



cedar  
CENTRE

# Stepping Toward a New Future

2022 / 2023  
ANNUAL REPORT

[cedarcentre.ca](http://cedarcentre.ca)





## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Cedar Centre's office is located on the traditional territory of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe peoples, whose presence here continues to this day. This land is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Williams Treaties with several Mississauga and Chippewas First Nations. As a Newmarket-based organization, we acknowledge the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as our closest Indigenous community and pay our respect to their Elders, both past and present.

We recognize and deeply appreciate Indigenous Peoples' connection to the land. We also recognize the contributions that the Métis and the Inuit have made, both in shaping and strengthening this community in particular, and our province and country as a whole.

As a trauma-specific service provider, Cedar Centre upholds the 94 recommendations tabled by the Truth and Reconciliation Committee. We will do our work in keeping with this commitment to reconciliation by striving to re-centre Indigenous voices in our work and our workplace, and through our actions as a changemaker in our broader systems and community.

**Cedar Centre provides highly specialized services for children, youth and adults who have been impacted by interpersonal childhood trauma.**

## MISSION

We provide a unique and holistic approach to therapy, education and advocacy for those who have experienced trauma. We work from anti-racist and anti-oppressive frameworks, serving all ages. We are committed to improving lives through the use of a trauma-specific therapy plan that is designed to meet each person's unique needs, strengths and challenges.

## VALUES

### Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression

We provide inclusive services to people of all identities and experiences, including those who are differently-abled, from all social, economic, racialized, gender, sexual orientations and religious backgrounds.

### Commitment

We are committed to helping participants find safety and stability, whether this is a new sensation for them or the recovery of a feeling familiar to them.

### Accountability

We hold ourselves responsible to provide the best trauma therapy available for our participants, as well as meeting or exceeding the expectations of our community partners and funders.

### Compassion

We foster a compassionate environment for our staff, participants and community to engage in so they feel welcome and safe.

### Professional Excellence

We provide the best trauma therapy available to our participants through evidence-based practices.

## Letter from the Executive Director

**Stepping toward a new future** might sound a bit cautious as a theme for this annual report. Why not choose an energetic word, like embracing, marching, running, racing? But I chose this wording carefully to reflect the intent of Cedar Centre as we move through what has been dubbed a “pandemic recovery” year. “Stepping toward” isn’t so much about the act of exiting, as it is about setting a mindful course forward.

Not one of us could have anticipated the amount of work it takes to recover from a pandemic, and arguably, we have not recovered...not yet. Look around you: we are in the midst of a human resources recruitment and retention crisis, and our costs for operating and meeting the unprecedented volume of need for our services have skyrocketed. At best, we are in the process of recovery. And like most recovery processes, some days are clear, comfortable and exciting, and some days are distinctly the opposite.

Last year, I wrote to you about the role and importance of resilience, but we all understand that resilience is intended for periodic use—not as the fuel of survival. Arguably, pandemic recovery is every bit as challenging as pandemic entry. Who knew!?! And yet here we are...**stepping toward a new future**.

Who would have guessed that our last three years of virtual operation would lead to a hybrid model of operation? That the amount of work that we invested in the new STAIR Coaching Program would be so popular that both STAIR Coaching and STAIR Group would be needed and wanted — not either, but a resounding both. How could we have imagined the ease of virtual community meetings, case conferences and professional development at our fingertips, juxtaposed with the desire to be in-person with our participants and colleagues? Who could have anticipated the need for new program and operating policies and procedures that would essentially undo what we have spent the last three years doing in response to unprecedented times?

Resisting the temptation to return to how we did things before has been a challenge for all of us. It takes courage and strength to titrate in uncertainty, and yet, I am certain there is no group of people that I would have rather done this recovery work with. From the brilliant and compassionate members of our Clinical Team, to the capable and visionary stewardship of the members of our Board of Directors, to the supportive and collaborative embrace of our community partners, we have stepped toward our new future, together.

