



2022/23
**IMPACT
REPORT**

**No matter where you are,
we'll meet you there.**

MESSAGE FROM OUR **BOARD CHAIR**

2022-23 was another year of growth and renewal at the GCA.

The Board has recruited two new members who will add depth and talent to our roster. During the year, we focused our work on risk oversight and long-term strategy. As part of this work, the Board and Staff together developed a new strategic plan that centers around our mission: to enable people on the autism spectrum to learn, to live, and to engage in their communities. We will do this by providing leading-edge inclusive programming, education, and training.

We are very proud of our Centre's ability to evolve and offer new and innovative programs and services. As the Ontario Autism Plan rolled out, our clients and staff were flexible and resilient in adapting to this changing landscape and we thank them. Our Urgent Response and Entry to School programming were particularly successful.

Sonderly continues to move beyond Ontario and is a leader in the development and delivery of educational content designed for educators at all levels. Its course offerings are expanding beyond ASD into general neurodiversity topics, and they have been very well received.

In Fall 2022 we purchased a new building at 3036 Danforth Avenue, in the east end of the city, very close to the intersection with Victoria Park. With this new acquisition, we will be able to provide autism services and programs to residents of the east end of the city. This is a much under-serviced area. Our plan is to be up and running by January 2025. This



is a new and exciting development for us and for clients of the GCA and their families.

GCA is on a forward-moving path with a continued focus on innovation, expanding offerings, and using evidence-based methodologies to serve as many clients as possible. We look forward to another year of excellence and innovation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judy Welikovitch'.

Judy Welikovitch
President, Board of Directors

MESSAGE FROM OUR **FOUNDATION BOARD PRESIDENT**

This past year saw tremendous growth for the Geneva Centre for Autism Foundation. With new leadership in place, a dedicated Board of Directors, and the generosity of our donors and partners, the Foundation broadened its impact on the programs and services offered at the Centre, especially in our Social Skills programming, translation services, respite care, employment training, summer camp, and recreational activities.

I am deeply grateful to our event partners who raised funds and shone a spotlight on our work through the ICON Dinner Gala, the Annual Golf Classic presented by BMO, and the Tanner Financial Golf Tournament. I also want to thank our corporate funders and the many individuals and foundations that share our desire to open doors to school, employment and community for all individuals with autism.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Tremblay'.

Jennifer Tremblay
President, Board of Directors





IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to enable people on the autism spectrum to learn, to live and to engage in their communities. We will do this by providing leading-edge and inclusive programming, education, and training.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Judy Welikovitch - President
Beata Mehta - Vice President
David Gillespie - Treasurer
Paul Jachymek
Sagar Kancharla
Darren Williams
Wendy Kosky
Marieta Mendoza
Linda Kenny

FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Tremblay - President
Nina Valentic - Vice President
David Gillespie - Treasurer
Geoff Wright
Judy Welikovitch
Beata Mehta

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Abe Evreniadis - Chief Executive Officer
David Ayanoglou - Chief Financial Officer
Renita Paranjape - Vice President, Programs and Services
Kim Takata - Chief Operations and People Officer
Marie Desmarteau - Vice President, Foundation
Andrew Davis - Director, Sonderly
Stephanie Warner - Vice President, Marketing



Sonderly training served
197
organizations.



Sonderly training delivered
8,016
courses.



GCA provided support services to over
3,000
children, youth & adults with ASD.



Geneva Centre has been an absolute Godsend to our family. Their services are topnotch, and the staff is knowledgeable and passionate about their clients. We always feel secure when our son is at the facility.



FILLING THE GAP

The Les and Kae Martin Bursary Program

The Les and Kae Martin Charitable Foundation has enabled GCA to expand our program offerings for high needs adults each year. As we continue to grow our adult services through this unique partnership, we are implementing key program improvements to address community needs and building internal capacity to support more participants.

This year's program will include a dedicated adult intake department and a revised service delivery model for Day Respite to create a more equitable and accessible program.

In 2022-23, the Les and Kae Martin Bursary Program doubled their impact from the previous year:

47

Adults attended funded Camp Programs

4,366

hours of 1:1 programming

47

Adults attended funded Respite Programs

18

Adults Receiving Transportation to the Centre



The staff member that worked with my son was amazing. She worked so well with him and made his camp time so enjoyable.

- Les and Kae Martin Bursary Recipient

GROUNDBREAKING INITIATIVE

The Autism Workforce Development Hub

With a major investment from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, GCA is reimagining autism employment services with the creation of the Autism Workforce Development Hub. This groundbreaking initiative will be a one stop shop for autistic job seekers and employers to access training and individualized support to facilitate inclusive, sustainable employment opportunities.

