



October 28, 2010

Autism Speaks Canada Announces over \$500,000 in Family Services Community Grants

The Board of Directors of Autism Speaks Canada is thrilled to announce its first round of Family Services Community Grants. Forty-two proposals from across Canada were received and addressed one of the four identified areas of need: education, recreation/community activities, equipment/supportive technology, or young adult/adult services. A total of 26 grants have been selected for funding in this inaugural year for the program open to organizations across Canada who deliver services and supports to individuals with autism, totalling \$550,150. The next round of request for applications for Canada will be announced in early 2011.

"Our gratitude goes out to our walk participants, donors and supporters from across the country and in particular the [KRG Children's Charitable Foundation](#) and the [Unity for Autism Foundation](#) who each made targeted gifts in 2009 to support the Canadian grant program," noted Marc Murnaghan, Chair of the Board of Autism Speaks Canada.

"The amount of funds that the Board has allocated to this program from its overall fund raised dollars speaks volumes to Autism Speaks Canada's commitment to supporting the extraordinary work that takes place across this country every day in the autism community," Jill Farber, Board Member who chaired the Grants Review Committee, stated. "There is certainly no lack of need for funding to build capacity of new and existing programs, support the underserved populations in remote communities and in particular those agencies that work with young adults and adult communities. We were overwhelmed at the quality and innovation of all of applicants."

"With the continued support of our generous donors and corporate partners, and the tireless work of our volunteers and walk supporters from current and new Toys'R'Us Walk Now for Autism Speaks Canada markets, the Canadian Family Services Community Grants program will be an annual funding initiative of Autism Speaks Canada and one that we hope to see grow more substantially in future years," noted Murnaghan.

YOUNG ADULT/ADULT SERVICES

Rady Jewish Community Centre

Winnipeg, MB

G.R.O.U.P – Gaining Opportunities and Understanding for Participants Vocational Training for Adults

The primary intent of this project is to provide young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) vocational opportunities in a supportive community environment. The multi-intent of the G.R.O.U.P. program is to develop a training manual to educate people in the workplace with respect to ways to integrate and ensure success for people with ASD; alongside of a training manual for the participants with ASD, and to practice vocational skills in a secure community workplace setting. Ultimately the program will provide opportunity and enable young adults with ASD gain independence, and self-determination and becoming more productive citizens, contributing to the fabric of the community.

\$23,800

Autism Calgary Association

Calgary, AB

Adult Support Program

This project will support the ongoing delivery of workshops for young adults and adults (aged 18-35) focusing on several areas of need including: transition to independent living, post-secondary planning, friendship and social skills, employment, and dating. They will incorporate peer modeling and curriculum collaboratively developed by individuals with ASD, families, and professionals. An instruction manual will also be made available to professionals such as doctors, educators, and therapists. The workshops will serve as a significant resource for the increasing population of young adults and adults on the autism spectrum who have limited financial resources and limited programs and services targeted to their areas of need.

\$25,000

Precious Minds Resources & Learning Centre

Sunderland, ON

Blaze Camp – Fitness Zone

With their Community Grant, Precious Minds' Blaze Camp serving those in the North Durham, Brock and Scugog areas, will build a Fitness Zone Area equipped with young adult-aged appropriate equipment (11 age group). With no current community fitness and wellness programs in this demographic area and the lack of resources for specialized fitness programs the need exists to support area youths' physical condition, physiological and social wellness and nutrition. In doing so, this initiative will enable youth with autism spectrum disorders to take greater control over their lives by coaching/modeling responsible exercise and nutrition patterns. Blaze Camp–Fitness Zone will be accessible for youth with ASD, their families, as well as a number of other community partners.

\$25,000

Autism Society of Edmonton Area

Edmonton, AB

Working Effectively with Adults with Autism

This innovative project, using the talent of the adult ASD community will build capacity among those who will be providing services to adults by educating them about autism in the adult years and providing hands-on training. The Autism Society Players, who are adults with an ASD will produce a training DVD designed to help a variety of audiences to understand how autism affects adults. The DVD will illustrate the strengths of and challenges facing adults with ASD as they go about their daily lives in the community. Other materials will be developed to complement the DVD presentation and to create a one-day workshop for those who work with adults with autism. As well, a shorter presentation will be developed for first responders.