This is an exciting time and not one for the faint of heart. For the difficult roads that we have travelled together, and for the exciting opportunities that lie on the path before us, thank you to each and every one of you who has come alongside Cedar Centre this past year. I am grateful to all of you for your role in building our resiliency, and equally grateful for your company as we step toward our new future, **together**.

*Alison Peck*

**Alison Peck**  
Executive Director



When Lisa\* experienced interpersonal trauma as a teenager a few years ago, it shook her trust in others and fractured many of her relationships, including the closeness with her parents. But a referral to Cedar Centre’s Child, Youth and Family Program has been life-changing.

Designed for children ages three to 18, the family-centred Child, Youth and Family Program focuses on developing and reinforcing support systems around a child or youth who has experienced interpersonal childhood trauma. Combining therapies such as trauma-focused CBT, Internal Family Systems and somatic (body-based) approaches, we work with children and youth to build upon the strengths and resources within themselves, their family and their environment.

When Lisa first started attending virtual appointments, it took a little while for her to open up. **“At first, I was very closed off and reserved,”** recalls the now 19-year-old. **“But the therapist I was working with made me feel so comfortable. I felt I could trust them and open up about my feelings and the details [of the trauma].”**

As she slowly started to come to terms with what had happened, Lisa’s Cedar Centre therapist guided her through understanding her many physical and emotional responses so she could be ready with strategies—such as breathing or grounding techniques—to manage situations where those feelings crept up.

One of the most profoundly important issues Lisa worked through was her fear of a certain

type of person. **“Learning how to cope with that part of the trauma definitely benefits me going forward because I’m always going to see this type of person around. It’s better to deal with it rather than avoid it and then stress all the time.”**

Through intensive weekly therapy sessions, Lisa forged a strong emotional bond with her therapist, and she really appreciated having a knowledgeable outside perspective to “give a little reality check” when needed.

Most importantly, the Child, Youth and Family Program helped her deal with her fears so she could regain trust and build strong relationships with the people in her life, her parents in particular. **“My therapist helped me think of ways that I could reconnect with them, and now I have the best relationship ever with my parents,”** says

Lisa. **“If I wasn’t able to get the proper help and guidance that I needed, I probably would have just shut down and left it at that for years.”**

Heading into her second year of university this fall, Lisa is flourishing. **“My experience [with the Child, Youth and Family Program] has really helped me grow as a person. I now have more self-confidence, I’m more trusting and I have great friends and a great home environment.”**

\*Name has been changed for privacy

---

**I Have More Self-Confidence,  
I’m More Trusting.**

---



## STAIR Named United Way of Greater Toronto Promising Practice

When the pandemic forced all of our programs online, one Cedar Centre program had to be completely reimagined. STAIR Group was an in-person group program that offered practical skills to help participants increase emotional regulation and build stronger relationships. In finding a manner to deliver the material in a completely different way without losing its essence, the evolving course was so successful that United Way of Greater Toronto has recognized it as a Promising Practice—one that shows potential for improving outcomes for its participants.

An introduction to the Adult Program, **STAIR** (or **Skills Training in Affect and Interpersonal Regulation**) is a 10-week course that sets participants up for success in the individual trauma therapy that follows.

When we moved STAIR online, we redesigned it with a self-directed coaching model. Participants can access the materials online and work through the exercises independently, and they have a weekly 30-minute live virtual session with a coach to ask questions, get support and discuss where they may need some help.

While the format has changed, STAIR's impact hasn't. It helps participants understand the effects of trauma—how it shows up in thoughts, emotions and behaviours. It provides practical skills and strategies to deal with trauma responses, including grounding, self-talk and more. One of the most important strategies is the feelings and behaviour log, which helps people build emotional intelligence and stress tolerance through actively noticing situations, thoughts, feelings, actions and positive or negative outcomes. Plus, we've continued to evolve and refine the STAIR curriculum, adding content and introducing new virtual modalities, such as somatic (body-based) therapies.

