



Annual Report 2016
Leading. Empowering. Inspiring.



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Abe Evreniadis

A Message from the Board President

Over the past year, we saw the difference added support and resources can make to help each individual with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) reach their full potential. As a large number of these individuals enter adulthood, we hear firsthand experiences that help us better understand support needs at school, work, and in the community. Geneva Centre for Autism's team of experts in clinical intervention has offered personalized, family centred programs for over 40 years. This tradition of high quality service requires frequent change to meet the dynamic and emerging needs of the autism community. I'm excited to share these developments with you.

Geneva Centre is committed to providing continuous, high quality services for families, professionals, and community members. In 2016, we began an accreditation process to review best practices and identify opportunities for improvement. Accreditation Canada was selected to oversee this process; its longstanding leadership of high quality care providers, combined with client focussed values, strongly aligns with our organizational standards.

Inherent in our vision for successful community inclusion is the value that everybody, regardless of their level of need, has a place to come. Over the past year, Geneva Centre expanded capacity in areas of growing demand, including mental health, employment, and comprehensive support for high needs. I invite you to learn more about these programs in this report, and remember that our door is always open.

Thank you for being a part of our community.

Abe Evreniadis

President, Centre Board of Directors

Geneva Centre for Autism

A Full Service Agency

Pathways
Communication **Community**
Youth Employment skills **Respite** Pre-school
Pre-employment rs.com Volunteers
Parent training **Clients** **Behaviour consultation**
IBI **Children** ASD Social skill **building Staff**
Family support **Empowering**
International **TPAS** Transition
autism **Adult** **Research**
symposium **Donors** ASD
Independent **Respite** Leading
IBI **Pathways** **Asperger's**
Welcoming **Clients** **TPAS** Inspiring
Speech and language **Board of directors**
Mental health support **Family** Pathways
Person directed planning **Leading** **Camps**
Community Family support **Clients** **Sponsors**
Training institute **Autism** **IBI**
rs.com

Community participation
Collaborative
Leading
Pre-employment
High needs **Staff** **Employment skills**
Professional training
day support **Asperger's**
Stepping stones cafe
Volunteers **Clients** **TPAS** rs.com
Speech and language
Family support

Geneva Centre for Autism in the Community



Attending the World Autism Awareness Day flag raising ceremony at Toronto's City Hall with Councillor Josh Matlow



Inspiration goes viral on World Autism Awareness Day



Sharing expertise in the media to support individuals with ASD.



MP Mike Lake celebrates World Autism Awareness Day at Geneva Centre's Stepping Stones Café



Full community inclusion comes with fun and games at Geneva Centre's annual family picnic. This event is open to the public to enjoy rides, games, and a barbeque for kids of all ages.

Early Intervention



"Please, please remember the first time you met Xavier and how far he's come today. Know that each one of you played a vital role in his success."

- Sherene, Xavier's mother

Santi's story

Santi was 4 years old and unable to communicate with his family when he came to the Toronto Partnership for Autism Services (TPAS) program at Geneva Centre.

Without the understanding of spoken language, Santi demonstrated frequent tantrums through daily transitions. His family found it difficult to take him to new places where he would be able to join other children.

Through **Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI)**, instructor therapists at Geneva Centre recognized Santi's excellent visual skills. They worked with this strength to help him follow instructions and participate in new activities. He now better understands his family in both Spanish and English and uses his iPad to voice 5 word phrases. Santi's ability to express what he needs has helped him to connect with other children. He looks forward to meeting new friends as he starts school.

Geneva Centre's TPAS program helps 70 preschool aged children develop cognitive, language, and adaptive skills each year for a successful transition to school.

Most IBI programs in Toronto are currently only offered in English. GCA staff work diligently to make services accessible to families who speak other languages. After launching the inaugural French TPAS program in 2015, GCA instructor therapists worked with the French School Board to ensure the children continued to receive ongoing support to reach their full academic potential.



Xavier discovered his talent and passion for gardening in Geneva Centre's Preschool Speech and Language program.

GCA offers comprehensive services for pre-school aged children to develop a strong foundation for success throughout their school years. Our team of Speech Language Pathologists, Behaviour Consultants, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, and Board Certified Behaviour Analysts put families at the centre of each program.

Social Skills

Children and youth learn from their peers during each stage of development. For a child with ASD, joining group activities may be challenging as it can be difficult to understand social interactions.

Geneva Centre's Group Services helps children and youth develop skills to socialize and become part of a team. The programs also provide plenty of opportunity for fun and play!

New program! Learning through Lego

Geneva Centre launched the first Learning Through Lego program in Ontario where children between the ages of 6 and 8 get to build a world as big as their imagination. Each child becomes part of a team as they learn to make eye contact, take turns, and create new structures, all while having fun! Here they learn to work and play with others as they take on new roles, including builder, helper, and director. Parents couldn't be more proud:



"My son's skills have significantly developed since he began the program. He's using a lot more self-regulation strategies and really trying to make friends with other kids."

Rest and social time is important for all members of the family.

