



MAKING LEMONADE

A year of service during the pandemic
2020-2021 Annual Report

MAKING A STATEMENT

Message from Our Board Chair and Executive Director

"When life gives you lemons, make lemonade."

On March 16, 2020 BridgeWay closed its doors due to the pandemic. Our primary focus became how to provide support to families who would need it over what we all believed would be three weeks. We began what would be over a year of nearly constant change to help families "Bring BridgeWay Home." Immediately, we extended services to include virtual Postpartum Mood Disorder and social work support. We populated our website and social media with songs, play activities and messages of support for parents. We piloted online program delivery. Attendance grew so we launched a full schedule of online programs on April 12, 2020. We are currently offering 99 weekly online programs until we can reopen in-person programming.

Taking care of our BridgeWay families meant we had to take care of our own. We began to plan so that we could minimize the impact to staff. Management used resources available and the Board showed great faith by approving the use of reserve funds to support staff wages. The BridgeWay Buzz, Friday Fusion, evening social nights and online Town Halls have helped keep staff connected during remote work.

Staff were incredibly resilient. They have weathered all of the changes needed from online, to outdoor to indoor and back to online programming. They have become familiar with terms like COVID hours, SUB plans and PPE and they have counted attendees, created birthday videos for children and conducted health screening. Despite the onerous cleaning required to keep our centres safe, the spirit of the staff to serve our clients never dulled.

COVID has impacted our community in so many ways. Our Healthy Start program delivered record amounts of grocery cards. Online special events, centred around holidays from all cultures, have become central to our families' lives. Rarely was one program enough with as many as five more needing to be added to keep up with demand. Special event kits provided through curbside pick-up and later sent through the mail have been an unexpected treat for children. Our online approach has resulted in 32 new partners who tell their clients about us.

The pandemic certainly gave us lemons. Our families, staff, Board and funders have taken the challenge and transformed it into optimism, resilience and creativity. The result is a "lemonade" of programs, skills and strategies that will serve our community well into the future.



Kelsey Orth
Chair and President



Lory Wolter
Executive Director

MAKING THE SHIFT

BridgeWay COVID Timeline



BridgeWay
centres close
March 2020



Extended social work
and Postpartum
Mood Disorder
support offered

March 2020



133 weekly online
programs launched:
EarlyON, Healthy
Start, and Growing
Together in Peel

April 2020



Outdoor programs
launched

August 2020



Centres begin to
reopen for indoor
programs

September 2020



All in-person
programs close
November 2020



99 online
programs a week
continue strong!

**November 2020 –
Present**



MAKING COMMUNITY

New Programs

- Story Walk
- EarlyON Cooks
- Zooming to Grandma and Grandpa's
- Curbside pick-up and contactless delivery
- Dietitian Chat
- Child Development Chat
- Preschool Time with American Sign Language



Bringing BridgeWay Home

For so many years, families have told us that our centres were like a second home to them. A place where they belong and feel welcomed. When we had to shift to online programs it meant that we were now going to our family's homes. It was our turn to feel welcomed and now we have our second home.

We wanted to make sure that our online programs were bringing families what was needed and what was being sought during these challenging times. Families told us they wanted a way to connect with others, a way to learn and grow, a way to lessen the feelings of isolation and loneliness, and a way to have fun.

Whether it was a chat session with our Dietitian, Zooming to Grandma and Grandpa's or celebrating a New Year in one of our special events, families have connected, engaged and welcomed each other and us into their homes. We look forward to opening our doors again but until then, thank you for welcoming us home.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



"I want to use this opportunity to thank my BridgeWay family for the help and support they have given me. It's nice to know that you have a community out there that cares and will check up on you once in a while. I miss our gatherings and am praying that this pandemic will be over soon so we can meet again and I will be able to share all the amazing stories I have."



Jayne celebrated her birthday with a drive-by bake sale and all proceeds went to BridgeWay Family Centre. The donation was delivered by toy truck, and we were able to accept it while keeping a safe distance. Together, Jaynee's family and friends, raised \$570!



"This pandemic was an unexpected surprise and I'm so sorry that my daughter is missing out on real social interactions.... Fortunately, BridgeWay has been offering virtual parties with kits available for pick-up and my daughter couldn't be happier!"



"BridgeWay has been phenomenal in supporting staff through COVID – offering support and understanding, even when the managers were trying to figure things out themselves. I have always felt that I could reach out to anyone and questions would be answered and fears would be calmed. They have gone above and beyond and I'm sure everyone appreciates the many hours that managers and supervisors have put in to keep things flowing."

MAKING AN IMPACT

2020-2021 Stats at a Glance

Program Visits

Total Adult Visits	54,623
Total Children Visits	42,409
Total visits	97,032



Digital Engagement

Website Visitors	40,110
Facebook Engagement	17,203
Instagram Engagement	7,629
Total Engagement	64,942



Statement of Operations

	2021	2020
REVENUE		
Program revenue	\$4,250,645	\$5,521,910
Fundraising & other income	\$258,512	\$245,810
	\$4,509,157	\$5,767,720
EXPENSES		
Program operations and administration	\$4,410,204	\$5,582,142
	\$4,410,204	\$5,582,142
NET EXCESS REVENUE OVER EXPENSES		
	\$98,953	\$185,578

The costs of food support increased by

250%

during the pandemic.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Board

Chair

Kelsey Orth

Vice Chair

Kathy Stewart

Vice Chair

Lisa Alicia

Treasurer

Harjit Dhami

Secretary

Karen Seunarine

Executive Director

Lory Wolter

Directors

Silvia Devlin

Felicia Empey

Janine Hodgson

Urooj Khan

Gunita Mitera

Stacey Parker-Yull

Sarah Petersen

Associate Directors

Ravinder Auluck

Joshua Cavric

Yui Sze (Alia) Lee

Hongliu Mo

Funders



Partners



Making Lemonade:

A RECIPE!

You'll Need:

- 6 lemons for about 1 cup of juice
- Simple syrup (1 cup sugar, 2 cups water)
- 4 cups water

Directions:

1. Combine water and sugar in a saucepan and simmer over medium heat just until the sugar melts. Let cool.
2. Juice lemons.
3. Combine cool syrup, $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of lemon juice and 4 cups water in a jug.
4. Mix well. Taste. Gradually add more lemon juice depending on how tart you like your lemonade.
5. Serve over ice. Garnish with mint leaf.