\$24,305

RECREATION/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Children at Risk Ottawa, ON Typical Teens

The Typical Teens social group provides community-based social skills training for teens with ASD. Half of the group members are trained teen volunteers, who act as models of “typical “ teen behaviour, and create “typical” teen social milieu for the ASD teens to join. Skills are learned in “typical” teen social situation out in the community, so generalization to “real world” situations is built into the model. While the ASD teens have the opportunity to learn and practice new social skills, the peer volunteers are also learning how to be sensitive, tolerant and helpful to individuals with social differences. The funding from Autism Speaks Canada will expand the existing successful project based in the east end of Ottawa to the west end of the region.

\$11,588

Canadian Metis Heritage Corporation Melford, SK Cultivating Creative Children-ASD Social Groups

The CCC-ASD Social Group Program is a continuation and expansion of the previous CCC-ASD Social Group Program which assists the underserved children aged 5-19 affected by autism in three rural communities of northeastern Saskatchewan including, Nipawin, Melford, and Tisdale. It will focus on social skill training, including peer modeling, and recreational activities, including community excursions. The social groups will incorporate siblings and high school student volunteers to act as peer models. The initiative will also form a Parent Social Group, in each of the three communities, facilitating social interaction, group support, and information acquisition and sharing.

\$25,000

Kinark Outdoor Centre Minden, ON Family Camp Model Program

The Kinark Outdoor Centre presently facilitates a Family Respite for ASD-affected families model. The grant will help to develop a family camp model, which will expand respite program service opportunity for all families with a child with ASD no matter age, function level, or where they live. The KOC will develop and pilot the project in the summer of 2011, that will offer an affordable, less staff intensive model that can then be replicated in a variety of camp settings. The replication manual will be circulated to community partners, and will be presented at local camping conferences.

\$9,067

Ontario Track 3 Ski Association Etobicoke, ON Ski Training Program for Individuals with ASD

Track 3 Ski Association runs a successful ski programs for children and youth with variety of disabilities. This new initiative is based on a recreational learn-to-ski program which will expand on their present work with children with ASD. Ontario Track 3 will create a team to work only on this project to provide a safe, calm, orderly environment where discovery can be encouraged, social interaction is promoted and participation in a recreational activity is encouraged. The grant will assist with purchase of adaptive equipment, enhancements to the existing facility to better support the ASD population and volunteer training to support the skiers.

\$25,000

Société Franco-ontarienne de l'autisme Ottawa, ON SAM dit FOUS and Summer Camp FOU Program Expansion

The objective of Société Franco-ontarienne de l'autisme is, through educational and recreational activities, to improve the communication abilities, social skills and social integration of autistic children ages 5 to 12, while increasing the capacity and number of French-speaking professionals. Funding support will increase number of participants in their innovative and inclusive summer camp FOU program and will also allow the Société to increase the number of children served by the program SAM dit FOUS. Both program use siblings and other neurotypical peers in an inclusive setting that serves to enhance tolerance, acceptance and fosters sibling and peer relationships. Funding support will enhance the overall program structure by contracting with an occupational therapist to better focus on the physical activities to be included in the program. The Société Franco-ontarienne de l'autisme is one of the few agencies offering programs and services for French speaking children and teenagers in the community.
\$25,000

Chilliwack Society for Community Living
Chilliwack, BC
Snoezelen Room

In the community of Chilliwack British Columbia and other surrounding communities in the Fraser Valley there are scarce resources for families with children with ASD. The grant will help create a Snoezelen Room, which allows all individuals regardless of their ability level to enjoy relaxation and active play at a rate that they are able to control. Accessibility to the Snoezelen Room will be shared with a large number of community partners in the underserved region further enhancing community cooperation and development of support systems for families and service providers.
\$24,690