Geneva Centre provides on site individual care and group programs that offer a welcoming environment to discover new interests and skills. It is also host to respiteservices.com for the Toronto Region, which provides caregivers a chance to relax and recharge from their daily physical and emotional demands.



Mental Health Support and Counselling

Geneva Centre offers comprehensive and personalized support to individuals with high functioning ASD and families to help work through pivotal stages in life. Many services, including counselling and group programs, incorporate cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) to help develop personal coping strategies.

New program! My Mindfulness Meditation Group

Geneva Centre introduced this workshop, in partnership with York University, to help youth aged 13-18 with ASD and their parents to reduce anxiety and learn to relate to each other in a new way. The program draws on CBT and mindfulness meditation to help participants learn to manage internal and external distractors to improve attentional control and emotional regulation.



Facing Your Fears

Facing Your Fears is a family focussed group intervention program that helps youth with high functioning ASD to manage symptoms of anxiety. It is designed for youth and parents to experience progress at each stage with session by session goals.

"We started with very small, doable steps. It really started to be exponential because my son's growth was very significant."

- Grant Parker participated with son Harrison in Facing Your Fears



W.C. Kitchen Foundation's mandate is to support at-risk youth in Toronto. Thanks to their generous grant, Geneva Centre was able to facilitate Facing Your Fears groups for 8-9 and 10-12 year olds in 2016.

Vocational Training and Employment Support

The dilemma of needing experience before landing a first job can create a larger barrier for individuals with ASD. A candidate's true talent may be concealed throughout a standard interview process by difficulties in social communications. Despite possessing a diverse range of skills and academic training, only 1 in 4 individuals with ASD are employed.

Geneva Centre introduced new employment program partnerships and expanded its vocational training curriculum as a growing number of young adults with ASD prepare to enter the workforce.

Erica, a recent graduate of Geneva Centre's **Culinary Arts Pathways program**, gained hands on experience at Geneva Centre's Stepping Stones Café as well as interview and employment training in the classroom.



Geneva Centre partners with Worktopia and Ready, Willing, and Able to provide employment support for youth and young adults in the Toronto region.

Worktopia is a federally funded project designed to improve the employment futures of youth and young adults with ASD. It includes EmploymentWorks and CommunityWorks programs that provide professional development opportunities for participants between the ages of 15-29.

Alex discovered strengths and job skills he didn't know he had when he began the EmploymentWorks program. Although he expected to require a lot of support, Alex quickly learned the job tasks and was able to work independently, as well as in a leadership role. He gained valuable experience with EmploymentWorks community partners, including Goodlife Fitness, Carlton Cinemas, and Mysteriously Yours.



Ready, Willing, and Able (RWA), a national employment project, connects employers with candidates who have an intellectual disability or ASD.

Thanks to a strong business case for inclusive hiring, including higher retention and productivity, RWA expanded its support to facilitate a rising number of jobs awarded to its candidates. The project also expanded services for entrepreneurs with ASD to enable them to compete in the small business market.

With the support of an ABA vocational coach, Erica interviewed for a position with a large theatre company and was hired on the spot!

An accommodation as small as providing a scanner allowed one illustrator for graphic novels to obtain a contract and earn a stable income from his work.

Day Support

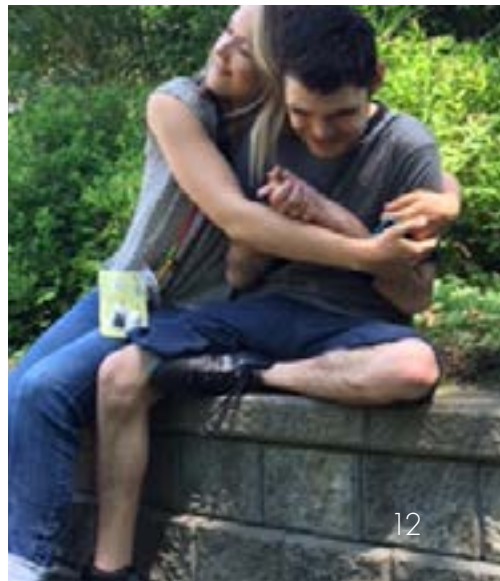
More than 50 adults in Toronto with complex needs were waiting indefinitely for support last year. Geneva Centre expanded its day support programming to offer more young adults, like Jason, comprehensive care. Here Jason receives dedicated attention to ensure his development and health needs are covered while he enjoys opportunities to learn and explore in the community.

Jason first came to Geneva Centre two years ago, at the age of 22, after his family had been unable to find a full day program that could meet his safety and development needs. He struggled with necessary functions like chewing food, sleeping, and toileting. He had not been able to interact with others due to aggressive behaviour and a tendency to run away. **But Jason, like all of us, did not want to be alone.**

Community Options Facilitators at Geneva Centre create a safe and engaging environment for all individuals to develop their strengths and learn life skills to increase their independence. With the support of this team, Jason quickly integrated into group activities.



