



Adoptive Families
Association of BC



annual report
2013 - 2014

executive report



This year, our organization moved in dynamic new directions. It was a year that we brought more services to more families in BC and Canada by bringing support and education right to their homes.

Our PASS program, an intensive, in-home therapeutic program is now working in the homes of families from Boston Bar to Victoria and Kamloops. And we brought online education to families in Black Creek, 100 Mile House and Halfmoon Bay who were waiting to complete the Adoption Education Program (AEP) as part of their adoption application.

Cities as far as Moncton, New Brunswick and Edmonton, Alberta now benefit from our progressive programs thanks to connections made at the NACAC conference in Toronto,

reaffirming our commitment to the innovative delivery of services that support Canadian adoptive families.

We reached out to families in their homes and neighbourhoods with our expanded commitment to online tools, too. Our new website embraces the faces, places and needs of adoption. We canvassed our members and partners to build this virtual adoption resource centre, one that's easy to navigate, has comprehensive resources, and is inclusive of Canada's diverse adoption community.

Our continued growth in the use of technology to reach our clients and partners will have a direct impact in the lives of children and families who're waiting to be brought together. Efficiencies in delivering services will make the

time these children wait in foster care shorter.

We're grateful for the many volunteers, families, board members, and staff who share our commitment to supporting adoption and adoptive families in BC and Canada.

On behalf of everyone here at the Adoptive Families Association of BC, thank you for your ongoing support.

Vision

A family for every child

Mission

To promote and support adoption

Edward Lyszkiewicz **Chair**

Karen Madeiros **Executive Director**

community

555 members | **thirty-two** professional members

hours volunteered to AFABC **2,338**

365 resources loaned out from **Adoption Resource Centre** in 2013-2014

items in our Adoption Resource Centre **2,438**



Our passionate supporters are what make the adoption community in British Columbia so strong.

This year, our **volunteers** gifted over 2,000 hours of their time to support family events, to share their stories in our magazine, and to develop services for adoptive families. Nanaimo volunteers organized the Vancouver Island Family 5k event, which raised over \$1,000 for AFABC and created awareness of adoptive families in the area.

We celebrated our supporters at the **Evening with AFABC** gala in June, which featured the

heartwarming and hilarious comedienne (and adoptive mom) Morgan Brayton; Chris Tait, who shared his experiences as a youth who aged out of care; and a performance by the Saint James Music Academy, a program that provides free music lessons to children living in the Downtown Eastside.

The annual **AFABC Adoption Awards** recognizes adoption champions across BC. This year's awards recognized long-time adoption advocate Sandra Scarth. Also recognized were Port Metro Vancouver and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 517, for their innovative adoption benefits for

employees; John Aquing for his dedicated volunteerism; Accent Inns; and Ian Telfer and Nancy Burke for their ongoing financial and in-kind contributions.

AFABC was my lifeline and ray of sunshine during our darkest hours. Laughter and joy once again fill our home.

- Leah, adoptive mom

support



It is such a comfort to meet other people with similar struggles in parenting; to have my kids connect so effortlessly with other children. No judgment, only support from everyone. It's good for the soul.

- Tara, adoptive mom

Dianna wasn't sure if she should go to the **Adoptive Parent Getaway** in Kamloops. It just seemed like too much work. To get her three special needs teenagers prepared and arrange all of the details for their respite care is what kept her from taking this kind of necessary break more often. But when she finally made it, she shared a reality—and now a connection—with other adoptive parents who parent children with FASD, trauma and attachment issues.

The needs of adoptive families are changing; they need support services available when, how, and where *they* need them.

requests for support
2590

496 calls and emails to the waiting child info line

family social events held across BC **seventy seven**

166 support group meetings held by **20** AFABC groups

This year, our **PASS** (Parent Adoption Support Services) program expanded to Victoria and Kamloops. This intensive, clinical, early-intervention service provides in-home coaching to families transitioning their child home.

Our regional Adoption Support Coordinators connect adoptive families through social events, support groups, and camps.

Families who can't make it in person, whether due to time or location, connected with other families through one of our six **Facebook** support groups. This year, a new Facebook group for single parents grew to 86 members by year-end!

education

THIRTEEN webinars

FIFTEEN

face-to-face sessions offered

308

**WEBINAR
ATTENDEES**

200

**FACE-TO-FACE
ATTENDEES**

AEP online participants **418**



Geographic reach was a big theme for the Education department this year, as families from across BC and Canada attended our programs.

