



Adoptive Families
Association of BC



**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2015 – 2016

EXECUTIVE REPORT

This year, AFABC worked hard to keep ahead of the changing needs of adoptive families.

Vision

A family for every child

Mission

To promote and support adoption





It's hard to believe that we're at the end of another year and it's time to report on the successes of the Adoptive Families Association of BC (AFABC). If it weren't for the donors who believe in the work we do, the Board and volunteers who generously donate their time, and the staff who diligently implement the strategic plan, we would not be achieving this level of success for our community and clients. We are grateful for each and every one of you.

Finding a permanent family for every child in need is a long-time vision of AFABC. This year, 525 children and youth joined permanent families in BC through foster care, international, infant, and direct placement adoptions. Building a new family is rewarding, but it is also very hard work.

Board of Directors

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Mary Caros
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Our education and regional support teams helped over 3,000 clients get ready to adopt, build a toolbox of adoptive parenting skills, develop community networks, and receive real-time support when and where families needed it.

This winter, AFABC signed a memorandum of understanding with Métis Nation BC. This agreement to work cooperatively on adoption for Métis children is a real accomplishment, one which we know will enrich the lives of children, youth, and families for many years to come.

More youth are receiving integral support thanks to our youth department. This year we launched AgedOut.com, an integral resource for youth aging out of government care. We also provided financial assistance to five youth through bursaries, and helped 19 youth develop real-world skills through our Speak-Out Youth Group.

We have been diligent in working on the three pillars of our strategic plan: Geographic Reach, Sustainability, and Centre of Excellence. We're pleased to say that we have achieved the vast majority of the goals set out three years ago, and are looking ahead to the next three.

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

Bill Hartley Chair

Karen Madeiros Executive Director

AWARENESS

We believe informing the public about adoption requires sensitivity, humour, and an active presence in various online and offline spaces.

“I came across Matthew’s profile on AFABC’s website. When I first read it, it felt like we were the family he was looking for. At a matching event we made a beeline for Kirsty (AFABC recruiter), to watch Matt’s video. We watched it four times in a row and I just sat and cried. Not long after that his guardianship social worker chose our family to receive his profile. We finally met him almost a year since first reading his profile and it felt like coming home.”

– Lisa, adoptive parent

1854

Facebook
followers

2104

Twitter
followers

18

Media
requests

two

Television
broadcasts

eight

Radio
broadcasts

23

Print media
stories

34

Online media
mentions



THE NEED

Despite the growing visibility of adoption in popular culture, there are still myths and stereotypes about adoption, adoptive families, adoptees, and children and youth in institutions and in foster care. We work to inform the public about adoption and engage them in the realities of how adoption shapes our history, culture, and society.

139,000+

Visits to
bcadopt.com

OUR RESPONSE

In June we partnered with the Vancouver Sun to create a seven part series on adoption that painted a realistic, representative, and compassionate portrait of adoption in BC.

We also continued 1000 Families BC, a media awareness campaign in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). This campaign raises the profile of children and youth in foster care and informs the public that kids of all ages need families.

Packed with the latest in adoption perspectives, *Focus on Adoption* magazine draws readers from across Canada. Our summer issue of *Focus* featured an insert by our Speak-Out Youth group about teen permanence, and our winter issue celebrated our adoption community with the *Adoption in Action!* insert.

Just in time for Adoption Awareness Month, we produced four new videos that highlighted the faces of our community.

This year we also worked on the Caregiver Recruitment Campaign, a collaborative project between the MCFD, Aboriginal organizations, and the BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations in building awareness for foster caregivers in BC.

THE NEED

Each year, 300 families welcome children home through adoption. Prospective parents are provincially required to take an in-depth training course before they can adopt. New and experienced parents also need education and training to help them navigate the unique parenting, cultural, social, and health needs of an adoptive family. To best support their clients, child welfare professionals require up-to-date training on adoption and fostering practices, theories, and strategies.

EDUCATION

We believe everyone has a right to adoption education and training that is accessible, supportive, and able to meet various learning and cultural needs.

six
Face-to-face
workshops

95
Workshop
participants



“Thank you for the webinar! The presenter brought to life issues about openness with her own personal stories. We covered a lot of ground and it was a great refresher for what we learned in the AEP years ago.