Over the past two years, Jason has endeared himself to staff and fellow participants, always greeting them with a jubilant "hi" and a big smile. His community is growing as his confidence and ability to communicate grow too.



Financial Report 2016

Geneva Centre for Autism and its Foundation strive to ensure individuals with ASD receive the support they need. Here's how Geneva Centre helped over 3,000 families in Toronto, and provided leadership to professionals across the globe last year:

Generous support for children's, youth, and adult programs came from:

Government grants
\$9,861,877

User fees
\$1,582,059

Donations
\$330,022

Special events
\$293,688

Other
\$703,067

April 1st 2015 - March 31st 2016

These funds were invested in:

Early intervention and treatment
\$6,783,434

Education and workshops
\$954,100

Community service partnerships
\$1,649,198

Respite and camps
\$786,609

Social skills and vocational training
\$954,746

Fundraising and administration
\$1,601,216



ShamWalk



Professional Training

As leaders in clinical intervention, Geneva Centre's Training Institute shares best practices, in fully accessible online and in-class formats, to enable professionals from around the world to better support students with autism.

In partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Education, the Training Institute provides customized curriculum to help educators across the province ensure students with ASD are able to reach their full academic potential.

Support is extended to educators in all locations and curriculum and may be customized to meet the needs of each school district. T.I. expert training faculty flew to Texas to share effective strategies with 75 teachers at their request to help support students with high functioning ASD in the classroom.

"Participants gained a better understanding of their students' behavior, learned new strategies to support students in the classroom, and received practical information that they passed along to their colleagues."

- Cathy Williams, Ph.D. Autism Education Specialist, Houston Texas



A record 2,591 educators in Ontario connected for the Online School Team Training.

Over 120 Geneva Centre staff and supporters raised a record \$21,000 as the biggest charity team for the St. Patrick's Day 5 km ShamWalk.



New Series! Invited Speakers

The Training Institute hosts experts in the field of autism to share in-depth, specialized knowledge and cutting edge breakthroughs in these on site and internationally live streamed events. BCBA participants are eligible to earn CEU's where applicable.

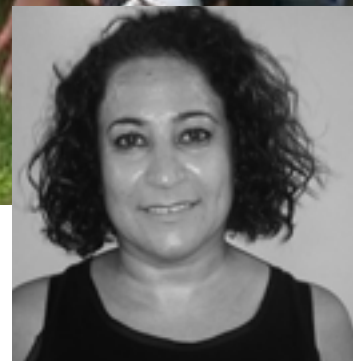
Merrill Winston Ph.D., BCBA, engaged hundreds of participants in person and online in ***Taking a Hard Look: Labels. Inclusion. Reinforcement. Behaviour.***

Geneva Centre for Autism's Team



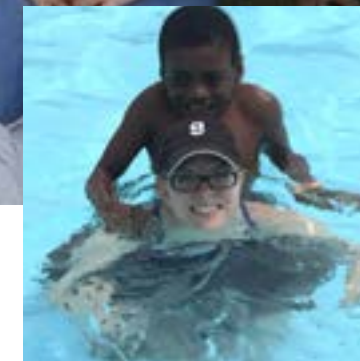
Geneva Centre's specialized, multi-disciplinary team collaborate to offer each individual and family personalized programming.

Well over 300 volunteers dedicated more than 8,600 hours of service last year to support individuals with ASD.



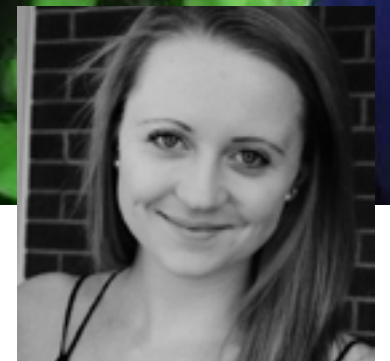
"Working with children at Geneva Centre is rewarding and fun. I get to do something that I am passionate about."

*Mahnaz Mirzaei,
Respite Services Volunteer*



"I like trying out different activities with the children, and discovering new interests along the way."

*Beatrice Irving,
Group Services Worker*



"Every child is a unique individual. Geneva Centre has given me the opportunity to experience the rewards of working with a child and seeing them progress."

*Tara Fiodorowicz,
Respite Services Volunteer*

Geneva Centre for Autism Foundation

Geneva Centre for Autism is delighted to recognize the following individuals, corporations and foundations that made a gift in support of children, youth, and adults with ASD. **Thank you!**

\$60,000+

The Giving Tree Foundation of Canada

\$30,000 - \$39,999

BMO Financial Group
TD Securities Underwriting Hope

\$10,000 - \$29,999

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The Harry E. Foster Foundation
The Langar Foundation
The Lloyd Carr Harris Foundation
Tippet Foundation
United Way of Toronto

\$5,000 - \$9,999

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\$100 - \$999

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William Lidstone

This list acknowledges contributions of \$100 or more between April 1st, 2015 and March 31st, 2016



Kettlebells 4 Autism connected over 600 people in 16 countries to support local autism charities. More than \$10,000 was raised for Geneva Centre.



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