**“Even without the therapy that comes later, most participants report that this program is life-changing,”** says Clinical Coordinator and therapist Mallory Nielsen. **“It leads the way for folks' experience through our program.”**

Notably, STAIR's virtual delivery has also allowed us to provide these crucial skills and resources to adults sooner—an important step forward in the healing process.



Program  
Spotlight



## Child & Youth Advocacy Centre Pilot an Early Success

With a promising year-long pilot well underway, we are moving closer to our goal of building York Region's first Child & Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC)—a safe space under one roof that provides access to child welfare/well-being services, mental health and criminal justice services for young people who have experienced physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect.

Launched last fall, the pilot is designed to quantify cases of sexual and physical abuse, and gather feedback from York Regional Police and the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Care Centre (DASA) at Mackenzie Health. One of the key elements of the pilot is to ensure a child or youth is only referred urgently to DASA for a forensic medical exam when necessary. In cases where time isn't critical for evidence collection, we can avoid compounding their stress by setting up an appointment at a later time.

We've seen early successes with the pilot: cases continue to be referred to DASA appropriately, and together, we're identifying opportunities to improve processes to provide the best support for children, youth and their families—a central feature of CYACs.

The CYAC model puts children and youth first, coordinating investigation, treatment, support services and advocacy to limit the impact of these systems. It will bring Cedar Centre services and teams from partner organizations—York Regional Police, York Region Children's Aid Society, Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services and Jewish Family and Child Service—under one roof.

Families will have a familiar, safe space to navigate every stage of the process, from disclosure to legal proceedings to healing. This will include remote testimony rooms, so the child or youth never has to walk into a courtroom and, feeling safe and secure, can provide a fuller testimony. Importantly, children will only have to disclose their story once, sparing them from being retraumatized with repeated disclosures. Their CYAC advocate will then share the information with each involved partner agency.

**“Having all partners co-located means our working relationships will become seamless, and the families will feel that,”** says Leslie McCallum, outgoing Director of Research and Program Development. **“This is going to make a significant difference in the lives of the children and families we serve.”**

# How We Treat Trauma

Thanks to generous donors and funders like you, we are able to provide specialized trauma-specific therapy for children and families, adults, newcomers and young people who are at risk of human trafficking. With a goal of improving the lives of people who have experienced trauma, our programs run up to 48 weeks, providing therapies tailored to each individual. Here's a closer look at our programs.



## CHILD, YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAM

When children experience trauma, it can impact the whole family. So we take a family-centred, strength-based approach in our Child, Youth & Family Program. We provide up to 48 weeks of therapy for children ages three to 18 who have experienced physical, sexual or emotional abuse, domestic violence or bullying, and we include supportive caregivers in the first six sessions so they can learn about trauma responses and how to best support their child. Then, we work with the child or youth one-on-one, engaging the family again once the individual sessions are completed, if appropriate.



## ADULT PROGRAM

Adults who have experienced interpersonal childhood trauma often struggle with emotional regulation, relationships and persistent trauma symptoms. Cedar Centre's Adult Program includes STAIR (Skills Training in Affect and Interpersonal Regulation), a 10-week self-directed coaching course, followed by individual therapy to address themes related to trauma. Participants also take part in the gender-specific Resourced and Resilient Group.



## ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROGRAM

Cedar Centre's Anti-Human Trafficking Program provides up to 48 weeks of therapy for kids and youth up to age 18 who have had experiences with or are at risk of human trafficking. Once a connection is made and a foundation of trust and safety is built, we take a self-led approach to therapy to empower the young people in our program. Our anti-Black racism framework, focus on equity and anti-colonialism, and engagement of Indigenous elders as needed ensures everyone is listened to and heard. Together, we work through their experiences of sexual exploitation and help them develop skills in emotional regulation, communication, healthy relationships, setting boundaries, assertiveness and more.



