



CROSSROADS

Children's Mental
Health Centre

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

crossroadschildren.ca 



MISSION STATEMENT

Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre works exclusively with children 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.

VISION

Crossroad's vision is of a community where every child 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.

VALUES

- **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.
- **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.



BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This year I stepped into the role of President, having joined the Board in 2021. I am grateful for the opportunity to be of service on the Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre (CCMHC) Board of Directors. I work alongside inspiring and accomplished individuals who share a deep dedication to the children and families in Ottawa.

Throughout the year, the Board has worked effectively with the capable leadership team of Michael Hone and Julie Giachino to support the CCMHC's mission. Dean Guo continues to provide effective financial stewardship. The Board values the expertise of the senior leadership team.

While virtual meetings remain the standard format, the Board began the year in-person with the Annual General Meeting. For many, it was the first opportunity to tour the CCMHC facility and meet staff (and Jillie!) in person. The monthly Board meetings focus on the issues of governance of the CCMHC and often include presentations from staff on specific programs and partnerships. These presentations are an engaging way of connecting the Board's

governance role to the CCMHC's operations.

The Board is proud of the having served 1578 clients and 35 campers through a variety of services. Each year, new clients seek out CCMHC's services which reflects the ongoing needs of our community.

Looking ahead, CCMHC is focused on continued research and collaboration, forging new partnerships to better meet the needs of children and families. We are particularly proud of the new partnerships to deliver integrated therapeutic services to children and families affected by gender-based violence (GBV) and supports for young pregnant and parenting mothers and their children. We reaffirm the goal of ensuring that every child under 12 receives the care they need, no matter how complex their mental health challenges may be.

The Board of Directors would like to thank all employees at CCMHC for their dedication to providing outstanding care and support to children, youth, and families. You are shaping a compassionate system, one that promotes resilience and well-being throughout life.

I am excited for this next year and look forward to CCMHC's continued growth and success.

Ash Deathe



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our esteemed board members for their invaluable time, unwavering support and guidance. Their wisdom and commitment to our mission have been instrumental in our progress.

Ash Deathe, President

Lawyer,
Sole Practitioner

Dr. Petra Duschner, Vice President

Manager, Mental Health & Critical Services,
OCDSB, Retired

Bill Strutt, Treasurer

Director, Corporate Accounting
Nutrition International

Lindsey Ehman, Secretary

Communications Professional,
Self-employed

Eileen McNamara

Practice Leader, Occupational Therapist
Ottawa Hospital

Robert Cleroux

Sergeant,
Ottawa Police Service

Joanne Baldassi

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

Caroline Sauvé

Nurse Practitioner, Eastern Ottawa Community
Family Health Team

Krista Durie

Project Manager,
Minto Properties





MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

At CCMHC, our commitment to the mental health and well-being of children and youth in Ottawa has never been more critical.

Although the pandemic is now in the past, its long-term impacts continue to shape the needs of the children and families we serve. The challenges are increasingly complex, and our response has had to evolve accordingly.

Over the past year, we have remained focused on strengthening and expanding our services to meet this growing demand. Our clinical and community-based programs reached more children than ever before. Wait-times for Intensive Home-Based Services were significantly reduced thanks to targeted program enhancements and new approaches to service delivery. These changes are already having a meaningful impact on the families who rely on us.

We are especially proud of the continued development of our Day Treatment program. The additional classrooms launched last year were not only sustained but expanded, allowing us to offer therapeutic, structured support to a larger number of children with complex emotional and behavioral needs.

Our Jiu Jitsu initiative remains a unique and impactful element of our services, offering a movement-based therapy that fosters resilience, confidence, and social connection.

Single session services also saw tremendous engagement this year, with many children accessing support. This high level of uptake reflects both the need in the community and

the trust placed in CCMHC. We also integrated One Stop Talk into our service offerings, adding a flexible and accessible point of care that we will continue to build on in the year ahead.

In 2025, we were proud to launch a new Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Program, an important addition to our service continuum. This program offers specialized support for children and youth who have been impacted by gender-based violence, providing trauma-informed care in a safe and affirming environment. Developed in collaboration with community partners, the GBV Program reflects our continued effort to respond to emerging needs with compassion, clinical excellence, and equity at the forefront.

