



Family Services Ottawa:

## **We believe in the ability of all people and families to rise.**

Family is everything. Our families can be our parents or our children, our relatives or our friends, our companions or just ourselves.

Family Services Ottawa works with adults, youth and families in our communities by equipping them with the understanding, skills and guidance to achieve mental and emotional health.

Our dragonfly is a symbol of our belief in the ability of all people and families to heal, raise their spirits and rediscover their strength. For every type of family that needs support, we are there.

# Letter from the Executive Director and President

When Family Services Ottawa opened in 1914 as the Ottawa Welfare Society, its focus was on social relief. Much has changed, and today we are focused on family because we know that family is not just important – it’s everything.

The global pandemic brought significant challenges, and FSO continued its tradition of adapting to meet family needs by working with adults, youth and families to equip them with the understanding and skills to achieve mental and emotional health. The FSO staff, volunteers and Board members demonstrated tremendous resilience, innovation and teamwork as they developed pandemic protocols, pivoted to remote service delivery, learned new software and adapted spaces to safely deliver urgent in-person services.

In response to the pandemic, we also worked with community partners to deliver mental health crisis supports through the creation of Counselling Connect. FSO counsellors enhanced their capacity to deliver single-session counselling, and senior managers co-Chaired the initial collaboration table, assisting with securing funding while supporting the project coordination. Counselling Connect, together with over 30 collaborating partners, delivered 6,000 single-session counselling sessions. Counselling Connect created specialized service access for vulnerable populations by ensuring that equity and diversity were informing our service planning.

During COVID, it was very important to pull together as a community of service providers. FSO was actively involved in establishing the

Champlain Region Mental Health & Addictions Network. This network created opportunities for over 60 providers to meet weekly to address emerging issues, share best practices and discuss collaborative responses to community needs. FSO furthered its collaborative efforts and community engagement by participating in the City of Ottawa Human Needs Task Force and the United Way of Eastern Ontario’s Community Resource Table. Participation allowed FSO to target our responses to fill gaps and make the most effective use of limited resources.

In the last year, we also had the opportunity to think forward and develop a strategic “Case for Change” to help us navigate the significant landscape changes ahead. FSO believes the way forward is through partnerships and collaboration. We have assessed our readiness to collaborate and identified our strengths and our areas for improvement. We built our capacity with an initial phase of digital transformation, which included launching a website re-development and renewing our brand in support. We secured funding for a new client-care database that will make remote service delivery more effective, enhance data collection and improve our ability to work with Ontario Health Teams and service delivery partners.

You will learn more about FSO’s COVID-19 experience throughout this report. We would like to thank our Board members, our volunteers and staff for all of their efforts to support our work while managing the pandemic impacts in their own lives.

**Jane Trakalo**  
Board President

**Deirdre Speers**  
Executive Director

**Family Services Ottawa was the force behind the Counselling Connect concept in the early days of the pandemic. Under FSO’s leadership, partner organizations together brainstormed how best to meet the emerging mental health needs of our community during these times. Working with FSO’s**

**senior leadership was and continues to be a pleasure. Their focus and drive to innovate inspire our leadership group and keeps us moving in the right direction.**

Tamara Chipperfield  
Director Mental Health,  
Addictions and Community Services  
Centretown Community Health Centre

# COVID-19: Rising to the Challenge

Our most vulnerable families have faced significant challenges throughout the pandemic. FSO rose to the meet the need through targeted investments and innovative programs.

## Targeted Investments

Investments in COVID Response:

**\$688,713**

- **30,000** McConnell Foundation - ICP building enhancements

---

- **55,000** United Way - Transcending Isolation

---

- **37,000** City of Ottawa - Parent Coaching

---

- **68,000** Community Foundation - Safe Counselling Spaces

---

- **25,000** Canadian Women's Foundation - Safe Counselling Spaces

---

- **69,000** Canadian Women's Foundation Financial Empowerment program development

---

- **390,463** Ottawa Health Team - Counselling Connect

---

- **\$14,250** Family Services Ottawa - IT equipment costs

We would like to thank our funding partners for collaborating to support families and for trusting FSO to deliver quickly and effectively.

