

Children's  
Ability Fund



— elle —

→ Children's Ability Fund ←

# 2015 to 16

annual report

[www.childrenabilityfund.ca](http://www.childrenabilityfund.ca)

— oo —

# executive director ←

Dear Friends,

Next year we will celebrate our 70th anniversary. As one of Alberta's oldest and longest serving charities we have experienced many changes.

Last year the Children's Ability Fund decided to refocus our energies. We concluded that we couldn't be all things to all people (with disabilities) and chose to go back to our roots - providing equipment for children and young adults in need. While mobility is, and continues to be a top priority with more than 90% of requests in that area, we continue to look at other funding opportunities to assist with the ability to be more independent at home, at school, at work and at play.

And we are making a difference as is evident through feedback we receive from our clients . . .

- Nikki and her new assistive hearing device – *It has helped to improve my quality of life and academic success remarkable.*
- *It has helped me in so many ways* – David on his new tilt system for his wheelchair
- Noel's Mom on her new stroller – *The stroller doesn't just enrich Noel's life but the whole families. Since we picked it up our life has been brighter. Thank-you to The Children's Ability Fund for making this dream come true!*
- Teagan's family on their new accessible vehicle – *I am forever grateful to all the people who helped raise the money for this van it has made life so much easier on our family.*
- Edie's Mom and Dad – *Thank you so much Children's Ability Fund for making this possible!*

Even though the year has been a challenge with the sluggish economy, record unemployment and the devastating fire in Fort McMurray, Albertans continue to amaze us by coming through with their donations.

We are proud to be a part of Alberta...helping those most in need. Together, we truly can be . . .

## #AlbertaStrong

Yours in community service,

**CAROL RUSS**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# client care

## our vision ...

equal participation in our society of all persons with disabilities

## our mission ...

to provide funding (for equipment) to enhance the independence of children and young adults with disabilities – throughout northern Alberta

2015-16

## board of directors

Linnie Tse, Chair

Brian Alguire, Treasurer

Wayne Evenson

Neera Garga

Ken Gulevich

Boyd Leader

Robroy (Bob) McGregor, Past Chair

Mary Sutherland, Secretary

Lin Zurawell

## staff

**Carol Russ**

Executive Director

**Marilyn Melnychuk**

Client Care Coordinator

## CLIENT CARE

### EQUIPMENT

Mobility

Communication

Technology

### PROGRAMS

Bikes for Tykes

Vehicle Adaptations

Snoezelen Rooms

Sledges in School

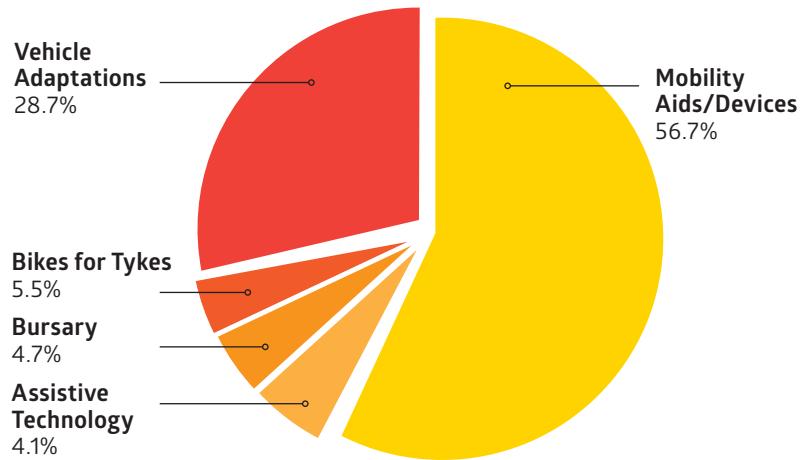
### BURSARY

# client care



More than 90% of the equipment/grants we provide are related to mobility, or the ability to be more active in the community . . . at home, at school, at work or at play.

Mobility aids include a variety of items such as wheelchairs, walkers, strollers, vehicle lifts, stair lifts, overhead lifts, tilt systems, and standing frames. They also include adapted vehicles and adapted bicycles. Almost 57% of donations were provided to individuals within Edmonton and the other 43% went to others throughout northern Alberta.



