of the new Dojo on-site as our camp built on a partnership with Outlaw Martial Arts who provided a daily JiuJitsu program throughout the entire month. Luv2Groove offered weekly sessions giving us an opportunity to incorporate dance/aerobic movement into the day, and Reptiles Rock came to visit us each week bringing a variety of reptiles and other animal friends for our campers to meet. With catering from Chef Ric's campers enjoyed a hot, nutritious meal at no cost to families. In total, CCMHC welcomed 67 campers this year. 22 of these children attended more than one week.



WrapAround

Children and families referred to Wraparound have complex needs across multiple domains, including

The Wraparound program begins with respect for a family's strengths, culture, and choices. The CCMHC Wraparound facilitator is there to help families develop a support team which can include friends, family, members of a faith community, as well as professionals. The team then develops a shared vision and action

Intersections, Skill

Builders/TAPP-C

Funded by the United Way and in partnership with the Ottawa Police Services, CCMHC offers the Intersections program. Intersections is an evidence-informed early intervention program for children up to the age of 13 years old with suspected mental health, developmental, and/or substance abuse issues who are at-risk of becoming justice involved. Focusing on service navigation, we help the

Facility Support Dog



Jillie, our Facility Support Dog, joined the team in late 2021. She is fully trained to support and soothe children (and their parents). Thank you to the Lions Foundation Dog Guides Canada, and to Isabelle MacNider (CCMHC Supervisor) for

but not limited to housing, education, legal, health, mental health, and recreation.

plan, coordinates activities, problem-solves, and shares resources to meet the family's stated goals. In the final phase of CCMHC's Wraparound program, the team collaborates on a transition plan to ensure ongoing success and involvement of natural supports in the community.

child and their family access and coordinate community support services to reduce and prevent further interaction with police services and the justice system.

Through a long-standing relationship with the Ottawa Fire Services, CCMHC also offers the TAPP-C Program, an arson prevention program aimed to reduce the risk of fire setting among children.

taking on the role of trainer, handler, and human mom. Jillie works the Child and Family Clinic and in treatment session and is available (upon request) to any child receiving supports through CCMHC for an in-office visit.



CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

CCMHC continues to welcome Children with Autism

The intersection of mental health and autism is a key priority area in Ottawa's three-year child and youth mental health plan. This year, CCMHC's team continued to participate in a community of practice with Dr. Jonathan Weiss, a leading autism and mental health expert in Canada. Facilitated by the Lead Agency, the community of practice provides opportunities to share information, improve skills, and actively work on advancing evidence-based practices to meet the mental health needs of children with Autism.

As well, this year we embarked on a new partnership with Carleton University's research team to deliver Secret Agent Society (SAS). SAS is a 10-week structured facilitated and digitally enhanced group for children with Autism. The skills learned in the group help children improve their emotional regulation, emotion recognition, social problem solving and social skills through computer assisted interactive games.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre is located on unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation. We extend our respect to all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples for their valuable past and present contributions to this land and we commit to reconciliation efforts.

ANTI-RACISM STATEMENT

At Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre (CCMHC) we oppose racism and oppression in all its forms, which have long impacted Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities in Canada. We are committed to providing a safe space for families in Ottawa of all backgrounds, where they can receive the support they need without fear of judgement.



We recognize the impact of racism and oppression on the mental health of children and their families, and the complex feelings/thinking- such as hurt, frustration and vulnerability- voiced by BIPOC communities. CCMHC takes seriously its role as an ally organization and recognizes that statements of support must be accompanied by change and action. We therefore commit to:

- Enhance our professional partnerships with BIPOC communities in Ottawa
- Advocate as allies for all those experiencing institutional and structural racism and social inequalities.
- Explore and improve our agency's policies and procedures to protect against the impact of institutional and systemic racism.
- Provide all CCMHC employees with resources to increase their awareness of racist beliefs, racial bias and oppression; naming and calling out prejudice wherever we see it.

We are also acutely aware of the intergenerational trauma and emotional burden caused by social inequality and oppression experienced by many of our BIPOC clients and families. We commit to explicitly acknowledge and deepen our understanding of this hurt and provide services and support that are empathic and inclusive.