## Highlighting Innovative Programs

**Parent Coaching:** With families isolated in their homes, parents are in need of ongoing, individually-tailored, parent coaching and advocacy support that address their complex needs. While our Parenting groups were still available, many parents during the pandemic were unable to participate in a 6 week-long group but still needed help to cope with isolation. FSO's innovative Parent Coaching program was a great answer for many parents and families who were low-income, racialized, suffering domestic violence or LGBTTTQ+. This past year we served 53 parents and 72 children through Parent Coaching. Requests surpassed expectations, and our wait lists have increased significantly over previous years.

**Transcending Isolation:** This program provides supports to parents with children and youth who identify as trans+ to help parents find positive ways to manage their children's stressors and anxiety. To further address a gap in service, a support group for parents/caregivers with children under 11 was offered to promote parent/child mental health, reduce isolation and improve parent/caregiver responsiveness. Transcending Isolation served 176 individuals through a total of 715 interactions in the parent coaching, youth mental health or counselling services.

**Financial Empowerment for Women:** With funding from the Canadian Women's Foundation Safer and Stronger Grants, the Financial Empowerment for Women program offers financial empowerment workshops in areas such as understanding debt, budgeting and money management, as well as one-on-one financial counselling sessions.

## PROGRAM STATISTICS BY THE NUMBERS

### REMOTE SERVICES:

**10,974**  
Remote  
Counselling  
Sessions  
Attended

**1,342**  
Counselling  
Connect  
Crisis  
Sessions

**For many children during the pandemic, in-person services have made a big difference in getting the help they need. A few come to mind. And we have many more.**

A 17-year-old was brought by her mother to FSO because the girl couldn't participate in online school and increasingly struggled with anxiety, staying in her room and not speaking to others. Virtual counselling was too stressful and the teenager couldn't speak beyond saying her name. All that changed when she came to FSO to meet face-to-face with a counsellor. The human contact made the difference, and she was able to take her anxiety medications, strengthen her primary relationships and begin sharing her needs and hopes with others. She even went out skateboarding with her sister!

Trust is a very important part of successful counselling, and even more so for children. Yet at the same time, children find it more difficult to build that trust through video sessions for a number of reasons. One child, a ten-year-old living in a home with high conflict, found that trust in in-person visits with an FSO counsellor who provided an anchor and one of his few healthy relationships with adults. For this young boy, FSO and his visits provide an important and trusted place where he can confide if things are ever not okay.

Being only 8 years old is hard enough, but when you're in foster care because of an unstable home life and nothing seems constant, it's even tougher. Family Services Ottawa made all the difference by providing in-person counselling that gave the child both a sense of privacy and safety that allowed her to feel supported, listened to and valued. Children have a more difficult time understanding video calls or engaging with them, so FSO's ability to make safe spaces during the pandemic to provide in-person therapy has been so important to our younger clients.

Divorce is always difficult for children. An 11-year-old found himself going back and forth between two parents who loved him but were very angry with each other. Both acknowledged the other parent as safe and reasonably well-intentioned but the child was nevertheless feeling responsible for the ongoing disagreements between them. As so often happens with children, he was not happy with video counselling, and it was only when he was able to speak with a counsellor in person that he could share his anxiety and feelings. FSO worked with his parents to develop a plan to reduce his exposure to potential conflict, and after a few weeks, was able to discontinue his sessions.

**PROGRAM STATISTICS  
BY THE NUMBERS**

**REMOTE SERVICES:**

**432**

**Parent  
Coaching  
Sessions**

**129**

**Parenting  
Group  
Sessions**

**289**

**Supervised  
Familial  
Visits**

# All Donors

## April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

### \$10,000 - \$15,000

Giant Tiger

### \$5,000 - \$9,999

Elsa Lessard

### In-Kind:

Rena Lafleur \$600

### \$1,000 - \$4,999

Beaudoin Construction  
Deirdre Speers  
Emond Harnden  
EQ Homes  
HostedBizz Inc.  
John Petitti  
MaryAnn Notarianni  
Neha D'Souza  
Siobhan Arnott  
SKS Law LLP