*Thank you ever so much for funds that you provided for the tilt on my wheel chair. It has helped me in so many ways - now I am able to get outside with my family and to be with the animals and go around the yard. Before I had the tilt, I was only able to be outside for half an hour and then I was tired. Now it's mostly all day and I am also able to travel for a longer period of time in the van. It has helped me in so many ways.*

*David's family*

*I'm so grateful to have received my digital Roger Pen. It has helped me to hear speech and high pitched sounds more clearly. The Roger Pen is easily portable and clips onto the speaker's shirt like a pen. It brings the voice directly to both of my ears. Although I have profound hearing loss, I find that with my Cochlear Implant and Roger Pen, I can hear 95-99% of what my professors say. I have completed my first year of University and I am starting my second year this fall. Children's Ability Fund . . . has helped to improve my quality of life and academic success remarkably. Thank you.*

*Nikki*



# client care



Mobility is very important to all of us. Children who cannot walk on their own need opportunities to move, even if assisted by other people or equipment, to maximize their cognitive and social development. They are naturally curious and want to explore their environment.

Strollers are often used before a child is big enough for a wheelchair or in addition to a wheelchair. Adaptive strollers tend to fit in places where wheelchairs may not, such as narrow doorways and hallways. Strollers also offer a lighter and more portable alternative to wheelchairs, and are often preferred by families because they can be loaded and unloaded from vehicles with ease.



**Keyaan** is a 5 year old boy who has a diagnosis of Dravet syndrome. He is a bright and happy boy who lives with his mother but experiences multiple seizures as part of this syndrome.

His new stroller relieves some of the daily challenges around mobility experienced by Keyaan and his mother. This stroller will be used extensively to go on community outings and used on a daily basis to take him back and forth to school ... allowing Keyaan to conserve his energy for learning at school and playtime at recess with his peers.

The stroller is light weight and folds easily making it easy for Mom to handle. It also provides a safe place to administer post seizure care if needed. When Keyaan experiences seizures that render him unconscious, the stroller allows safe transportation home in this unconscious state.

Mom writes . . . *I really appreciate this stroller more than you may know. He has had many seizures while we were out and I needed to care for him in the stroller with rescue meds. My nurse also really appreciates it.*

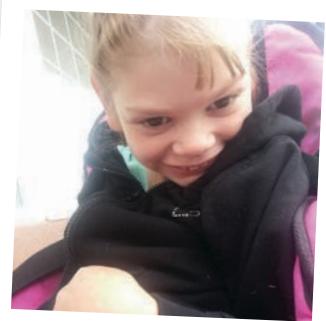
In the past 2 years **Noel** has sadly slowly out grown our old stroller that we invested in once we knew Noel had long-term mobility issues. This was our go to equipment for long outings like shopping, going to the Zoo and Emergency room visits.

After a lot of debate, we decided on a new model and we were blessed when The **Children's Ability Fund** and The Cerebral Palsy Association of Alberta funded the stroller.

The stroller wasn't even an hour old before I put it to the test. That night we got to do something as a family that we avoid doing . . . going for a family walk. Her wheelchair is great but has issues with things like curbs and her other equipment she has out grown so much that it's dangerous trying to go over a curb.

Noel loved the stroller so much that she spent a good portion of Saturday sitting in it and watching cartoons. The only thing that got her out of it was when her respite worker came to play!

The stroller doesn't just enrich Noel's life but the whole family's. Since we picked it up our life has been brighter. Thank-you to The **Children's Ability Fund** for making this dream come true!



*It takes a village to raise a child and the **Children's Ability Fund** is very pleased to be as part of a village of caring organizations dedicated to providing equipment for children with disabilities.*

# special programs



## VEHICLE ADAPTATION PROGRAM

Accessible affordable transportation for families of children with disabilities continues to be an ongoing challenge. Established in 2008 the Vehicle Adaptation program offers a grant of up to \$5,000 towards the cost of an accessible vehicle or vehicle modification.



**Jessie** has a diagnosis of Rett syndrome. Rett syndrome is a rare genetic neurological and developmental disorder that affects the way the brain develops, causing a progressive inability to use muscles

for eye and body movements and speech. It occurs almost exclusively in girls. Jessie is not able to stand or walk independently and is not able to transfer herself from her wheelchair to a car seat. It was becoming very difficult for her parents to lift her into the vehicle.

The **Children's Ability Fund** was able to contribute toward the cost of this power seat lifter for Jessie and her family.

