



Family Services Community Grant Recipients 2013

(Toronto, March 24) Autism Speaks Canada proudly provides funding for not-for-profit service providers across Canada through the Family Services Community Grants. The purpose of these grants is to support service providers to build their capacity to support individuals and families impacted by autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Family Services Community Grants focus on three key areas of need: education, recreation and community activities, and young adult/adult services. Grants are given for up to \$25,000 for a one year duration to support new programs or the expansion of existing projects. Grants are chosen through a review process, including a community panel of individuals with ASD, family members, friends and service providers across Canada. In 2013, Autism Speaks Canada awarded \$469,221 to 27 organizations across the country. For more information on the Family Service Community Grants, including application details and how to get involved, please visit www.autismspeaks.ca. The Family Service Community Grants cycle for 2014 will open in late-March 2014!

Autism Community Training Society (ACT)

Burnaby, BC

Getting the Word Out on Employment for Adults with ASD
\$25,000

Adults with ASD and their families are frustrated by the lack of clarity and accountability surrounding employment supports in British Columbia. This project builds on ACT's successful model of delivering information services to families of children with ASD by identifying information resources on employment supports to optimize the search for meaningful work for adults. The ACT Online Learning Community and ACT's Information Database will be used to collect and present helpful resources and services. This work will culminate in a new chapter, "Navigating the B.C. Employment Maze", in ACT's Autism Manual for BC. This will be available as a proto-type that other provinces can use to individualize to their circumstances.

Autism Dog Services

Lynden, ON

Instructional Videography to Accompany Training Manual
\$12,000

This project will create instructional videos to accompany the training manual we wrote and published last year.

This project will enhance the benefit of educational and accessible videography which can be viewed by the family and child to emphasize and practice the skills taught by ADS instructors. The videos will mirror the materials in our printed manual.

ADS staff is responsible for the entire project completion. A local media company will produce the videos. ADS staff will work with service dogs in training and volunteers acting out each task module demonstrated in the videos. The videos can be sent upon request digitally or in DVD format.

Autism Resource Centre Inc. (ARC)

Regina, SK

Life Skills Training Program

\$25,000

At the core of this program is the simulated apartment. In the simulated apartment contained within our Centre, participants learn to complete tasks, such as personal hygiene, operating household appliances, sorting laundry, changing the bed, cleaning the apartment, the planning and preparation of snacks and simple meals, money concepts and grocery shopping. Our goal is to transition these skills to home, client's apartment or to new residential settings. In addition, this program facilitates independent skills that increase self-confidence; problem solving abilities; and provides practical knowledge of independent or semi-independent living.

Autism Services of Saskatoon

Saskatoon, SK

Summer Day Camp Inclusion Program

\$19,480

This project will be providing an inclusive summer day camping experience to our clients who are diagnosed with ASD. The program will focus on including children/youth diagnosed with an ASD into regular summer day camps such as the YMCA summer day camp program, University of Saskatchewan summer day camps and more. This opportunity will benefit our clients by providing them with the structured day that they are used to having during the school year as well as the opportunity to learn and develop social skills in an inclusive environment. Autism Services of Saskatoon will work closely with the summer day camps in Saskatoon and area to provide the staff levels that our clients require and the programming resources that will help to create an environment where social skills are developed with the clients typical peers. Our hope is that this program will also benefit the staff and participants in the partnering programs as they will learn the specific accommodations required to work with and play with our clients on the spectrum.

Boys and Girls Club of Bonnyville

Bonnyville, AB

Training Support for Rural Communities

\$11,461

This project will provide training opportunities on ASD for professionals providing children's programming in rural Alberta communities. Bringing training opportunities to rural area allows for a cost effective way to enhance service provider's capacity to support children, youth and families. Training will also occur to support children with ASD to partake in existing programming at the Boys and Girls Club. The overall goal of this training is to increase awareness of ASD and to provide more effective supports to the children and families in our community.

Capilano University

North Vancouver, BC

Mentoring Programs for Students with ASD

\$8,150

The Mentoring Program for Students with ASD at Capilano University is a collaborative project between Disability Services and the Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) Program. In September, students with ASD registered in academic programs, are voluntarily paired with a student mentor from the ABA program. They meet twice a week on campus and work on three focus areas: academic skills, interpersonal skills and wellness and self-care. The mentors receive training throughout the year from ABA, Disability Services and Learning Support faculty. While the mentees learn student success skills; the mentors gain valuable experience working with young adults with ASD.

Challenge Disability Resource Group

Whitehorse, YK

Social Thinking in the Workplace

\$25,000

Social Thinking® in the Workplace is targeting adult individuals between the ages of 18 and 60 with Autism/Aspergers in pre-vocational and vocational training. Participation in the program is comprised of both formal “lessons” and practice time designed to target the skills that have been introduced earlier in the session or to build upon existing skills.