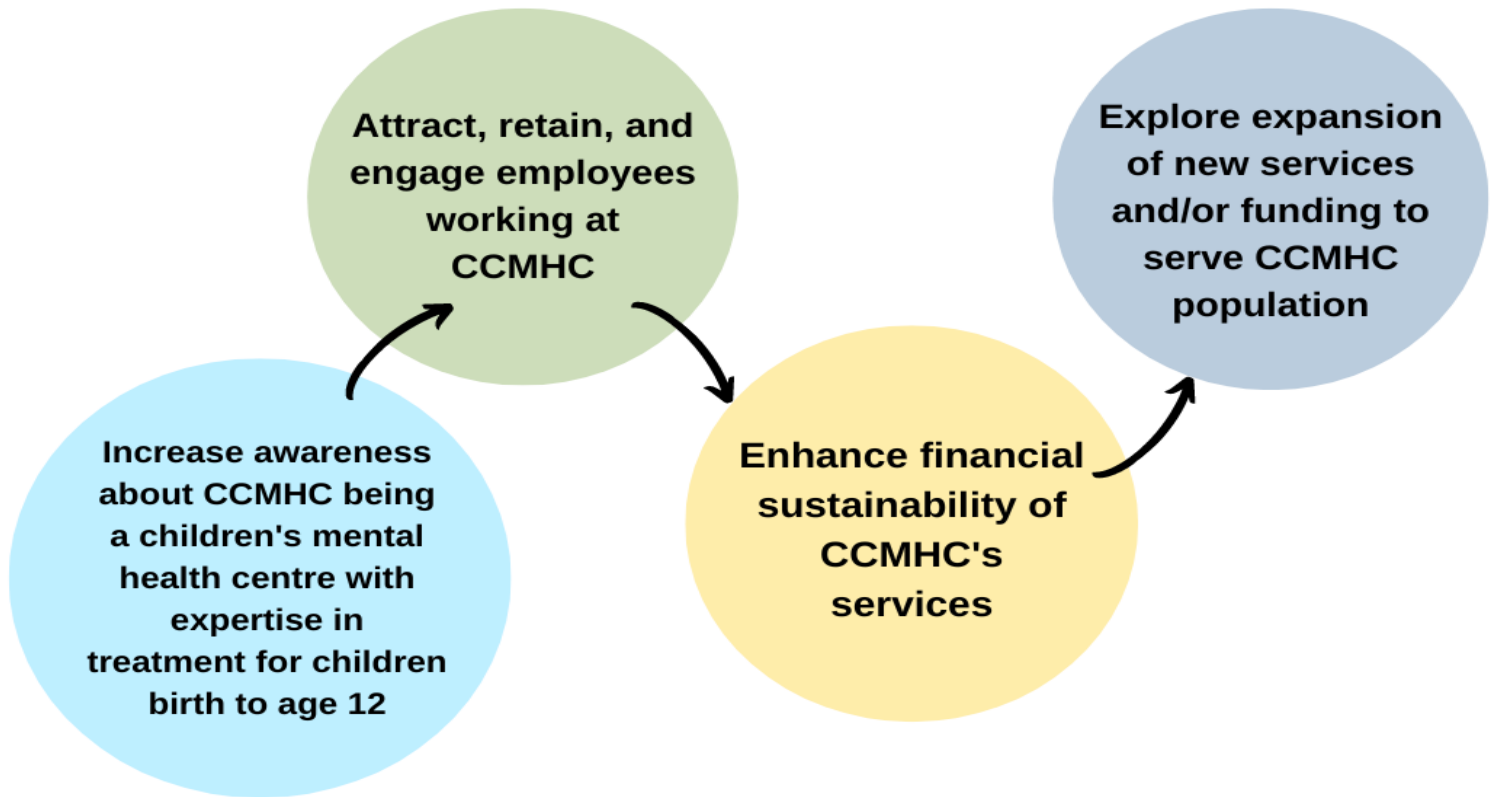
Our efforts this year were guided not only by service demands but by a deeper organizational commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are working toward a future in which every child in Ottawa regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or ability feels recognized, respected, and supported. This commitment informs our program development, influences our policies, and defines our culture.

As we look to the future, we are focused on expanding our reach, refining our practices, and strengthening partnerships across the sector. Thank you for being an essential part of this work.