*"We are able to travel more places because the transfer in and out of the vehicle is now painless and much easier than having to use physical strength. Thank you very, very much! We are very, very happy!"*

*Jessie's mom*



*I would like to say a huge Thank You to the **Children's Ability Fund** for helping to fund a portion of the Wheelchair Van for my daughter. **Teagan**'s van arrived and it is perfect! We love it!*

*Teagan will now be able to get out and participate in a lot more activities now! She sits behind Mom in the second row of the van and can see right out the front windshield which she has never been able to do. She also loves the ride up the ramp. :)*

*Transporting Teagan is much safer now and this helps ease tensions. Prior to getting this van I was transporting Teagan in my SUV. I would have to carry her out to the vehicle and then lift the wheelchair into the back hatch of the SUV.*

*Teagan often has up to three appointments a week and then school on top of that so my back and neck were getting very sore. I am forever grateful to all the people who helped raise the money for this van it has made life so much easier on our family.*

## BIKES FOR TYKES PROGRAM

The **Bikes for Tykes** program was introduced to provide funding for the adaptation of a bicycle for the individual needs of a child with a disability.



Bikes provide an independent mode of transportation that helps build self esteem and gives a sense of freedom. Special adaptations to a bicycle can help a child with disabilities "delight in being a child".



## *special programs*

# BURSARY

The **Children's Ability Fund** Bursaries are awarded annually in amounts up to \$5,000 at the discretion of the Board of Directors and may be allocated to more than one individual. The selection committee bases its decision on personal accomplishments, community involvement and financial need. The following awards may be granted each year:

- Kuder Bursary Award \$ 2,000
  - Ian & Anne Patterson Bursary Award \$ 1,000
  - Dr. G.A. Rice Bursary Award \$ 1,000
  - **billy ability** Bursary Award \$ 1,000

*The 2015–16 Bursaries were awarded to the following students:*



# Hidde Geurts

## Red Deer County

Hidde has Mosaic Down Syndrome. He is interested in science, math and history and is attending Red Deer College with the goal of achieving a Bachelor of Applied Science degree.

Hidde had his first swimming lesson at the age of 5 and progressed through all 10 levels of the Red Cross' children's program. He joined the Special Olympics Swim Club in Red Deer at the age of 16. Hidde is currently a para-swimmer with national status and has traveled in Germany, Mexico, Netherland, France, Italy, Austria and the UK.



Elena Kellis

Jasper

Elena was diagnosed at 13 years of age with Polyarticular Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis. It was her idea to start a junior high drama class and she continued to set the bar high for herself and her peers in the drama program.

She is following her dream of attending the Theatre program at the University of Victoria with her end goal to receive a Fine Arts Theatre degree.



Mathieu Lessard

## Morinville

Mathieu was diagnosed at the age of 12 with Ankylosing Spondylitis, a form of arthritis. In order to remain active and keep his body healthy, he chose to play on both the volleyball and basketball teams all through high school. He says, "Maintaining a positive attitude is important in battling my arthritis".

Mathieu is striving for a Bachelor of Science degree while attending MacEwan University.

# donations



For almost 70 years, people with disabilities have benefited from the generosity of donors to the Children's Ability Fund. Each year we receive gifts from a number of individuals, organizations, groups, corporations, and Foundations through many different means.

## ANNUAL SUPPORT

Individuals - who believe in what we do – contribute to the annual direct mail campaign or monthly giving program. All donations are directed to current equipment requests. Thank you to each and every one of you!

### We also receive donations from several of Alberta's organizations, foundation and groups:

Agricultural Society of Genesee  
Agricultural Society of MTM  
Benevolent Protective Order of Elks #167 - Hardisty  
Benevolent Protective Order of Elks #470 – Lac La Biche  
Catholic Women's League - Camrose  
Club Etoile D'age D'Or De Girouxville  
Hemital Moravian Sunday School  
Knights of Columbus St Joseph Assembly  
Ladies Auxiliary Royal Canadian Legion #183 – Bonnyville  
Ladies Auxiliary Royal Canadian Legion #57 - Camrose  
Linda Joyce Charitable Foundation  
Lions Club of Beaverlodge  
Lions Club of Edson  
Lions Club of Entwistle & District  
Lions Club of Spruce Grove  
Lions Club of St Albert (Host)  
Lions Club of St Paul  
Order of the Royal Purple #122 - Viking  
Order of the Royal Purple #22 - Edmonton  
Order of the Royal Purple #318 - Eaglesham  
Order of the Royal Purple #92 - Wainwright  
Richmond Park Hall Association - Athabasca  
Royal Canadian Legion #39 - Vegreville  
South-West Seniors Outreach Society  
The Provincial Chapter of Alberta, IODE - Irricana  
Ukrainian Women's Association - Two Hills  
Union 52 Benevolent Society  
Wildwood Ladies Aid  
Women of the Moose #1375 - Camrose

## PLANNED GIVING

Others make a donation through our planned giving program. A planned gift enables donors to make a long-term commitment and may include a donation in honor or in memory of a loved one, a bequest in a will or a gift of life insurance. Every year a percentage of all new bequests are added to our Endowment Fund for continued growth and continuity.