Participants will be introduced to the core vocabulary related to Social Thinking® related skills and sessions will be focused on increasing their self-awareness of the behaviours and social communicators required across different settings.

Ecole John-F. Kennedy

Beaconsfield, QC

Senso-Mobile Project

\$25,000

The École John-F.-Kennedy is a specialized school that hosts 185 students aged 4 to 21 years with an ASD and/or intellectual disability.

To improve our students' sensory processes, we must widen the range of sensations that are recorded and modulated, encourage students to make adaptive responses and help students learn how to organize their behaviour.

Our project consists of equipping our teachers with specialized sensory materials. The occupational therapist and music therapist must purchase the specialized materials, create activity sheets that summarize the objectives and train school personnel how to use these tools.

While increasing our service offerings through our sensory carts and providing students with activities

Gifted People Services/Community Matters Toronto

Toronto, ON

Building Community Support for New Canadians through Recreation

\$10,000

This program provides services for newcomer families with individuals with ASD. This initiative will address the increasing needs for newcomer families with individuals with ASD, including monthly recreation activities, weekly adapted arts/music and integrated social skills programs. The recreation activities provide a platform for families to get together, to relax and find relief, to share experiences and to provide a platform for children, youth and adults with ASD to interact with others family members. Adapted arts/music program helps children with ASD to learn arts and music using the ABA method. Integrated social skills program offers a natural opportunity for children with ASD to socialize with neurotypically developed children.

Geneva Centre for Autism Foundation

Toronto, ON

Monarch Café – Culinary/Hospitality Pathway of Extended Learning Program Manualization Project

\$25,000

Geneva Centre for Autism (GCA) launched its first vocational pathway in Culinary Arts and Hospitality in January of 2013. At the core of this social enterprise model is providing training, support and career path opportunities for adults with ASD. With the generous investment from Autism Speaks Canada, GCA is able to manualize its innovative model of service and training. Our newly developed training manual, online curriculum, workshops and one-to-one advisory session outlines will be shared with other service agencies across the country. We hope to empower others to replicate our successful program, leading to more adults with autism transitioning into employment and further educational opportunities.

Georgian College

Barrie, ON

Student Mentoring and Support Group

\$9,240

The Georgian College Student Mentoring and Support Group will enable students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to access specialized social-emotional support to build and foster social connections, gain greater self-awareness and develop success skills to enhance and support their post-secondary experience.

Student success goals for participants of the Student Mentoring and Support Group will include increased coping skills in both academic and personal situations, active participation in social experiences with other students with ASD, increased social and learning opportunities with peer mentors, development of self-advocacy skills and increased participation within the College community to enhance their student experience and increase retention.

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

Toronto, ON

Social ABCs Training for Early Childhood Educators at Humber College

\$25,000

The main objective of this project is to translate and evaluate the feasibility of our sustainable, cost-effective, caregiver-mediated, very early Social ABC's intervention program for infants/toddlers at risk for ASD, and related social-communication challenges, into community child cares. This project will educate Early Childhood Educators (ECE's) in community childcare centres with more training on ASD and related social-communication challenges. The use of the Social ABC's intervention program will increase early intervention strategies by enhancing the skills of ECE's in fostering communication development and affect sharing during daily routines while children are in their care. By training ECE's in implementing the Social ABC's intervention, they will ideally be able to use the intervention techniques throughout their day within the context of their existing curriculum and schedule, positively impacting children who have been flagged as being at-risk for ASD or related social-communication challenges, both now and in the future. The impact of this training would result in increased intensity of intervention for the children and advanced capacity in the community.

Integrated Services for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Toronto, ON

York University and OISE Student Teacher Training

\$25,000

ISAND educational consultants will guest lecture at various faculties of education in Ontario in order to explain the social-emotional challenges faced by children with autism and provide teaching strategies to support all classroom students successfully through challenging moments, focusing on positive mental health and overall well-being of teachers and students. The course instructions is based on the text, *Moment to Moment, A Positive Approach to Managing Classroom Behaviour*, which details the social-emotional skill deficits which impact children with autism and demonstrates numerous practical classroom tips as well as activities. Selected student teachers will receive a practicum placement in special education focusing on building healthy relationships during recess and friendship clubs. Student teachers will also receive training at ISAND under the supervision of pediatricians, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, and behaviour therapists.

JVS Toronto

Toronto, ON

Asperger's Peer Support Network

\$20,214

JVS Toronto will offer an ASD Peer Support Network for individuals 20 – 30 years of age with ASD who are currently employed in full or part-time work.

The transition to the world of work presents many challenges and changes. This program will assist with strategies to maintain employment. Once monthly evening group sessions, social outings, guest speakers and mentors will form the basis of the supports available to help participants retain and grow in their jobs. A focus on self-esteem building, confidence, social communication will help create a life balance for the participants.