With gratitude,
Michael Hone
Julie Giachino



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES





Intensive Program

The Intensive Services Program at Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre provides individualized, trauma-informed care to children from birth to 12 years old who present with complex emotional, behavioral, psychological, and social needs. Services are delivered directly in the home, allowing for consistent, hands-on support within the child's everyday environment. This year, CCMHC continued to provide multiple flexible streams of care based on family needs and intensity of support required.



Intensive Services

These services are offered over a 16-week period, with a minimum of two in-home visits per week totaling four or more hours. Clinicians work closely with families to build the child's skills, strengthen caregiver-

child relationships, and reduce challenges in the home, school, and community. Case management is integrated into this service, ensuring families are connected with appropriate community support.

Wraparound The Wraparound stream supported families with complex needs across multiple life domains (mental health, housing, immigration, education, etc.). Over a 6-month period, staff facilitated team-based planning, drawing on natural and professional support identified by the family. Regular meetings, home visits, and collaborative problem-solving helped families build a vision for their future, supported by actionable steps and sustained community connections.

Infant and Early Mental Health Services (Birth–6 years)

Families with young children received 8 to 12 weeks of in-home support, focusing on secure attachment and emotional development. Using the Circle of Security framework, staff worked with caregivers to increase their understanding of their child's cues, strengthen communication, and build confidence in responding to emotional needs. This program also supported caregiver reflection on parenting style and strengths.

This 12-week program offers weekly home visits (1.5 to 2 hours) that focus on improving

Children's Mental Health

Services (Ages 6–12) This 12-week program offers weekly home visits (1.5 to 2 hours) that focus on improving emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and relationship-building between children and caregivers. The approach is rooted in Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) and includes psychoeducation, modeling, and skill-

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, we were joined by Sarena Bacon, Extensive Needs (ENS) Social Worker from CHEO to further incorporate partners from the Neurodevelopmental Health Sector. Sarena and Isabelle (CCMHC Supervisor) co-facilitated with continued mentoring from Dr. Weiss, a leading autism and mental health expert in Canada. Through the support of our lead agency, the Community of

building tailored to the family's specific needs.

Throughout all Intensive Service streams, our team focused on meeting families with empathy, flexibility, and cultural sensitivity. By grounding our work in collaboration and relationship, we continue to support families in building safety, resilience, and hope.

Practice has grown to full capacity and has led practitioners to increase their skills in working with children with



autism and mental health challenges. The next year will look at further exploration of specialized topics.



Circle of Security Community of Practice

This year we launched our internal Circle of Security Community of Practice. As we are offering attachment training to our teams across programs, the COP allows us to increase mastery of attachment theory and intervention for CCMHC staff. Over the past year, we have been able to explore and increase understanding of different Circle of Security concepts through case studies and didactic presentation in our COP.

New Partnerships – One Stop Talk, Growing Up Safe and Youville

One Stop Talk

We have partnered with other agencies in Ontario to join One Stop Talk. One Stop Talk is a free, virtual, confidential service that let's children and youth under the age of 18 call or connect online from anywhere in Ontario to get brief mental health services. Four of Child and Family Therapists have joined the One Stop Talk team and are offering brief services. This partnership allows agencies to pull resources together to provide and accessible, culturally informed virtual sessions.

We continue to support families with in-person single sessions through our **Child & Family Clinic**. The Child and Family clinic provides free, timely access to single-session counselling for families seeking help for their infant, toddler, or child's social, emotional and/or behavioral challenges. Our clinic now focuses on supporting families requiring in person sessions, caregiver focused sessions and/or with additional support requirements. Families can now book sessions directly on the Crossroads website.

Growing Up Safe - A Gender Based Violence Shelter Partnership

Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre (CCMHC) is leading an innovative, trauma-informed initiative that delivers integrated therapeutic services to children and families affected by gender-based violence (GBV) our *Growing Up Safe* program. By combining evidence-based models—Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Circle of Security (COS), and Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS)—the program promotes trauma recovery, emotional regulation, and strengthened caregiver-child bonds. Delivered in partnership with local GBV shelters, the program extends support from crisis through to stable housing, ensuring continuity of care. Through joint training and cross-sector collaboration, CCMHC and its shelter partners are building a coordinated, community-wide response to GBV that enhances both immediate safety and long-term healing for vulnerable families. We are delighted to be partnering with Interval House, Maison d'Amitié, Nelson House and Harmony House. Two of our Child