This year we are grateful to have received

- disbursements from the Ralph Buttner Memorial Fund and the Kuder Trust Fund (Bursary)
- bequests from the Estate(s) of Frieda Wagner and Marie Malysh
- donations In Memory of loved ones: Wes Herman, Lorne Kelndorfer, Christoph Linke, Ed Nerling, Ernest Papp, Shirley Walker and Terry Lynne Wooldridge



*We are all born with the ability  
to change someone's life.*

anonymous

# special events

## SHINING STARS



**Children's Ability Fund** Shining Stars help make things a little brighter for someone with a disability. They encourage friends, customers, students and colleagues to help give the gift of mobility and independence! Thank you all for your thoughtfulness and support!

- **CMDRA** - Canadian Motor Cycle Drag Racing Association
  - Silent Auction
- **Ken Gulevich** – Children's Ability Fund Demolition Car
- **Silent River Benevolent Foundation** – Chinese New Year Celebration
- **Silent River Kung Fu Studio** – Pandamonium
- **Vegreville Agriculture Society** - Father's Day Demolition Derby

## GO AUTO 18th ANNUAL BOWL FOR CHILDREN

On May 4th (may the force be with you), at Ed's Rec Room in West Edmonton Mall, 28 lanes full of enthusiastic participants and local celebrities helped raise money to support the **Children's Ability Fund**. In challenging times, Albertan's came together – yet again - to help raise over \$44,000 for the charity.

The support of our title sponsor, event sponsors, lane sponsors, prize donors, online auction bidders, celebrity team captains, volunteers and the participants—who go above and beyond to raise pledges for the charity—make it all happen.

Title sponsor, GO AUTO, leads the way for a fourth year. West Edmonton Mall and Ed's Rec Room are essential partners, donating the venue and organizing the food donation from Eberhardt Foods. Event sponsors; Ben Moss Jewellers and Double Diamond Electronics continue their long history of support.

## SHAW CHARITY CLASSIC: BIRDIES FOR KIDS



We were delighted to be a part of the Birdies for Kids Program. This unique program gives more than 100 ALBERTA children's and youth based charities a chance to help raise funds for their cause without ANY administrative or overhead costs. We received 100% of each donation that was made in the **Children's Ability Fund**'s name and then additional funds were donated through the matching program of the Shaw Charity Classic Foundation. We received a donation of \$5,990.



Lane sponsors: Angus Watt Advisory Group, Chandos Construction, Cougar Paint & Collision, Eco Medical, GO Kentwood Ford, KRP (Kingston Ross and Pasnak) LLP, Labatt Breweries, Melton Foundation, NAPO (Northern Alberta Prosthetic & Orthotic Services, Peterson Walker LLP, the Rig Shop, and Sorrell Financial help make it happen.

A very special thank you to a host of local media celebrities who so willingly gave of their time to captain the teams of bowling participants. Special thanks to our team of Microsoft volunteers.



**The Children's Ability Fund truly appreciates and wants to thank all our supporters, sponsors and volunteers!**

# volunteers



The **Children's Ability Fund** volunteers—including the Board of Directors—donated more than 765 hours of their precious time to help us out with several events and activities throughout the year.

We are pleased to recognize the following individuals for their achievement this year:

- **Gold star** – Brian Alguire, Rhoda Lupaschuk, Michelle Roy, Linnie Tse
- **Silver star** – Boyd Leader
- **Bronze star** – Patricia Gallien

**We couldn't do it without you!**



## GERRY HERMAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR 2016: MARY SUTHERLAND

Each year we recognize a special individual who has made a significant contribution to the Children's Ability Fund through their volunteerism and this year we are delighted to honor Mary Sutherland.

Mary is worth her weight in gold, sharing her time and talents at special events, as a Board Member and in the office.