Over 300 participants were able to access the **Adoption Channel** thanks to webinar technology. These live sessions allow families to log on to adoption education from the comfort of their own homes, while also giving them the chance to interact with session instructors, and to get their questions answered.

Edmonton & Area Child and Family Services authority adapted our **Adoption Education Program Online** (AEP-Online) program to

offer to their families. Course participants have reported a large increase in their knowledge and understanding of adoption-related content upon completing the course.

Over 200 parents attended our **face-to-face workshops** to learn from a diverse group of experts: experienced adoptive parents, adoptees, social workers, and health professionals.

In November, we travelled to New Brunswick to present our Transitioning Children into Adoption and Openness workshops for the New Brunswick Adoption Foundation.

This seminar was absolutely fantastic. The presenter was very thorough and the material totally shaped our perspective - as prospective adoptive parents, I can't thank you enough. We are so grateful, and we feel very supported.

- Leslie, adoptive mom

youth



1800+

visits to the **Speak-Out Youth Zone**

Speak-Out Youth
group meetings **11**

fourteen
active members
and **five**
alumni | **133**
Twitter
followers

The youth were simply awesome and it was wonderful to hear their stories...so honest and open.

- MCFD social worker



Our Speak-Out Youth Group (SYG), a program for youth in and from government care, celebrated their fifth birthday.

Members delivered a workshop at the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) conference in Toronto in August. The youth shared their experiences working on the development of the **Speak-Out Youth Zone** website.

SYG members developed skills in website content and online engagement on the Speak-Out Youth Zone website.

They also had the chance to learn the ins and outs of print publishing with the creation of their second **Speak-Out Youth newsletter**.

The Speak-Out Youth Group **offered their voice** to projects and events with the Representative for Children and Youth, the Douglas College Child and Youth Care program, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, and Aunt Leah's Place.

advocacy

children and youth in
government care in BC

3 0 0 0 +

1032 children and
youth waiting to
be adopted in BC

children and
youth adopted
from care **210**

118 international
adoptions

infant adoptions
thirty one

13 direct placement adoptions



When Charmaine's passport application for her adopted daughter was rejected by Service Canada, she turned to CTV television to bring attention to a system that was unfairly discriminating against adoptive families. When Charmaine and CTV needed an expert voice on the subject they turned to AFABC for an on-camera interview.

"The federal government has to make the rules clearer, and make any exceptions and information required for them available to families," said Karen Madeiros, AFABC Executive Director.

The **Young Adult Support project (U-Count)** reached over 100 former youth in care, collecting their input on better supports for young people who have aged out. Youth were able to anonymously share their stories through in-person interviews and online surveys. Top issues for the youth were housing, education, support, and health care.

Twenty-five former youth in care applied for the first **Howard Legacy Youth Fund** early in 2014, and two BC youth will be awarded \$1000 each towards their post-secondary studies this summer.

finding families



We have to tell Anne she picked the very perfect family for me!

- Adoptee



Seventeen-year-old Maggie had been separated from her sister, who had been adopted at a young age. With her Wendy's Wonderful Kids worker's support and persistence, Maggie made the difficult decision to leave her foster home and to be adopted by her younger sister's family.

Maggie now has a family to cheer her on as she graduates high school this spring.

When served by a Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) worker, children are up to three times more likely to be adopted. This year, our WWK team celebrated the **finalization of 50 adoptions** for BC children who were in government care.

The WWK team also coordinated several multi-media **matching events** this year to provide a visual opportunity to "meet" the children and youth who are looking for families.

twelve adoptions
finalized in 2013

50 adoptions
finalized
since the WWK program launched.

family finding
completed for

7 children
and
youth

twenty
three
child-to-family
matches

awareness

1,047 Facebook followers
1,547 Twitter followers

41 mentions by news media

visits to bcadopt.com
85,000



Dozens of families kicked off Adoption Awareness Month in November with Leo the Lion and the BC Lions. Families also skated in Prince George, rode the carousel in Burnaby, and walked in the Santa Claus Parade in Victoria.

Newly redesigned bcadopt.com provides visitors an improved platform for adoption information, engagement, education and support.