## OUTREACH & PREVENTION PROGRAM

Awareness is essential to getting kids help when they're experiencing interpersonal violence or sexual abuse. Cedar Centre's Outreach and Prevention Program provides information, resources and public presentations to community groups, schools and other professionals. This program offers those who have completed the Adult Program opportunities to share their lived experiences through public presentations.



## NEWCOMERS' HEALTH & WELL-BEING PROGRAM

Recognizing that some newcomers have lived through incredibly difficult situations, Cedar Centre partners with the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) York Region & South Simcoe and the Welcome Centres of York Region to deliver a unique health and wellness program. With free services including specialized counselling, health education and health care from a nurse practitioner, this program provides vital services with a focus on each participant's unique needs and circumstances, including language, culture and community. Building on newcomers' strengths, this program helps them move past the difficult situations they've lived through, leaving a lasting impact as they build a new life in York Region.



# By the Numbers 2022/2023

At Cedar Centre, we provide a highly specialized, holistic approach to therapy, education and advocacy for people who have experienced interpersonal childhood trauma. As the need for our therapy services continues to grow, we remain dedicated to providing exceptional support.



---

## ADULT PROGRAM

**122** participants worked one-on-one with a Cedar Centre therapist

---

## STAIR COACHING

**69** adults joined our Skills Training in Affect and Interpersonal Regulation (STAIR) 10-week Coaching Program

---

## TRAUMA-INFORMED CASE MANAGEMENT

**37** participants worked with a specialized trauma-informed case manager to build resiliency

---

## CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAM

**72** participants benefited from our family-centred, strength-based services

---

---

## NEWCOMER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING PROGRAM

**37** newcomers received therapy and support to access health care and vital services

---

## ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROGRAM

**25** participants received individual and specialized therapy to address their experiences with sexual exploitation

---

## IYOGA

**42** participants from our waitlist benefited from our effective and innovative iYoga groups

---





## Vision for Tomorrow

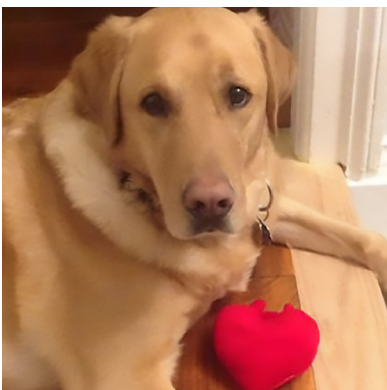
**The generous support of funders and donors like you have helped us advance our highly specialized trauma services by meeting our current and evolving needs.**

Last year, we launched our first pilot tied to our Child & Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) project, and the interim successes we've seen have affirmed that we are on the right track. As we work toward securing sustained funding for the CYAC, and a location, we will continue with pilots that give us the opportunity to practice, evaluate and fine-tune our services and processes. Working closely with our project partners, we can begin delivering components of this important model sooner.

As we look to the future of our current programs, we remain committed to meeting new and evolving standards and practices in trauma therapy. We're excited to begin returning to in-person delivery in the coming year, but will be continuing some programs and courses in an online delivery or hybrid model, STAIR being a notable example.

As we continue to review and grow our programs and see our vision for York Region's first CYAC come to life over the coming years, we are stepping toward a new future. Your support is vital to reaching our potential.

**Please join us!**



### TAKE A BOW-WOW, VIXON!

Our National Service Dog Vixon will be leaving us this year to enjoy a much-deserved retirement, filled with long walks, snuggles and treats. While it will be a bittersweet goodbye, we are looking forward to welcoming a new four-legged friend, National Service Dog Truman.