Centre for Autism Services Alberta
Edmonton, AB
Fun, Family & Fitness Initiative

The Fun, Family & Fitness Initiative includes two group-based recreational programs for children and youth with ASD's and their families; a Young Master's Club adapted Tae-Kwon Do program and an Adapted Yoga program. The programs are geared to entire families, and will prepare families for integration into inclusive, community-based programs. Even with these adaptations, the programs are structured to enable the participants to legitimately achieve skills and levels. The programs provide an introduction to the recreational activities in a safe, accepting, and family-centered environment, with goal of transitioning to inclusive community based programs when the child and families are ready.
\$16,053

EDUCATION

Reach for the Rainbow
Toronto, ON
Training Staff – Conference

In 2009, Reach For The Rainbow provided support for 5850 integrated camp days at community venues for families with children or adult with disabilities. Training is a critical component in preparing staff to work with this population. Reach For The Rainbow offers a one-day conference to help counselors and support staff develop skills necessary for supporting child and young adults with disabilities including ASD. Funding will allow the 2010 Conference to include an substantial increase number of delegates able to attend and provide an overall enhanced quality-training opportunity for those working with children and adults with ASD by attracting trainers/facilitators/speakers with significant expertise.
\$15,000

Autism Ontario – Ottawa Chapter
Ottawa, ON
Project PACE (Partners In Autism Community Education)

Project PACE is a collaborative effort of 5 agencies in the Ottawa region. Rotating workshops will provide education and hands-on training to those working directly with individuals with autism spectrum disorders (parents and professionals) as well as in-home parent training, consultation and coaching. This project, already in place and showing tremendous results for 0-6 populations will extend the reach to individuals and families with children in the 7–18 age range in the Ottawa region. Project leaders are anxious to show and share results across Ontario and Canada.

\$25,000

**Child Development Institute; The Hospital for Sick Children; The Redpath Centre;
The Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at University of Toronto
Toronto, ON**

SNAP (Stop Now and Plan)

Under 12 Outreach Program for Children with Asperger Syndrome and their Families

This project will fill an important need for children with Aspergers Syndrome and their caregivers. The program will develop and pilot a modified version of the award-winning model of the evidence-based clinical treatment program SNAP – Stop Now and Plan originally designed to serve conduct and related behavioural disorders in children under the age of 12. By modifying SNAP to meet the specific needs of children with Aspergers Syndrome, the intended outcomes will see children gaining skills in communication and effective expression of emotions and socialization. Parents will learn how to more effectively communicate and manage their child's behaviour. Funding provided will allow for the development of a manual outlining the program allowing for its replication and dissemination making this effective intervention accessible to the community and to other service providers in the future.

\$24,807

Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve and Autism Ontario

Haldimand County, ON

Autism Community Outreach Initiative

Through this project, training and support will be provided to children, families and the community in four schools on the Six Nation Reserve who have requested training in positive behavioural support. In this currently highly underserved community, a number of initiatives will be put into place and the funding will be provided to support the work of the professionals in the day-to-day interactions with children and youth with ASDs. Supportive equipment purchases including computers, software, language mastery and augmentative communication devices, therapeutic toys and materials will be provided through funding support. Clinical expertise and training will be offered to parents, teachers, SLPs, OTs, social workers and other professionals of the Mohawk Language School as well as three other schools on the reserve. Native multidisciplinary teams will be engaged from program start-up to ensure that the high priority needs of the community are met and identified outcomes are achieved. The expertise and training will be focused on the specific needs of current students with ASD and increasing the overall capacity of staff to support children from the First Nations Communities in the future.

\$25,000

The South Slave Division Education Council

Hay River, NT

SCERTS Staff Training

In this remote community of Canada, autism prevalence rates rise along with the rest of the country but access to experts for diagnosis, evaluation and treatment are virtually non-existent. Families must travel 1400 km south to Edmonton to receive an autism diagnosis. As a result a number of parents do not make the trip and children enter school without a formal diagnosis and virtually no treatment or education until they reach kindergarten. Teachers are then faced with little or no training to effectively serve their students with ASDs. The overall purpose of this project is to enhance staff capacity and increase services and treatment options for children diagnosed with ASDs in the South Slave Divisional Education Council, a small remote school board located in five distinct communities in the south portion of Northwest Territories primarily made up of aboriginal students. By using a train-the-trainer model, professional development will filter into the community along with resources and support for families, other

organizations within SSDEC and other school boards within the Northwest Territories. The Staff will train with the SCERTS program to ensure consistency throughout the area.

