



Family Services Ottawa

FAMILIES GROW. COMMUNITIES SOAR.

FSO Report to the Community | 2023-24



A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We have much to reflect on from this past year, in which we were able to dedicate more time to more families and clients than the year before; innovate to tend to gaps in care; support organizations nationally through crises and to protect their employees' mental health; and our continued advocacy and collaboration with our partners.

The families we support are facing increasingly complex mental health challenges, precarious living conditions, inability to meet basic needs, rising hate and division, and the systemic inequalities or inadequacies of our social safety net.

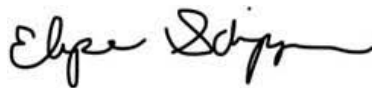
We want to recognize all of our clients for their courage to seek help and hold hope, and thank them for trusting us to walk alongside them.

We'd also like to celebrate how these mounting challenges seemed to inspire our team to show up with even more motivation to take good care of our clients and each other. This is how FSO has been there for our community for more than 100 years now, with vital support from funding partners without whom this work would not be possible,

including the Province of Ontario, the City of Ottawa, Ottawa Community Foundation, United Way East Ontario, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Happy Roots Foundation, our donors, and our sponsors including HostedBizz.

We are grateful for and proud of this special FSO community – our team, Board, volunteers, community and funding partners. As the following stories and numbers reflect, we are indeed delivering on our mandate to strengthen our beloved Ottawa community by supporting the wellbeing of people and families.

With immense appreciation,



Elyse Schipper, Executive Director



Harry Binks, Board President



“They helped me with all my needs and beyond. The staff is amazing.”

BY THE NUMBERS:



AROUND THE RAINBOW

1,000 2SLGBTQI+ family members supported



COUNSELLING HOURS

14,000+ hours of counselling provided



COUNSELLING CLIENTS

2,600+ community members received counselling



SUPERVISED ACCESS

170 family members safely building relationships



PARENT COACHING

135 parents received customized parent coaching services

COUNSELLING PROGRAMS

In 2023-24, we provided over 14,000 hours of counselling to more than 2,600 clients. These clients were individuals, couples, and all the family constellations, and of every age across the lifespan. We were finally able to restore our in-person groups, addressing needs such as living with anxiety, resilience after trauma, understanding your nervous system, and creativity & art.

Our anti-violence counselling team brought mothers and their children together for a narrative therapy-based group intervention, and brought the women's support group back in-person after 3 virtual years. In collaboration with our intake team, transitional and housing support workers, and our partners at Interval House, we were able to ensure women seeking support for intimate partner violence were supported quickly with risk assessment and safety planning. A partnership with Legal Aid Ontario enhanced our ability to support women leaving abuse with legal advice specific to family law and family violence.

“When I first arrived at Family Services, I felt like a shell of the woman I once was, consumed by fear and the pain of a traumatic relationship. From my very first intake session to my final meeting with my counselor, I felt truly seen and understood, even in the midst of an experience that was still confusing to me. The care, guidance, and expertise I received through the Violence Against Women program completely transformed the course of my life. I left behind the identity of victimhood and stepped into an empowered version of myself—one rooted in compassion, boundaries, and self-worth.”

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Through *Around the Rainbow*, our education, counselling and support services for 2SLGBTQI+ families, we were able to support almost 1000 clients, and tend to a gap in available services for transgender, gender diverse, and non-binary children ages 7 to 12. In partnership with the City of Ottawa and our colleagues from Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre, these children experienced connection and community in a new mental health and social skills group, while their parents and caregivers met separately to learn and support each other.

Our *Supervised Access Program* continued to offer a neutral and safe space for children and their parents or relatives to maintain, rebuild, or establish relationships – this year for more than 170 family members.

In 2023, changes were made to the Child Youth Family Services Act to prepare youth for a successful transition from the care of Children's Aid Society to independence. Our *Alternative Dispute Resolution* team was able to extend its mandate to bring youth together with their personal supports, professionals, and a neutral coordinator to plan for housing, education, employment, mental and physical health, connection with family and culture, and other important factors identified by the participating youth.

We provided coaching to 135 parents, and facilitated more than 100 Parent Education sessions including Parenting Through High Conflict Separation and Divorce, and Anger Management.



“FSO has been there and very helpful for my family. They have a lot to offer to people who are in need and their doors are always open to help others.”

FAMILY SERVICES EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (FSEAP)

Through our *Family Services Employee Assistance Program*, we provided counselling and work-life services to support more than 1100 employees of 32 organizations across the country and increased our capacity to provide critical incident response services.

As a social enterprise, 100% of the revenue generated by this service supports the programs at FSO.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Behind the scenes, we modernized our technology infrastructure for a better client experience, better data collection and analysis, and increased cyber security and prevention. We increased our professional capacity with professional development in polyvagal theory, cognitive behavioural theory for insomnia, acceptance and commitment therapy, mitigating trauma, diverse therapeutic perspectives on gender-based violence, and best practices for risk, safety, and consent.