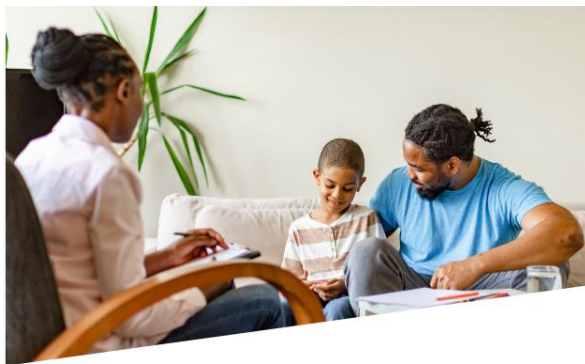
and Family Therapists and two of our Child and Youth Workers are providing on site treatment at shelter sites.

Youville Partnership

This year we established a partnership with Youville Centre, to remove barriers and support pregnant and parenting mothers ages 13-25 and their children. We provide weekly on-site single sessions by a Child and Family Therapist who can also work directly with mom and child in the moment as Youville offers on-site licensed daycare. Families who require more support in their home environment can then be referred directly to our Intensive Services by the CFT, using a trauma-informed approach so that clients do not have to re-share their stories with multiple service providers.

THERAPY SERVICES

Child and Family Therapy



Our team of social workers and psychotherapists offered individual and group child and family therapy services to almost 300 families this year.

This year we focused on enhancing our clinical skills with the Infant and Early Mental Health population. With a strong foundation in Circle of Security (attachment theory), 6 members of the clinical started the Circle of Security-Intensive pathway. This two-year pathway will allow Child and Family Therapist to incorporate their clinical acumen with specific intensive

interventions for caregivers and their young children and set up families for positive attachment patterns over their lifetime.

We continued our practice of Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy as we enhance our trauma informed approaches. We have also continued to integrate Emotion Focused Therapy, especially in regard to working with caregivers and/or children with eating disorders. Other areas of focus for the clinical team include training around families experiencing high conflict divorce, complex trauma, suicidal ideation and self-harm. As always, Collaborative Problem Solving is an

anchor in all our mental health treatment and continues to be an

School Based Mental Health (SBMH)

The SBMH team provided on-site support to 18 schools in both the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and Ottawa Catholic School Board throughout the 2024-2025 school year. In total we supported 157 students. With a focus on developing skills to better meet the needs of our clients through trainings in Circle of Security Classroom Facilitator, complex trauma, and Autism, the team was able to increase collaboration with school staff and community partners.

We integrated a more culturally diverse approach to services through offering the Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire in families' native languages and used the CoS training



and CCMHC's internal CoS community of practice to develop skills in working with young children as well as engaging school staff in treatment. Program goals were centered around increasing our ability to work more effectively with schools including engaging in Collaborative Problem Solving with colleagues and building effective debriefing skills and using a trauma-informed lens with students emphasizing choice, empowerment, and collaboration.

Facility Support Dog

A poster for Jillie, the Facility Support Dog. It features a circular photo of a black dog named Jillie wearing a red fuzzy collar. The text on the poster is as follows:

Jillie reduces anxiety and provides comfort

Contact us if you feel your child would benefit from having Jillie attend their session.

JILLIE
Our Facility Support Dog

BY PHONE
613-723-1623

BY EMAIL
info@crossroadschildren.ca

crossroadschildren.ca

Jillie, our Facility Support Dog, joined the team in late 2021. She continues to be one of the favourite staff members amongst visitors. 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 taking on the role of trainer, handler, and human mom. Jillie works in the Day Treatment program, 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.

Camp

Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre offered a therapeutic day camp to children ages 6-12 who experience behavioural, social, emotional, and mental health challenges. Camp is a highlight for our staff to be able to welcome new faces to our building and we have worked hard to create a space that allows us to effectively support a variety of needs, activities, guests, and also allows our campers to have a lot of fun.



This year we incorporated Therapeutic Jiu Jitsu into our camp curriculum, facilitated by one of our Child and Family Therapists who has 20 years of jiu jitsu experience. Campers were able to practice skills relating to defending themselves while they are standing and when they are on the ground. The kids were also provided with leadership opportunities as they volunteered to

help with jiu jitsu demonstrations in front of the class and contributed their ideas for how we could collaborate to play games together while expending energy in a regulatory manner.