McGill University Health Centre, Autism Spectrum Disorders Program

Montreal, QC

The Autism Family Navigator

\$25,000

We are an interdisciplinary group of specialists, professionals, researchers, and trainees serving families affected by autism. Through this Autism Speaks Canada funded project, we plan to add a “Family Navigator” to our current portfolio of services and research. The Navigator will support families affected by autism in making difficult and time-sensitive decisions and work with them to identify and remove barriers they experience in accessing community services. We view navigation as a strategy enabling our system to realize the vision of a personalized, family centered, and coordinated *spectrum of care*. By exposing the true burden on families, the systems supporting them, and their community, our long-term hope is to instigate much needed health systems and policy transformation through community-based solutions.

Miriam Foundation

Montreal, QC

Social Pragmatics Groups for Young Adults/Adults with High Functioning Autism

\$20,000

The bilingual program will support young adults/adults with high functioning autism (HFA) and Aspergers between the ages of 18-30 years who live in the Greater Montreal area and have completed high school and aspire to have part or full-time employment. The program addresses many of the challenges participants face including: friendship, dating, understanding body language, acquiring conversational skills, sexuality and work-place culture. The program’s main goal is to teach prerequisite skills so adults can successfully join the workforce and live fulfilling personal lives. The program is designed so that every participant is paired with a neurotypical peer. Many adults with ASD have not had the opportunity to learn social cues and families report having difficulty finding resources to help teach their children how to navigate social situations. Since young adults/adults with HFA and Aspergers may have difficulties with dating, relationships, sexuality and respecting boundaries, part 2 of the program will address interpersonal relationships, dating, sexuality and attraction, job search criteria and interview skills.

Osoyoos Autism Behavioural Centre

Osoyoos, BC

Under Six Behaviour Intervention/Social Play Group and Parent Support Group

\$4,300

This grant will help to support programming for families living in Osoyoos and the surrounding rural areas. The Osoyoos Autism Behavioural Centre provides opportunities for ongoing parent support groups and social play groups. The Centre also provides a consistent location for travelling professionals including speech and language pathologists, behaviour interventionists and occupational therapists to work with children to deliver individualized programs.

QuickStart- Early Intervention for Autism

Ottawa, ON

Next Steps Networking Workshop

\$16,309

Parents feel helpless and overwhelmed as they struggle to make sense of and act on the bewildering array of information and advice they receive when they are told their child has or may have autism. They need to discover and to feel that they are not alone, and that there are indeed many things they can begin to do with their child.

The 'Next Step Networking Workshop' will provide parents with information and training on how they can help their child. Through filming and making the workshop available online, we will be able to reach many more people.

Scott Robertson STEP (Specialized Therapy Educational and Play) Program

Edmonton, AB

Positive Parenting Partnership – Triple P

\$11,970

The grant will be used to enable all of our Interventionists to become certified Triple P facilitators. The STEP Program works directly with families and children who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. We are an early intervention service provider working one on one with children and parents. Triple P training would enable our agency to be a "one stop" service provider. Having all our Interventionists trained in Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) will enhance our ability to coach families and to help them implement and generalize positive parenting strategies when dealing with a variety of behaviours and situations in their homes and community. Allowing them more strategies and confidence in dealing with their children's needs. One on one-Triple P training will provide parents with skills and knowledge enabling them to target a broad range of behaviours, helping to provide their children with adaptive functioning skills in their homes as well as their communities.

Search & Rescue Society of British Columbia

Victoria, BC

Project Lifesaver

\$25,000

Wandering and bolting is a reality for caregivers. A person with a cognitive condition who becomes lost is a critical emergency as they may not be aware of their situation and may not call out for help or respond to others who call out to them.

The Project Lifesaver Program, founded in 1999 as an initiative of the 43rd Search and Rescue Company of the Chesapeake Sheriffs Office in Virginia, was introduced to the Greater Victoria area in British Columbia in 2008. Since then the Search & Rescue Society of British Columbia (responders for Greater Victoria, BC Project Lifesaver Provincial Training Agency and Western Canada Project Lifesaver Air Training Facility) has been working to expand the program in British Columbia. The program is now available in Surrey, White Rock, Delta, Richmond, Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Nanaimo, Sooke, Sidney and Greater Victoria. We expect to launch the program to Greater Vancouver in 2014.

Project Lifesaver clients wear a radio transmitter on the wrist or ankle that emits a tracking signal unique to each client. Project Lifesaver's technology can help decrease the chances of fatalities and injuries and significantly reduce the search time. The program is available in Canada, the United States and Australia. There have been over 2400 searches with a 100% success rate.

The grant received from Autism Speaks Canada will enable us to continue to expand this lifesaving program in British Columbia.