### Under \$1000

Adrienne Capaldi  
Adva Cohen  
Alex De-Abrue  
Amirah Fayek  
Angie McMurray  
Angus Fraser  
Anthony Desnoo  
Anthony Esposti  
Barbara Armstrong  
BMO Global Asset  
Management  
Boyd Fuller  
Bruno Carchidi  
Christine Glead  
Christine MacEwan  
Corien Kershey  
Cresa Ottawa  
Darryl Metzger  
David Pigott  
Dick Stewart  
Don Lewicki  
Dr. Indu Gambhir  
Edward Jones  
Eliane Herz-Fischler  
Elizabeth LaRochelle  
Errol Feldman  
Fishburn, Sheridan & Associates  
Frances Cherry  
Gabriel Petitti

Gridway Computing Corp.  
Gustave Goldmann  
Guylene Owen  
Hana Pika  
Harry Binks  
Ian Cullwick  
Inta Dreijeris  
Irene Cherner  
Isabelle Jetté  
Jane Trakalo  
Janne & Tim Kerbashin  
Jenna-Marie Tymko  
Jennifer Greer  
Jessica Lomazzo  
Jim McCaw  
Joan Hayes  
Jody Ciufu  
John Martins  
John Mbakulo  
Karla Thorpe  
Katherine Stauble  
Kathleen Hudson  
Kathleen Wright  
Kathy Newton  
Keith Anantol  
Kerri-Lynn Pratt  
Kevin Chappell  
Kim Noble  
Kim Picard  
Kristin Fearon  
Laurie Valentine  
Lise Michalow  
Lynda DaCosta  
Lynne Hanson  
Magnitude Partners Inc.  
Marena Winstanley  
Margaret Feitz  
Margaret Kelly  
Marlene Riviere  
Martine Chartrand  
Michael Gaines  
Monique Paquette  
Naomi Gilker  
Natasha Saunders  
Nellie Tomalty  
Norine Hum  
Pierre Dufresne  
Ray Angers  
Robert Dillman  
Robert Higgerty  
Sabine Modder  
Sarah Morgan-White  
Shöne Greer  
Scott Kirby  
Steve Mcilroy  
Sue MacPherson  
Susan Learoyd  
Mortgage Brokers Ottawa  
The Property Group

Tubman Funeral Homes  
Walter Robinson  
Wendy Grimshaw  
William Danauds

### Our Generous funders:

#### Province of Ontario:

Ontario Health  
Ministry of Children,  
Community and Social  
Services  
Ministry of the Attorney General

#### City of Ottawa

#### United Way of Eastern Ontario

#### McConnell Foundation

#### Ottawa Community Foundation

#### Ottawa Health Team - Equipé Santé Ottawa OHT-ESO

#### Trillium Foundation

#### Canadian Women's Foundation

## PROGRAM STATISTICS BY THE NUMBERS

### TECHNOLOGY:

# 5

**Introduction  
& training on  
5 new remote  
platforms to  
ensure safe  
remote services:**

- On Call Health
- Zoom
- Caredove
- Robin HQ
- Optisign

## Giant Tiger Steps Up for FSO

Giant Tiger, a long-time family business in Ottawa, has stepped up again this autumn with a generous donation of \$20,000. This tremendous gift follows Giant Tiger's already impressive give of \$15,000 in December 2020.

Giant Tiger's aim is always to do the greatest good possible, for the greatest number of people possible in the diverse communities that the retailer calls home. That is why Family Services Ottawa was and continues to be such a great fit for Giant Tiger. Mental health has been at the core of the pandemic, and Family Services Ottawa has been overwhelmed with requests for mental health support. Families, youth, seniors, individuals and the LGBTQ+ community were all seeking assistance as the demand for services grew with every passing day.

# GIANT TIGER



"In 1961, Gordon Reid opened the first Giant Tiger store in Ottawa's Byward Market. Our first store remains there today and is a symbol of hard work, making every dollar matter and our commitment to doing what is right. We are proud to be partnering with Family Services Ottawa to help provide access to mental health services and support to vulnerable families in Ottawa," said Alison Scarlett, AVP, Public Relations and Brand Communications, Giant Tiger Stores Limited.