\$25,000

Friend 2 Friend Social Learning Society
North Vancouver, BC
“Can I Play Too?”

This project will provide an innovative packaged program as well as a training program for educators and parents on leading practices for supporting the social inclusion of children with ASD within their natural peer group. By working in partnership with community teams the program “Can I Play Too?” will be implemented in school and communities settings across British Columbia with a view to program expansion and delivery across Canada and throughout North America. The project is a new and cost effective (train-the-trainer) method of delivering the important message of friendships and acceptance through a fun and interactive puppet show for children aged 3-18. The program will work to foster understanding, acceptance and empathy towards individuals on the autism spectrum and build pro-social communication strategies for successful interactions between children on the autism spectrum and their peers.

\$25,000

Shuswap Children’s Association
Shuswap, BC
Community Education and Parent Support Program

Families with children who are suspected of having autism or who have an autism diagnosis in the underserved area of Shuswap, BC need information and education about the early signs of autism, the diagnostic process, and the support and services that are available to them and their children. As well, the project will facilitate support groups as a way to further educate and disseminate information to parent, community professionals, and service providers. Enhancement of overall community education will further foster inclusion and acceptance of children and families with ASD’s and other special needs.

\$10,000

Children’s Autism Services of Edmonton (CASE)
Edmonton, AB
Conference Outreach to Remote Communities

Children’s Autism Services of Edmonton hosts a highly respected Annual Conference bringing some of the highest quality and most world-renowned speakers to the Edmonton area each January. With the help of this grant, CASE will be able to provide conference outreach to a wider audience across Northern Alberta who would not be able to attend otherwise due to costs or travel difficulties. By using the Telehealth Sites across Alberta to broadcast portions of the conference to those who would not otherwise be able to access the learning opportunity, the CASE Conference will ultimately have a broader impact on service providers and families and children across the province. Featured Speakers for 2011 Conference include: Temple Grandin, Lori Frost (PECS Expert) and Dr. Diane Twachtman-Cullen (communications disorders specialist).

\$25,000

CPE Le jardin des frimousses
Lachine, QC
Supports and Services for Young Children in Community Child Care Setting

The day care centre has been working with the local community services centre (CLSC) for a number of years and has in that time integrated 30 children with special needs, 7 who have been identified as having an ASD. Increasing demands from CLSC have been placed on the centre to integrate more children with ASD between the ages of 3 and 4. Management has agreed that formal training and supports must be put in place to ensure that the needs of the children are met. A portion of the grant has been set aside to provide parent networking and education for those families who often feel isolated to connect and network with other parents in this underserved and underresourced community. CPE Le

jardin des frimousses will leverage the funding and the program development to raise their awareness to the integrations of children with ASD in the community. Funds have also been designated to outfit a special sensory room specific to the children's needs. To take full advantage of the equipment and team, the facility would be rented to families during the day care centre's off-hours, and shared with care workers of rehabilitation centres as well as speech therapists and occupational therapists.
\$25,000

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPORTIVE TECHNOLOGY

New Heights School & Learning Services

Calgary, AB

Life Skills Work Room Project

Located in Calgary, AB, New Heights Learning Centre will be create a Life Skills Work Room for their ASD students. The program will incorporate life skills within the 5 major areas of living including self, family, job/school, leisure and community and will be designed to meet the specific needs of each student. The goal of the program is to allow students to become as independent and self-sufficient as possible. The Life Skills program will be a part of the measurable goals for all students at New Heights. On-site access to a fully equipped and real-life skills room will not only enhance learning from New Heights students perspective but will also be made available to support similar programs of other schools and organizations in the area. Community businesses and stakeholders will be engaged to foster enhanced education, acceptance and eventual inclusion in community businesses and social programs.

\$16,310