Sinneave Family Foundation

Calgary, AB

Development and Piloting of Nationally Leading Curricula for Job Coach Training in Autism

\$25,000

Supported employment supports individuals with ASD to obtain and retain employment; however, there currently is a lack of evidence-informed curriculum for training job coaches. To address this gap, we will develop, pilot and evaluate a training program for job coaches and other related support providers. The project will comprise the following steps: (1) an environmental scan and review of existing job coach training curricula, (2) evaluative focus groups that include adults with autism, family members, job coaches, employers, and other key stakeholders, (3) development and pilot testing of curriculum in pilot course implementation and evaluation, and (4) manualization of the curriculum.

Sunbeam Residential Development Centre (DSRC)

Kitchener, ON

Communication and Technology

\$20,597

Developmental Services Resource Centre – Sunbeam Residential Development Centre, through the support of Autism Speaks Canada, will be implementing enhanced Speech Language Pathology services. These services will address the communication needs of children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders living in Waterloo Region.

Mobile technology has been demonstrated to benefit some individuals with ASD. Workshops, clinics and resources will be developed and presented that target mobile technology and how it is useful for teaching individuals and enhancing their communication skills.

Stars for Life Foundation for Autism

Charlottetown, PE

ASD Training Workshop Series – For Parents and Support Workers of Adults with ASD

\$8,500

The Stars for Life Foundation, has a framework for several training modules, that with the support of the Autism Speaks Canada, we will fully develop workshops that we will offer to educators, workers, and parents.

Our goal is to make autism-specific training available for those who are working hands on with Adults with an ASD. On Prince Edward Island, we are the only service providing pre-vocational training, transition planning, residential services, and family resources centre that are autism specific, therefore we see the need to expand our training further to the educators and support workers and families of adults with an ASD in our growing community.

The Steadward Centre for Personal & Physical Achievement – Free2BMe

Edmonton, AB

*Kickstart Instructional Soccer Program**\$10,000*

Access to community sport and recreation programs for children and youth living with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is often challenging, or simply not an option. Specialized physical activity and sport programs serving the diverse needs of children living with impairment including physical, sensory and/or developmental impairment, often provide physical activity and sport sampler programs where participants are exposed to a variety of activities. While these programs have their merit, they can still pose a barrier to individuals living with autism seeking to participate in single sport community programs such as soccer. Multi-week single sport instructional programs with an emphasis on teaching game play strategy, sport specific skills and core competencies of one sport are needed. The Free2BMe Physical Activity Program for Kids and Teens with Disabilities, in partnership with the Centre for Autism Services of Alberta is offering a ten week *Kickstart Instructional Soccer Program* for children living with ASD ages 7 to 13 to develop the basic skills of soccer through access to trained staff, and opportunity for practice and repetition of skills in a supportive and social environment. Our goal is to build on the basic skills that transfer to integrated settings such as community league soccer.

Waterloo Region Family Network

Waterloo, ON

*Coffee Club**\$8,000*

Coffee Club is a social group for young adults living with special needs filling an identified gap in community programming. It provides a natural step-by-step approach to social and safety awareness and comfort zones within the larger community while building friendships.

Our project involves the expansion of the program in two ways. Expanding the program to a Kitchener location will help to meet the needs of those living in all parts of Waterloo Region as it will be more centrally located. The other goal of the project is to meet every month at a community location – coffee shop, park, restaurant, concert or sporting event. This will allow individuals to practise social interaction in a safe and comfortable environment with the appropriate peer support.

Waterloo Region Track 3 Ski School

Waterloo, ON

*ASD Specific Training Program**\$4,000*

Waterloo Region Track 3 (WRT3) Ski School provides children and youth with disabilities the opportunity to safely experience downhill skiing. This project will provide the opportunity for a two-day training program to educate volunteer instructors on how to best support students with ASD with effective teaching strategies for ski and snowboarding instruction. Current student enrolment consists of approximately 80% of students with ASD. This program will utilize professionals who work with children and youth with ASD, who will work with the WRT3 training committee to develop a specific training program. In addition, equipment and resources specific to supporting students with ASD will be acquired to better support instructors and students in the program.

York ASD Partnership

Aurora, ON

*York Region ASD System Training Course for Mental Health Staff – Phase 2**\$25,000*

The York ASD Partnership is a collaboration of parents and service providers. Our mission is to improve the system of support for individuals with ASD and their families in York Region. The York Region ASD System Training for Mental Health Professionals will develop and deliver training to mental health workers to enable them to provide effective mental health services to individuals with ASD. This project will increase the capacity of mental health professionals to meet the needs of individuals with ASD, increase their confidence in providing effective service to individuals with ASD while building capacity through cross-sectoral collaboration between ASD and mental health specialists.