The generosity of Giant Tiger also inspired other companies and individuals to support FSO through a matching gift opportunity. Matching gifts up to \$15,000 in 2020 and \$20,000 in 2021 have provided essential mental health support to the people of Ottawa at a time when it was needed most.

**Our collaboration with Family Services Ottawa made sense as Giant Tiger aims to do the greatest good possible, for the greatest number of people in the diverse communities that the retailer calls home.**

**Alison Scarlett**

AVP Communications and Public Relations,  
Giant Tiger



### PROGRAM STATISTICS BY THE NUMBERS

#### REMOTE SERVICES:

**119**  
Family  
Mediation  
Sessions

**249**  
participants  
Around The  
Rainbow Parent  
Support Groups

# Music on a Mission The Best Goes On. Online!

Music on a Mission is more than an event -- it is an incredible experience combining music trivia, entertainment and our community. Many people help to orchestrate the evening because we all understand the importance of supporting mental health and the contribution that Family Services Ottawa makes to our community.

Since 2003, this event has raised important funds and united the community all in the name of music. One of the "must-go" events on the Ottawa charitable calendar, Music on a Mission has always had a reputation as a spirited live event with great music, the energy of competition, amazing silent auction and awards for the best costumes. In 2020, though, the pandemic made it look like it was all over for Music on a Mission. And we were wrong!

In fact, we all needed the joy of music and the satisfaction of raising money for mental health services more than ever. We underwent a complete rethink and shifted Music on a Mission online. The FSO team, which included staff and volunteers, pulled off a musical miracle, and created a fun, lively and successful virtual event that raised more than \$35,000 for FSO and mental health support. And we all had a blast at the same time.

Sponsors, teams, attendees and our FSO team had a fabulous time as everyone tested their musical knowledge. From rock to country and everything in between, music enthusiasts battled it out while our host, Emma from Trivia Hub, kept us entertained. The beat kept going through the breaks with talented musical guests Kristine St. Pierre and Lynne Hansen.

Through the generosity of Giant Tiger, a matching gift opportunity was launched! The local retailer and family business offered up to \$15,000 to be matched by the community. Inspired by this kind gesture by Giant Tiger, donors contributed their gifts to provide even more mental health supports to residents in Ottawa.

In 2021 we will bring trivia, music, and fun through our Virtual Music on a Mission on **November 18th from 7 - 9pm**. You can learn more about our big night by visiting [familyservicesottawa.org/music-on-a-mission](https://familyservicesottawa.org/music-on-a-mission). Our generous friends at Giant Tiger have stepped up with a \$20,000 matching gift for this year's event. So, it's time to assemble your team and test your music trivia knowledge!



## PROGRAM STATISTICS BY THE NUMBERS

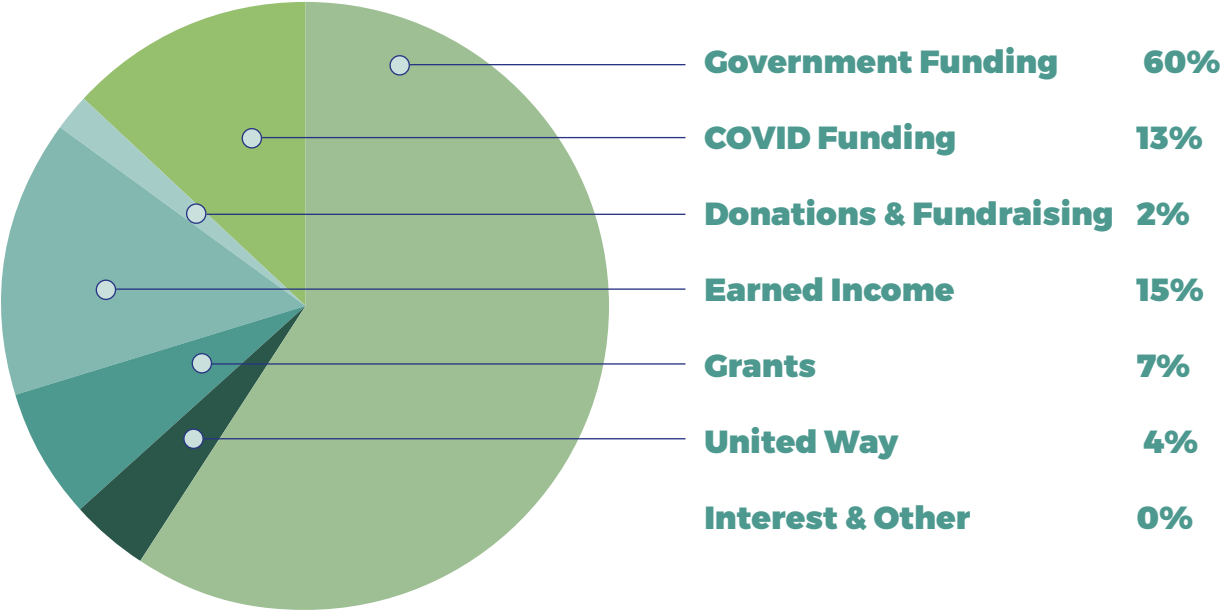
### REMOTE SERVICES:

**15**  
Gender  
Identity/  
Gender  
Inclusion  
Trainings

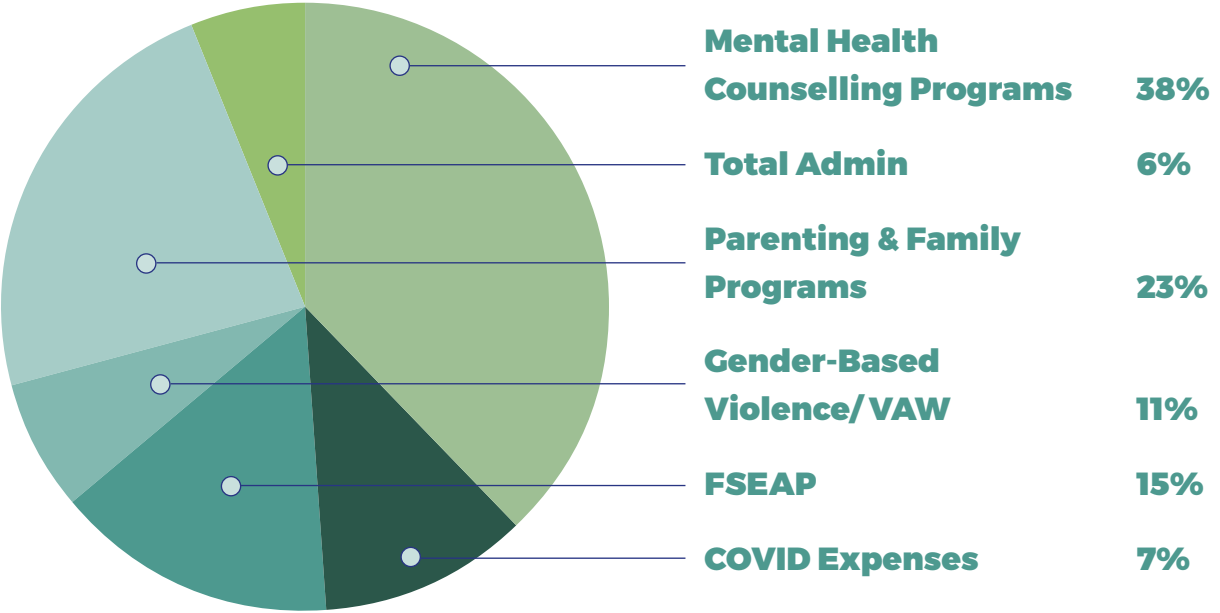
**189**  
participants  
Around The  
Rainbow  
& TRAN-  
Scending  
Isolation  
Youth  
Groups

**35**  
Around  
The Rainbow  
Parent  
Coaching  
Sessions

# Revenue total



# Expenses total



## Family Services Employee Assistance Program

FSEAP is the only national EAP provider structured as a social enterprise, meaning 100% of profits support mental health and community based programming for children, youth and families.

FSEAP helps employees balance work and personal lives, build knowledge and skills to deal with challenges, and resolve problems that can negatively affect their ability to maintain focus and productivity at work.