In the coming year, the AWDH will:

- Provide 500 free autism and neurodiversity awareness training packages to Ontario employers.
- Support pre-employment training and 1:1 skill building for 20 autistic job seekers.
- Offer individualized accessibility consulting and support for 10 employer partners.

"By working directly with both employers and job seekers to understand their needs and address potential workplace barriers, we can provide appropriate, inclusive employment opportunities for a largely untapped pool of talent."

-Geneva Centre for Autism CEO, Abe Evreniadis

BUILDING CAPACITY

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility @ GCA

In 2020, Geneva Centre for Autism implemented a plan to address Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) within the organization. Through IDEA @ GCA, we are taking concrete steps towards fostering an organizational culture that is psychologically safe and accountable to diverse individuals.

Over the past year, IDEA @ GCA has been laying the foundation for a more equitable future through initiatives including:

- Working with HR to review and provide feedback on GCA policies and procedures
- Consultation and discussion with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) on Cultural Competency and Psychological Safety
- A workshop for the GCA Board of Directors and ELT on Unconscious Bias
- Commissioning a video series on topics including:
 - Microaggression in the workplace
 - Imposter syndrome
 - Privilege and social identifiers
 - Institutional racism
 - Indigeneity

Geneva Centre is grateful for the opportunity to work with consultant Dr. Joseph Smith on the implementation of these critical initiatives.

SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR

Our first year offering the Urgent Response Service and Entry to School programs in collaboration with the Toronto Autism Services Network was a big success.

GCA's Urgent Response Service provided rapid and personalized care to prevent the escalation of risk or harm for 179 children with autism and their families. This wrap-around approach to support includes access to behaviour therapy, occupational therapy and respite services for families in crisis.

Year 1 Impact:

116

families accessed Behaviour Therapy with a BCBA

48

families accessed Respite Services

15

families accessed Occupational Therapy



When we signed up, I think we had just sort of hit a brick wall. We just didn't know how to get him to communicate with us. And I think doing URS helped us understand that he was already trying to communicate with us and that's just not how we were seeing it. So we started building off of that and now he doesn't have to get angry because we're better at understanding him. I learned so much. And I think we left URS appreciating him more.

- Urgent Response Service Parent

The first year of Entry to School saw 95 preschool-aged children graduate from the Group-Based Skill-Building program and transition to school for the first time. The graduates and their families will receive additional support from GCA throughout the first six months of kindergarten as they navigate this significant milestone.

Year 1 Impact:

88%

of caregivers feel more prepared to support their child's transition to school.

100%

of caregivers felt the staff understood and supported their child's individual needs.

91%

of caregivers feel their child is better prepared to transition to school after Entry to School.



Geneva Center provided great care and learning. The changes we have seen in our son are off the charts. He has shown so much improvement. I felt by the end of the school program he was very prepared for JK.

-Entry to School Parent





SONDERLY TRAINING

The past year marked a marvelous milestone for Sonderly. Since its launch in 2019, Sonderly has offered **over 150 hours** of training content on autism and applied behaviour analysis to **22,000 users** in both English and French. Sonderly's courses are designed in collaboration with educators, clinical experts, and individuals on the spectrum to deliver the latest research and practices for supporting the ASD population.

This year, Sonderly has begun launching training materials in the mental health space. Now more than ever, the need for mental health awareness is essential. At Sonderly, we promote mentally healthy classrooms in grades K-12 by equipping educators with the relevant knowledge and tools they can use to support the mental health needs and well-being of their students and themselves.

Sonderly has also taken the initiative to host free discussion sessions with subject matter experts. The topics range from the stressors and challenges to student mental health, to tips and techniques for educators to enhance the classroom experience.

As the team continues to assess the current trends and client feedback, we are excited to expand their course offerings to build community capacity to embrace neurodiversity and mental wellbeing, and better meet the needs of individuals on the spectrum.



150+
hours of training content



22,000
users in both English and French



THANK YOU!

Geneva Centre for Autism is grateful to the individuals and organizations that support our work in the autism community. These donations are essential to the development and implementation of cutting-edge programs that are empowering each of our clients to succeed on their own unique journey.

As the leading sponsor of GCA's Annual Golf Classic, BMO has been a champion of the Geneva Centre for Autism for over 20 years. With funds raised this year, we are committed to providing flexible, high quality services that families can depend on in a changing environment.



THANK YOU!



autism.net



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