And last, but certainly not least, as a year-long collaborative effort of the entire team and Board – we were awarded Accreditation by the Canadian Centre for Accreditation in recognition of achieving established standards for quality in governance and excellence in service provision specific to community-based organizations.

FSO achieved 100% of both mandatory standards and leading practice standards – a true representation of our team and the high standard of care for every individual that seeks our support.

“Every detail I offered seemed to matter. I’ve always felt heard with anyone I’ve spoken with.”



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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OUR PURPOSE

To strengthen our communities by supporting the mental and emotional well-being of people and families.

OUR MANDATE

To offer accessible counselling, workshops and educational programs to adults, youth and families to increase their knowledge and skills, adopt healthy strategies, build human connections and increase resiliency.

OUR FUNDERS

Province of Ontario

- Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS)
- Ontario Health

Ontario Trillium Foundation

City of Ottawa

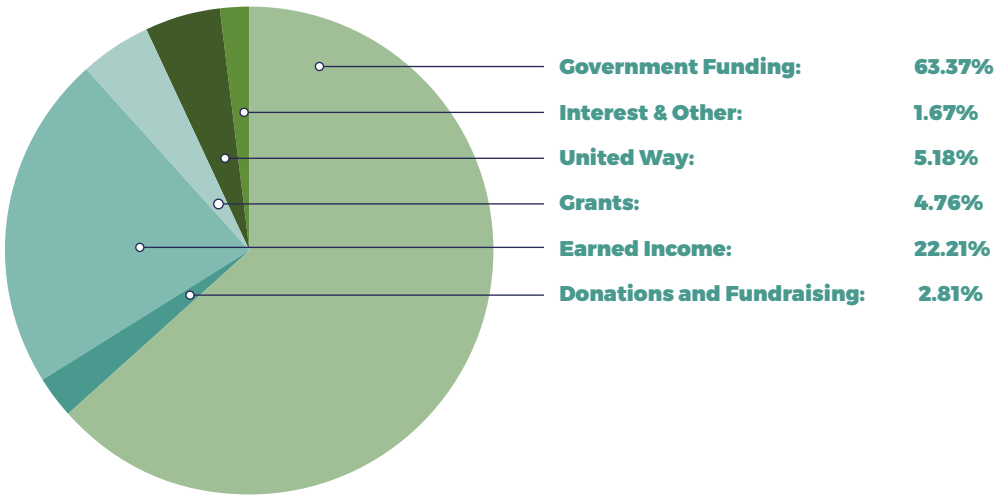
Happy Roots Foundation

United Way East Ontario

Ottawa Community Foundation

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2023-2024

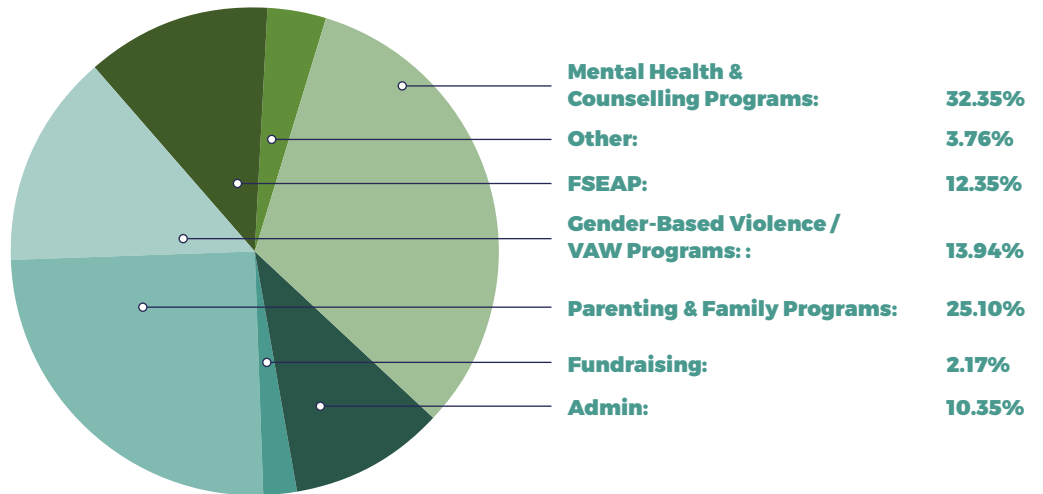
REVENUE TOTAL



**WHERE
THE
MONEY
COMES
FROM**

EXPENSES TOTAL

**HOW THE
MONEY
IS SPENT**



“I felt respected and heard from the first couple of minutes, and my mental health and state of mind were vastly improved after my sessions.”