



2018 Activity and Impact

MISSION

Connections supports parents with cognitive challenges to maintain a safe and nurturing home for their children.

Message from the Agency Director

A year of deeper, more responsive impact

When families we support and our team members say they feel at home at Connections, we know we are doing something right. The secret is that 'we' refers to the entire extended family of Connections - our entire team, our friends and supporters, and our funders. Everyone who becomes involved with Connections feels that family vibe and, in turn, they extend that inclusive, welcoming spirit to others. And **that's** the secret.

This foundation of family has resulted in Connections continuing to support more than 100 families each year. It has allowed us to expand our team with new people, each bringing different experiences to broaden the expertise available to our families. That collective expertise becomes a pooled resource shared among the team as well.

In 2018, remaining at the same quantity of families, we significantly deepened the quality of support, by expanding ways for people to connect with each other and at Connections, and by improving our responsiveness.

Led by Program Director and Founder, Lauren Raymore, we're able to triage need and ensure that a pregnant mom is brought into the fold immediately -- often before we have funding in place.

An ever-growing range of educational groups, workshops, and social gatherings

have strengthened our ability to connect people, so they feel at home at Connections. It's a way to be flexible with our support as individuals on the waiting list can join a group, getting support more quickly and also getting to know In-Home team members. Feeling safe, acknowledged, and responded to form important building blocks for good parenting skills and getting more quickly to a stable home.

Counselling, Financial Coaching, and Parenting Assessments are all specialized services that Connections has developed specifically for parents and family members with cognitive challenges. Each of these components distinguish Connections and, more important, they make a difference for parents. All three areas were especially busy for Connections in 2018.

For the entire Connections team, 2018 was notable as we watched newborns thrive into toddlers, school-aged kids sprout up, and families teach us about resourcefulness and adaptability.

2018 was another year with each and every day at Connections that was challenging, celebratory, stressful, and meaningful.

We are grateful to the funders, our volunteers, and committed donors who support us to support families.


June 14, 2018

Erin Waite,
Agency Director

The stories build from an incredible team

Meeting families where they are, then responding with what they need, is simple and also remarkable.

Connections' team has something in common that has little to do with job title, role or background. Each person at Connections responds to our clients with respect, honouring their personal journey, and doing what is best to help that person meet their goals.

Like any agency, we have employee manuals, standard practices, and our fair share of reports and forms to fill in. But it is aside from all of that where Connections' team makes the magic happen.

Most of what takes place is captured in the small moments: it's when one team member juggles their day to cover an urgent client issue for another team member, it's when clients or team members are in the office at lunch and partake in a bowl of soup brought in by another one of the team.

Through the past year, we've built this layered support into our planning. Now, a group meeting to make lunch, sits down to eat with the workshop participants coming together after lunch.

Our In-Home team is continually working closely with our Financial Coach, and families are realizing a significant improvement in their family finances as a result.

Connections' team is second to none. Our community is stronger for the dedication and talents of Carrie, Dana, Donna, Doug, Jan, Jann, Kemi, Lauren, Nicole, Olimpia, Patti, Robyn, Selina, Shaylene, Tanya, Terry-Mae and Tracy.



A special note reflecting on 2018 is to highlight the exceptional contribution made by Carrie Lawson to Connections. Carrie takes on a dual role by supporting families as well as being a Team Lead and supervising half of the In-Home team members. A split role is always most challenging, particularly for time management. But Carrie is always the first person to offer to do something extra, and it doesn't matter what the task might be or who needs help. It is remarkable that Carrie never seems to be overwhelmed and she always finds 'extra' time to lend a hand. With a team that always shows a willingness to help out, Carrie takes her contribution to a new level.

2018 Impact

Investing \$8,900 per family per year saves the community tens of thousands per year -- with better outcomes

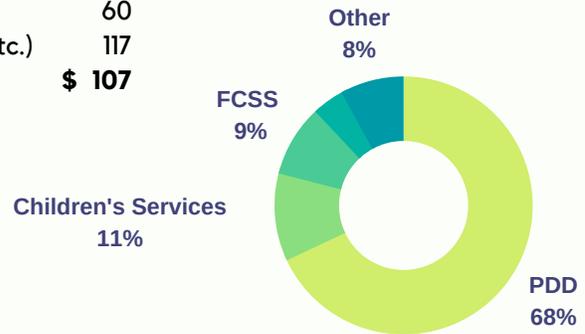
Families in service (families/individuals)	132/364
In-Home service (hrs.)	13,737
Counselling (hrs.)	487
Group program participants	453
Families on waiting list (Dec. 31)	20
Children's Services Intervention Cases	
Intervention files closed	21
Parents remaining involved	18
% success	90
Financial Coaching	
No. of Tax Returns filed	186
Total Tax Credits/Benefits recovered (\$000)	\$558

 **Less than \$8,000 per family per year to maintain a stable, nurturing home for children**

Financial Summary (\$000)

Total revenue	\$ 1,157
Total 2018 budget	1,049
Investment per family	<8
Total salaries/benefits	849
Program supplies	23
Office/program space rent	60
Administration (audit, insurance, phones, IT, etc.)	117
Net income	\$ 107

Sources of Funding



Our extended family

Board of Directors

Connections' families and our agency benefit from a dedicated, volunteer Board of Directors:

Ian Gray-Donald, Chair; Carrie Beckett, Mary Chalupka, Barry Chugg, Karla Côté, Neil James, Treasurer; Maya Kambeitz, Thy Nguyen, Lissa Samantaraya-Shivji



Thank you to funders who are also supportive partners.



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