We first met Mary when she applied to the Children's Ability Fund for funding for a computer for her daughter CJ. That was 22 years ago! Back then the Children's Ability Fund hosted a Christmas party for the children we had helped throughout the year. CJ and Mary volunteered to help out. CJ would don her elf hat and assist Santa by handing out the presents. Both Mary and CJ became our yearly Christmas volunteers until the final party in 2007.

Since then Mary has been a reliable volunteer we can count on, volunteering for events like the Casino when she is not traveling the world! Mary, along with her daughter CJ, are regular volunteers for Bowl for Children and have raised funds to 'pay it forward' and help us with our mission.

Currently, Mary sits on our board of directors (since 2013) and in the summer of 2015 she offered to volunteer in the



office to help with administrative duties, such as database entry and campaign mail outs. Mary is positive, energetic and full of ideas and suggestions and willing to take on any task asked of her. Wednesday is a merry day and has been now for almost a year!

With Mary's gift of herself, her warmth and her compassion – she has indeed made a difference.

The **Children's Ability Fund** is fortunate to have such a dedicated and outstanding volunteer and we are delighted to name Mary Sutherland the 2016 Gerry Herman Volunteer of the Year.

---

*The Gerry Herman Volunteer of the Year award is presented to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the Children's Ability Fund through volunteerism.*

# financial ←

**Children's Ability Fund**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As of June 30**

**ASSETS**

	2016	2015
Current Assets	350,270	104,834
Investments	3,535,514	3,628,798
	<b>3,885,784</b>	<b>3,733,632</b>

**LIABILITIES**

Current Liabilities	103,184	95,478
---------------------	---------	--------

**EQUITY**

Beckett Trust	2,262,900	2,301,686
Endowment Fund	1,141,128	1,198,118
Bursary Fund	82,900	82,900
General Fund	295,672	55,450
	<b>3,885,784</b>	<b>3,733,632</b>

**Children's Ability Fund**  
**Statement of Operations**  
**For the Year Ended June 30**

**REVENUE**

Estates & Legacies	209,698	20,233
Investments	184,532	114,849
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments	-110,537	-79,009
Fundraising Projects & Gaming	96,584	95,686
Donations & Grants	59,694	48,769
	<b>439,971</b>	<b>200,528</b>

**EXPENDITURES**

Administration	134,183	135,525
Programs & Public Awareness	33,013	32,443
Fundraising Projects	22,687	21,020
	<b>189,883</b>	<b>188,988</b>

**DONATIONS Client Care**

Individual Client Requests	100,642	157,175
Children's Ability Fund Bursary	5,000	5,000
	<b>105,642</b>	<b>162,175</b>

**Surplus (Deficit)**

	<b>144,446</b>	<b>-150,635</b>
--	----------------	-----------------

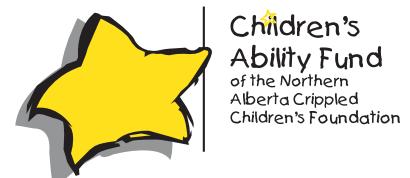
Audited Financial Statements have been prepared by independent external auditors Peterson Walker and are available for review.

**Clifford & Mabel Becket Trust Fund**

In 2000, the **Children's Ability Fund** received endowment proceeds from the Becket Trust. This has been placed in an internally restricted fund for future use.

**Endowment Fund**

In 1987, the Board of Directors established the Endowment Fund to ensure that resources would be in place to meet the growing demand to provide the necessary funding for people with disabilities. Each year a percentage of the fund is used to assist with the administration and overhead cost of the Children's Ability Fund ensuring that ALL donations received are used to purchase equipment to enhance the lives of people with disabilities.



ele

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to **Children's Ability Fund** together with its staff, donors and supporters. Through the grant that was given by **Children's Ability Fund** (and with the help of other charities), we were able to purchase an accessible van for our daughter, Edie.

Edie is a sweet little girl and she's getting bigger. Her condition affects her mobility so having an accessible van greatly helped our family in terms of transportation. It saves our backs from injury and pain from frequent lifting.

Edie loves to go to different places and we would love her to actively participate in the community which provides a sense of independence and belongingness. It's the second time that **Children's Ability Fund** helped us. The first time was providing the specialized stroller that she's using right now which gives her a good trunk and head support. The specialized stroller can also be used in the accessible van because it has tie downs.

Again, thank you so much **Children's Ability Fund** for making this possible!

Edie's Family



ele