We continued our long-standing partnership with Luv2Groove, who are skilled at engaging children in physical activity incorporating teamwork and body awareness. Additionally, Zoo Crew showcased their You-Nique program to our camp, which provided campers a chance to engage with a variety of animals and learn about empowerment, belonging and connecting by highlighting each animal's unique adaptation and how it makes them so special. Messages focused on how all the animals (and kids!) benefit from each other's unique characteristics to overcome challenges and problem-solve together.

In total, we welcomed 35 campers from our CCMHC programs, the Children's Aid Society, as well as the OCSB and OCDSB. In our second year partnering with Mazzola catering, we were able to provide hot, nutritious meals to campers and staff to ensure that everyone had full tummies and a lot of energy.

The Crossroads summer camp is a unique opportunity for the children that we work with, as many of the children do not get the chance to experience

summer camp. By incorporating Zones of Regulation with morning check ins, brain stem calmers between activities, and offering safe spaces to regulate, Crossroads summer camp is place where all children are welcome. We are also fortunate to be able to walk to the park and pool almost every day, which all the campers enjoy.

Infant and Early Mental Health (IEMH)

This year through the Provincial Training Initiative, the clinical team was able to take part in the Circle of Security Intensive Assessment training, teaching our therapists how to review and interpret the Strange Situation Procedure (SSP) and the Circle of Security Interview and develop skills in

Headstart:

We embarked on a pilot expansion project of our established Headstart program this year. While we remained connected to Headstart through the Somerset West Community Health Care Centre at their two locations of Nanny Goat Hill Nursery School and Queensway Preschool, we added Pinecrest-Queensway Headstart Child Care Centre and Annavale Headstart Nursery School as two additional locations. The role of the CCMHC HS worker shifted from doing in-home support work with a limited number of

assessing caregiver-child dyads, as well as addressing barriers to secure attachment with caregivers.



Infant mental health refers to how well a child develops socially & emotionally from birth to age 3.

We continue to benefit from the May Court grant which allowed us to provide subsequent COS training to all staff, such as the "Bigger, Stronger, Wiser, Kind" and "Shark Music and Core Sensitives" growth courses, as well as the Classroom Facilitator course.

families, to taking on a more family engagement approach. With this approach, we've been able to fully focus on relationship building with families and removing barriers to supports. A designated Intensive Service worker was assigned to Headstart families which allowed the HS worker to focus on creating a foundation of trust, and then smoothly transition to in-home supports where families could access treatment within the Intensive Service stream most

appropriate for their needs (e.g. case management, IECMH, Intensive +).

Day Treatment

The Day Treatment program is dynamic and energetic program that serves 64 latency-aged kids. The program works in partnership with the M.F. McHugh Education Centre, providing a combination of education and treatment for children whose mental health needs create barriers to their success in traditional school settings.

In September 2023, the Day Treatment program experienced a significant shift in its landscape. The program moved to a new, bigger, location, expanded the number of classrooms, reduced the number of kids in each classroom to improve the client to staff ratio, and designated a receptionist at the new location to support with everyday tasks necessary to help the program running smoothly. The commitment to a safe, therapeutic and trauma-informed environment remained steadfast and unwavering. The Day Treatment program continued to run Zones of Regulation groups, play-based groups, therapeutic groups, and provide discharge transition support. A Child and Family Therapist was also onsite to provide therapy and risk assessments. A beloved part of the program, Jillie—our emotional support dog—made weekly visits to the unit, bringing comfort and joy to staff and children alike.



Meanwhile, the Breakfast Club, supported in part by generous weekly donations from COBS Bakery in Westboro, ensured no child started the day hungry. The addition of the Day Treatment Consultation (DTC) Team provided clients with the unique opportunity to access more easily complementary supports from CHEO Psychiatry, OT, and Social Work as well as waitlist and discharge supports.

The program also maintained its commitment to professional development on Wednesday afternoons, ensuring that Crossroads' values and approach remained central to its treatment practices. Staff engaged in ongoing coaching to strengthen their skills in Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS), while also deepening their understanding of attachment through the Circle of Security framework. Focused case reviews invited other members of the multi-disciplinary team to share fresh perspectives and viewpoints fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility for the treatment that is provided in the program.



As the program successfully concluded its second year under this new model, we remain devoted to continuing to improve and streamline the system of

care for the children and families who access the Day Treatment program.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Ashlee Pallotta

Canada Helps

Ash Deathe

Rob Thorton

Andras Birkus

William Strutt

James Clarkin

Cobbs Bakery

Richard Dancer

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Lynn Laham

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Natasha McBrearty

Our sincere gratitude to our donors for their meaningful contributions and support. Their generosity means so much to us and the clients and families we serve.