This year, we Focus-ed on our magazine readers, too, and gave *Focus on Adoption magazine* a design makeover and a more colourful look,

while keeping much of the same, rich adoption-related content readers expect.

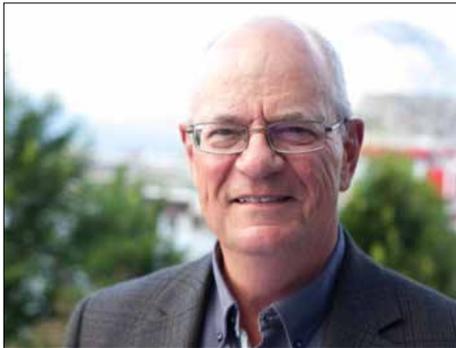
"I love reading other families' stories and the articles in *Focus*. It often puts the issues we're struggling with into perspective," says adoptive mom Cara.

Our **social media** followers helped us go viral when they shared adoption statistics on their Facebook pages. The image was shared 191 times and was seen by over 10,000 viewers.

I totally love your new website and the diversity in your images - it's wonderful to be represented in this tangible way in your resources, and I certainly feel supported by all of your staff.

- Sharon, adoptive mom

partners



**John Hardie Mitchell
Family Foundation**

Over the past nine years, we played a critical role in supporting the adoption community through an annual matching grant to AFABC. This matching grant inspires others to give, while funding services that provide children with the lifelong stability they need.

The John Hardie Mitchell Family Foundation was established in 1985 by one of Vancouver's historic founders. John Hardie Mitchell was well known for his influence, generosity, and innovative practices.

Jack Zaleski, Managing Director, John Hardie Mitchell Family Foundation



**vancouver
foundation**

We are proud to support AFABC's Speak-Out Youth Group, which gives youth a platform for sharing their voices and experiences with the foster care system in their own words.

Vancouver Foundation's Youth Homelessness Initiative is focused on preventing homelessness among youth formerly in government care by creating the right conditions and opportunities for them to succeed as adults. We work to strengthen community services to support vulnerable youth.

Mark Gifford, Director, Grants & Community Initiatives Vancouver Foundation



TELUS | Vancouver
community board™

We proudly supported the Adoptive Families Association of BC with a \$20,000 grant for their Speak-Out Youth Group program. Together we can help give voice to youth perspectives and support vulnerable children in our communities.

Each year, TELUS invests millions of dollars to support hundreds of registered charities across Canada. Our Community Board members choose programs that best meet our vision and clearly demonstrate a focus on improving outcomes for youth through innovative program delivery.

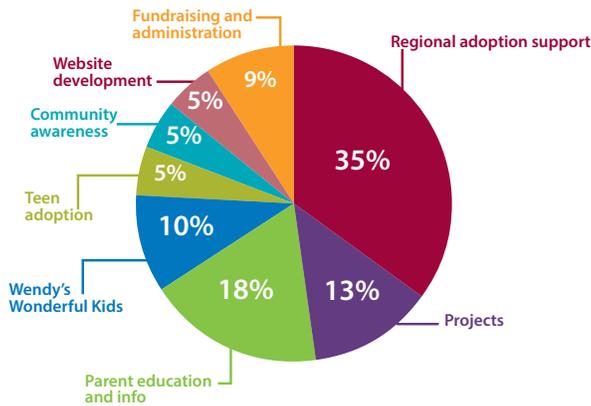
Nini Baird, Chair, TELUS Vancouver Community Board

Our donors help us help kids.

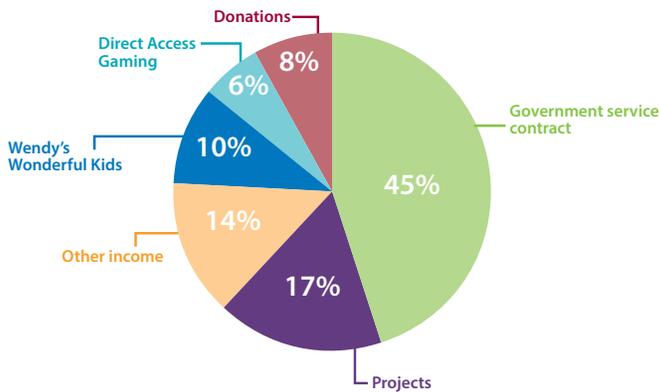
See the back page of this annual report for a complete list of donors.

year end report

2014 expenditures



2014 revenues



Highlights from the Treasurer

Fiscal 2014 was a year of steady growth and expansion. We utilized 22% more funds for ongoing programs and services such as the Adoption Education Program Online (AEP-Online) and the Adoption Channel. We were able to increase our geographical reach and services due to additional governmental funding and an increase in donations. Interest and investment income also helped to fund shortfalls in a number of areas including the AEP-Online, the Adoption Channel, community outreach, Focus on Adoption magazine, and the library. We will continue to invest in these areas as they are an integral part of our overall mission. In addition, we have invested over \$90K on revamping our website, which will provide more extensive information on all areas concerning adoption.