## LETTER FROM THE TREASURER

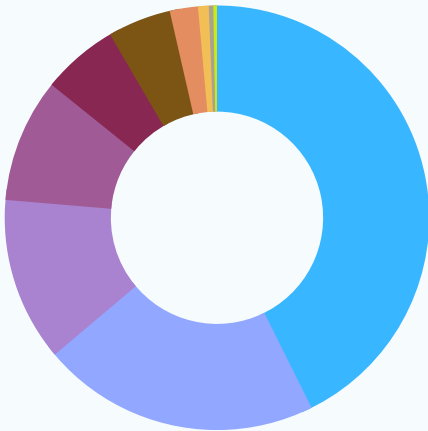
Cedar Centre had another busy year providing trauma-related services and supporting participants impacted by interpersonal childhood trauma. For the year ending March 31, 2023, Cedar Centre had revenues of \$1,631,400 (compared to \$1,688,819 for 2022) and expenses represented 99% of revenues or \$1,616,915 for the year (in 2022 expenses accounted for 84% of revenues or \$1,418,016). The organization had a surplus of \$14,485 (in 2022, the organization had a surplus of \$270,803).

The Centre's majority of funding for delivery of programs is obtained from government sources and successful applications to various grantors. Donations and fundraising initiatives undertaken by the organization form an integral component of the overall funding activities. The organization greatly appreciates the multiple groups of volunteers who devote their time and effort to the raising of these funds.

*Abby Kassar*

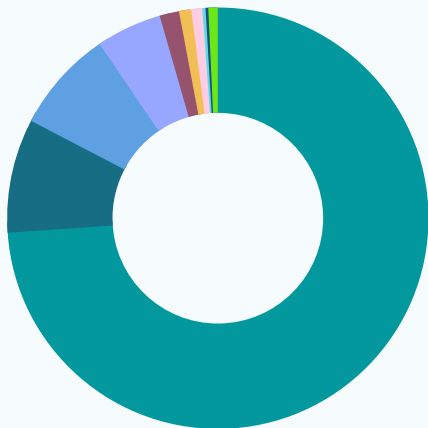
**Abby Kassar**, CA, CPA, CFP, TEP  
Treasurer, Board of Directors

## Financial Summary, Year End March 31, 2023



### Revenue

Ministry of Health and Long-term Care	\$695,738
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	345,800
Department of Justice	203,920
United Way Grant	153,936
IRCC program revenue	94,864
Donations and other sources	78,723
Canadian Women's Foundation	35,000
Ontario Trillium Grant	13,303
Fees for services	5,600
Government assistance	4,516
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,631,400</b>



### Revenue Allocation

Salaries and benefits	\$1,194,840
Office and general	141,517
Fees for services	127,103
Occupancy costs	81,383
Professional fees	24,242
Insurance	15,216
Education, courses and seminars	13,558
Transportation	4,005
Therapy dog	3,367
Amortization	11,684
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,616,915</b>

For complete audited financial statements, please visit [cedarcentre.ca](http://cedarcentre.ca)



We are deeply grateful for the generous support of all of our donors and funders. Because of you, we are able to improve the lives of people who have experienced trauma through our highly specialized therapy programs. Your support makes a lasting difference.

 <p><b>United Way</b> Greater Toronto</p>	<p><b>Ontario</b>  MINISTRY OF HEALTH</p>	
<p><b>Ontario</b>  Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services</p>	<p>Ontario Trillium Foundation  Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario</p> <p><small>An agency of the Government of Ontario Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario</small></p>	 <p>CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION   FONDATION CANADIENNE DES FEMMES</p>
	<p>Department of Justice Canada</p>	<p>Ministère de la Justice Canada</p>
	<p>Women and Gender Equality Canada</p>	<p>Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada</p>



# cedar

CENTRE



**Cedar Centre**  
17705 Leslie St., Unit 12  
Newmarket, ON L3Y 3E3



**905-853-3040**



**1-800-263-2240**



**[cedarcentre.ca](http://cedarcentre.ca)**



**[cedar@cedarcentre.ca](mailto:cedar@cedarcentre.ca)**



**[@cedar\\_centre](https://www.instagram.com/cedar_centre)**



**[facebook.com/cedarcentre.ca](https://www.facebook.com/cedarcentre.ca)**

**CHARITABLE REGISTRATION NUMBER: 10668 0952 RR0001**