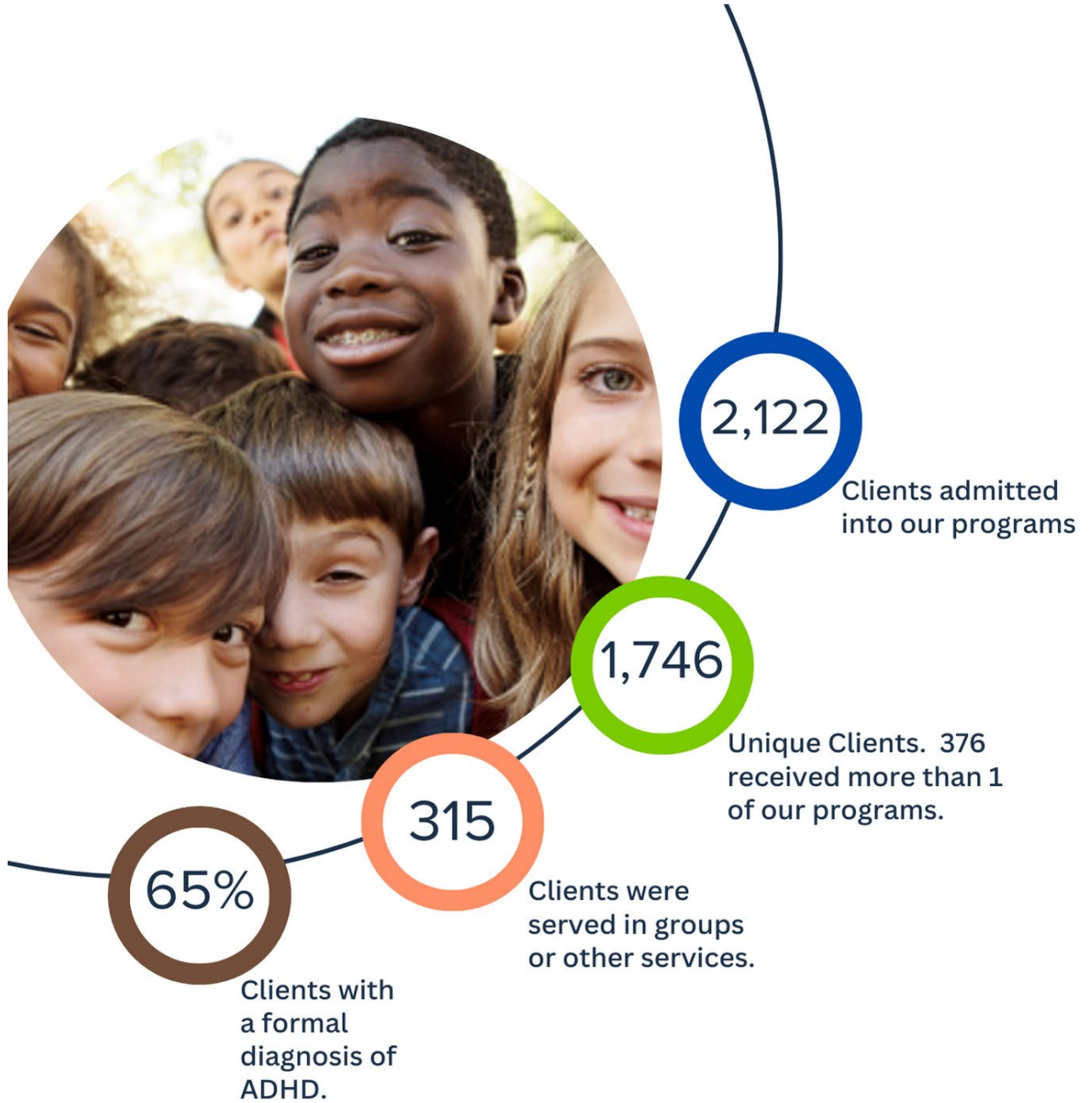
CCMHC is committed to building an inclusive space where 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, friends, and allies can feel safe and supported.

CCMHC



OUR IMPACT

Help for children. Hope for Families.



OUR IMPACT



Help for Children. Hope for Families.

KIDS
do well
If they
CAN



Reduction in Family Stress.



Reduction in social functioning issues.



of clients said their time with us was very helpful.



Reduction in sleep issues.



Adjustment to trauma

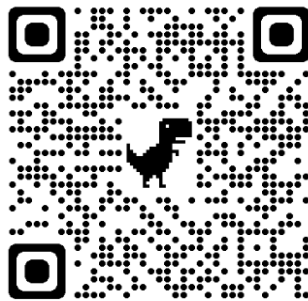


of parents said that overall, things are better as a result of our help.



2023 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Please visit our website, crossroadschildren.ca, for [CCMHC's 2023 Audited Financial Statements](#).



Follow Us



Help for children. Hope for Families.

1755 Courtwood Crescent, Ottawa, ON K2C 3J2
(ph): 613-723-1623 (fax): 613-723-7393
info@crossroadschildren.ca
crossroadschildren.ca