Expenditures	2014	2013
Programs, Services, and Projects		
Regional adoption support	\$ 585,301	\$ 482,426
Projects	221,276	250,548
Parent education and info	297,862	228,987
Wendy's Wonderful Kids	161,958	161,369
Teen adoption	90,631	50,367
Community awareness	86,525	74,950
	\$1,443,553	\$1,248,638
Website development	91,180	53,287
Fundraising and administration	158,061	141,701
	\$1,692,794	\$1,443,626

Revenues	2014	2013
Government service contract	\$ 715,812	\$ 666,375
Projects	270,311	319,429
Other income	225,072	127,419
Wendy's Wonderful Kids	160,231	162,129
Direct Access Gaming	100,000	100,000
Donations	131,609	81,320
	\$1,603,035	\$1,456,672

Financial position		
Assets	\$2,156,343	\$1,827,388
Liabilities	\$1,431,148	\$1,012,434
Restricted funds	\$485,071	\$565,904
Unrestricted surplus funds	\$240,124	\$249,050

While governmental service contracts and grants accounted for over 60% of our revenues, donations represented 8%. We will continue to diversify our revenue sources by investing in fundraising programs that will grow our donor base. We are proud to say that about 90% of our revenues were invested in programs, services and projects that benefited children and youth in need of a forever family.

The full set of financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2014, along with the auditor's report is available on our website at www.bcadopt.com.

thank you

Monthly Donors

Bryn Mackworth
David Egan
Edward Lyszkiwicz Professional Law Corporation
Eileen Woo
Harold Schellekens
John O'Meara
Karen Madeiros
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Family Partners (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

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Sook Ching Foundation
Social Venture Partners Vancouver
Victoria Foundation

Neighbourhood Partners (\$10,000-\$24,999)

John Hardie Mitchell Family Foundation
Telus Corporation
Vancouver Foundation

Community Partners (\$25,000 and up)

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
Fernwood Foundation
Ministry of Children and Family Development

thank you

to all of our *anonymous donors*

afabc

Board of Directors

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David Egan - Past-Chair
Charles Hill - Secretary
Evangeline Zhou - Treasurer
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Harold Schellekens
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Robin Sauve
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Management Team

Karen Madeiros – Executive Director
Janis Fry – Family Development and Clinical Services
Mary Caros – Development and Communications
Sophia Barton-Bucknor – Education and Youth Services
Susan Waugh – Business Systems and Technology

Adoption Support Coordinators

Cathy Gilbert – Victoria and South Island
Diane Dunbar – Central and North Island
Dianna Mortensen – Interior / Regional Team Lead
Jennifer Hillman – Fraser / In-home Support Worker
Randy Simpson – Vancouver Coastal
Selena Weiers – North Central and Thompson Cariboo
Sherrie Jones - North Peace River

Provincial Staff

Andrea McBeath – Social Media, Communications Coordinator
Anne Melcombe – Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter
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Chloe Good – Development Coordinator
Craig Ferguson – Research and Education Technology Coordinator
Erin Melvin – Education Coordinator
Kevin Vanier – Computer and Business Systems Coordinator
Kirsty Stormer – Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter
Maggie Robinson – Administrative Assistant
Rhonda Leach – Youth Engagement Coordinator
Rosie Patterson – Reception / Administrative Assistant
Sam Pothier – Project Lead: Youth Engagement and Development
Yvonne Devitt – Community Engagement Coordinator

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Our annual report is designed at AFABC. It is printed on recycled paper using vegetable based inks and low emission presses. Thank you to our partners at Blok Printing.



eclipseawards.com
MOMENTS OF EXCELLENCE

Our Adoption Awards are generously donated by Eclipse Awards.