



2018 Annual Report

As we enter our fifteenth year of operations, on behalf of the children and families we serve – Thank you! Thank you to our church families for your continued support and faith in our programs.

Highlights from 2018

Camp Great Strides – This was our third year offering full-day Summer and Christmas Camps. Located at Dunbarton-Fairport United Church in Pickering and St. Mark’s United Church in Whitby, the camps were very well attended. Between the two locations, all twenty days of Summer Camp ran on schedule. The children loved spending time with a few special visitors too, from our friends at WindReach Farm. The happy campers loved meeting cute cuddly animals and the memories will surely last a lifetime. FOOTPRINTS also utilized new temporary fencing in Pickering, specially designed for our summer program. We were able to safely expand outdoor space for the children to enjoy more summer activities. The Christmas Camp ran all six days as scheduled, without cancellation. In 2017, the Christmas Camp operated in Whitby. For 2018, the Christmas Camp took place in Pickering. The children had fun making Christmas crafts, singing songs, playing games, watching movies and more. Thank you to Unity for Autism for providing funding, allowing us to offer full-day camp programs to families.

Together We ‘Hang’ – Our after-school youth social program Together We ‘Hang’ first ran in 2015 and continued in 2018. From February until June, the program ran simultaneously at two locations. The Whitby Library sessions ran on Mondays from 4-6 pm. The Pickering Library sessions ran on Wednesdays from 4-6pm. After a summer hiatus, the Whitby Library sessions continued running Mondays from October until December. Thank you to the generosity of the Durham Community Foundation, the Town of Whitby and the individual donors for helping make this program possible for youth looking for an inclusive, fun, safe place to hang with friends.

There were some new and familiar faces on our senior staff in 2018. After six successful years as FOOTPRINTS’ Operations Manager, Julie Cashin-Oster moved on to a new adventure. Her family bought and now runs the Orono newspaper. Melissa Benevides has been dedicatedly involved with FOOTPRINTS for the past four years, and began training with Julie in September as the new Operations Manager. Program Consultant Michele Finney is currently on leave, after giving birth to her beautiful baby boy in November. In Pickering, Friday evening sessions were changed to Saturday afternoons. Program Consultant Nicole Santorufo is now overseeing both the morning and afternoon sessions in Pickering. Cheyenne Peddie and Matthew Reyad are sharing duties as the new Program Consultants in Whitby. Mathieu Galipeault, Ahmed Hafez and Peter Miller joined our Steering Committee. Be sure to say hello to all the friendly faces at FOOTPRINTS.

Challenges in 2018

Volunteer recruitment and retention is challenging for many agencies. It is true for FOOTPRINTS as well, and some of our children require extra support. In an effort to motivate and inspire volunteers to contribute more time to helping our families in need, we’re implementing a new Volunteer Recognition Program in 2019. We’ll encourage the volunteers’ feedback in the new program as well. Another challenge we faced was our growing waitlist for permanent respite care. The highest number of children waiting for a permanent respite spot was 12 in Pickering and 21 in Whitby. To help alleviate the numbers in 2019, in addition to the new volunteer incentives mentioned, respite care schedules will be adjusted to include only one bi-weekly spot per child, as there were some cases where a child had more than one spot. This small change will enable more children to move off of the waitlist and secure permanently scheduled respite care in 2019.

Fund Development

Fund development and fundraising is vital to FOOTPRINTS operations. In 2018, the Operations Managers continued to research and apply for funding opportunities. As a result, funds were generated from a range of sources and we are grateful for the generous donations. Dedicated donors in 2018 include: United Way Durham Region, Unity For Autism, Town of Whitby, Mackenzie Financial Charitable Foundation, Harry E. Foster Charitable Foundation, Durham Community Foundation, Catherine & Maxwell Meighen Foundation, Andrew Foundation, and more. We are so grateful for the kindness and generosity of the foundations and individual donors, who have made it possible for FOOTPRINTS to provide respite care programs to families in need.

2018 by the Numbers

- 49 children and their families received support from the program
- 2329.5 hours of direct respite care was provided in Pickering and Whitby
- 157 Child Support Volunteers provided 2865.5 hours of time to the program
- 40 new Child Support Volunteers were recruited and trained
- 11 Steering Committee volunteers gave over 442 hours of time to program operations and management

What are Families saying about FOOTPRINTS?

“A safe place for children with Autism to learn and grow with the same friends every week.”

“The break that we get is priceless. Sometimes it's the only time I get to myself all week.”

“The non judgemental environment and the ability for my children to be children without feeling alienated.”

“More time to relax knowing that my children are well supported.”

What are Volunteers saying about FOOTPRINTS?

“I have had many meaningful experiences with the children and I've made a friend or two with other volunteers. Volunteering here has made me a more understanding and compassionate person.”

“Footprints has been a great place to volunteer.”

“I have gained an opportunity to contribute to society in a way that is enjoyable while developing both personally and professionally.”

“It's a rewarding experience!”

2018 Steering Committee Members

- Chair, Corrine Brook-Allred
- Vice Chair, Bev Crane
- Treasurer, David Green
- HR/Fund Development Rep., Sandy MacKenzie
- Support Treasurer, Sandra Chase
- Secretary, Sandra Halls
- Support Treasurer, Lynn Ikeda
- HR, Matthew Cole
- Ahmed Hafez
- Bingo, Mathieu Galipeault
- Volunteer Recruitment, Peter Miller

2018 Consultants

- Operations Manager, Melissa Benevides
- Program Consultant Pickering, Nicole Santorufo
- Program Consultant Whitby, Cheyenne Peddie
- Program Consultant Whitby, Matthew Reyad
- Orientation Trainer, Cheyenne Peddie
- Program Consultant (On Leave), Michele Finney
- Orientation Trainer (On Leave), Michele Finney