Thank You

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 Color (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 acknowledging and deepening our understanding of this hurt and providing services and support that are empathic and inclusive.

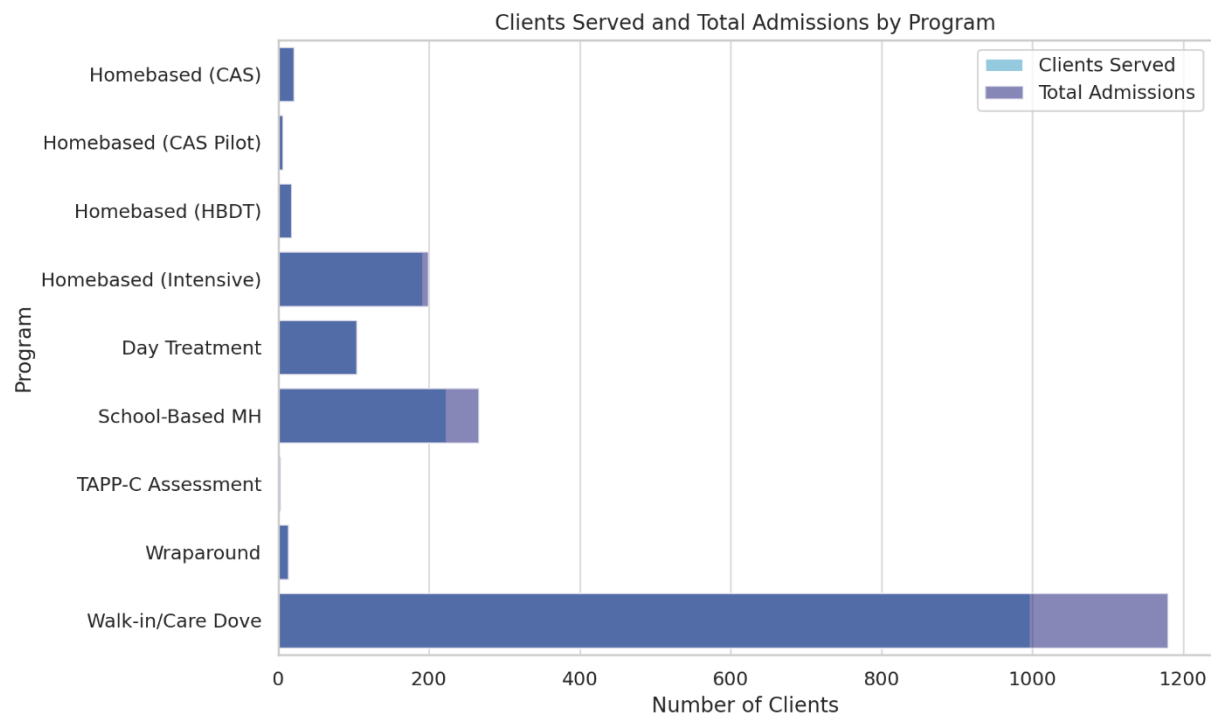


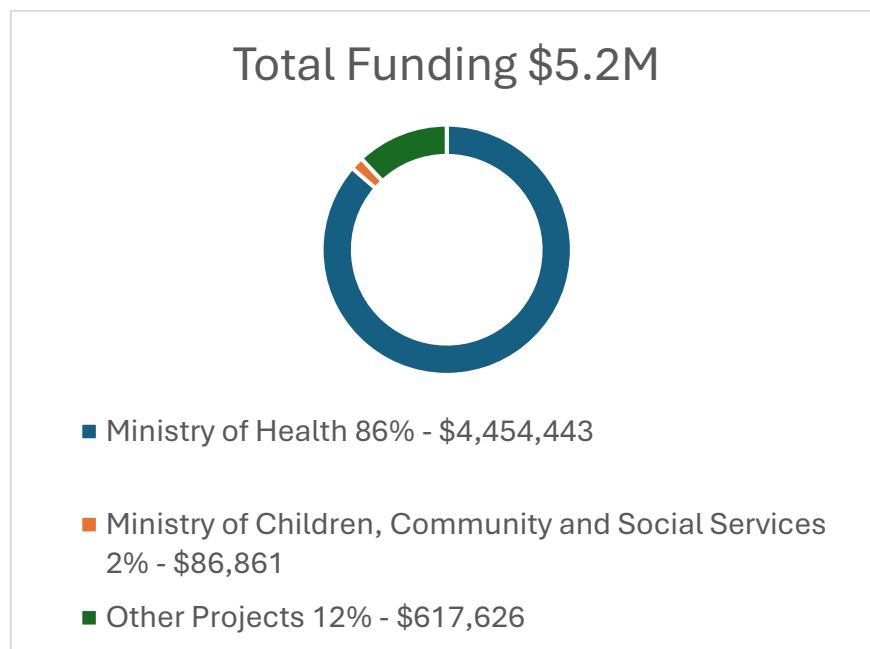
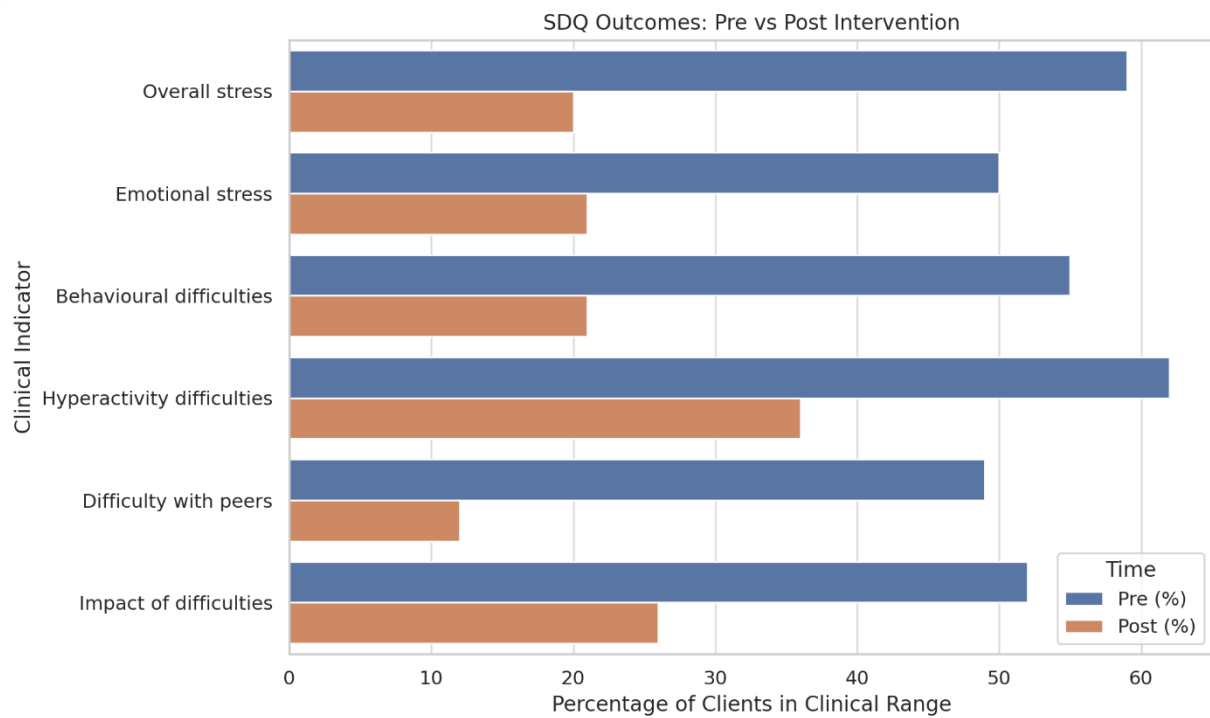
CCMHC is committed to building an inclusive space where 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, friends, and allies can feel safe and supported.



STATISTICAL INFORMATION

(see program evaluation for more information at www.crossroadschildren.ca)





Total Expenses \$5.1M



- Salary & Benefits 83% - \$4,218,082
- Building 3% - \$145,454
- Professional Services 6% - \$328,014
- IT 4% - \$202,982
- Operating 2% - \$85,746
- Mileage/Travel 1% - \$41,878
- Training 1% - \$52,096

Please visit our website, crossroadschildren.ca, click link to access the [Audited Statements](#)

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Help for Children. Hope for Families.