–Audrey and Scott, adoptive parents

344
AEP-online
participants

OUR RESPONSE

This year, 344 prospective adoptive parents across BC took our accessible Adoption Education Program Online (AEP-Online), with a 93% graduation rate. We also successfully tested Adopting Teens and Tweens, our second in-depth online course that will be offered as expanded learning to parents considering teen adoption.

Over 350 parents and professionals were able to readily access adoption education thanks to our new on-demand webinar library. New topics like *Social Media and Adoption* and *Openness in Adoption* were added to the library, which now has over 20 titles with topics ranging from school to food and from identity to culture.

Four communities with a total of 92 participants participated in our Pathways child specific recruitment and family finding training. We delivered trainer and participant manuals to MCFD, in addition to teaching a four-day Pathways Trainer workshop.

Two intensive workshops for adoption professionals were presented in the Yukon: *Family Finding Boot Camp* and *Lighting the Fire of Urgency Boot Camp*.

18
Webinars

520
Webinar
participants



CHILD SPECIFIC RECRUITMENT

We believe that every child and youth is one caring adult away from being a success story.

55

Family finding cases

41

Family matches

“You could see his eyes light up when it finally sunk in that he did have a history, he did have a culture to be proud about, he did have a community of people who were pulling for him. The grin on his face was incredible.

– MCFD Social Worker

fifteen

Finalized adoptions

8/10

Placements made within the child's network.

21

Adoption placements

THE NEED

At the start of this year there were 941 children and youth in government care that were available to be adopted and 7,000 more in other stages of the foster care system. These kids need a permanent place to belong. Often, they also need to be reconnected to extended family and communities.

That's where our Child Specific Recruiters (CSRs) and Wendy's Wonderful Kids recruiters come in. They work not just to find a family to adopt the child, but to create a well-rounded sense of permanence and a network of supports so that these kids grow up knowing where they came from, who they belong to, where home is, and who will be "family" throughout their lives and into the next generation.

OUR RESPONSE

Last year, fifteen adoptions were finalized for children and youth on our CSR team's caseload. Our CSRs also made family matches for 41 kids, with half of these moving to the pre-adoption placements by year's end.

The team had a whopping 71 youth on their caseloads this year. Teens who work with a Child Specific Recruiter are three times more likely to find permanency than youth who are served by another form of adoption preparation and recruitment.

Our three CSRs and two Wendy's recruiters connected with Aboriginal groups from Namgis on Vancouver Island and Musqueam Nation in Vancouver, reconnecting children and youth with their extended families and their culture.

SUPPORT

We believe in empowering adoptive parents with tools to support their kids and themselves, while still providing them with a strong and supportive network of peers and professionals.

“It’s nice that I can reach out to other parents when I have a question and it also feels good to offer suggestions to newer families, too. To hear ‘You’re not alone in this’ calms a lot of doubt and sleepless nights. The fact that I can reach out to AFABC for extra help has been a lifesaver. They really get it.

– Allison, adoptive parent

THE NEED

There is no simple blueprint to being an adoptive family. New forms of openness, the inundation of social media, and more families adopting children and youth with special placement requirements are changing the adoption landscape and the needs of families. Our families are unique in their strengths and challenges, but we know they thrive with the advice, support, and kinship of others who have been in their shoes.

20

Waiting Child sessions

368

Waiting Child session participants

33

Family social events across BC

OUR RESPONSE

Across BC and Canada, 887 parents found connection and support in our 10 Facebook support groups. Over half of these parents told us they connected with families offline, too.

This year, we answered 1,383 requests for support from prospective, waiting, and current adoptive parents, and professionals. We also launched live chat support, giving clients another way to connect with Adoption Support Coordinators (ASCs) for specialized adoption support.

Our Family Camp Program provided financial support to camps for adoptive families like Families with Children from China, Ethiopian E Camp, and Mehaber Camp. Opportunities like these give kids the chance to see other families that look like their own.

Forty-two new families built a solid foundation to transition their kids home thanks to our PASS Program. This intensive, in-home program trains parents in therapeutic play, a non-directive style of interacting with toys as tools for communication.

Over 1,200 children, youth, and parents participated in 48 social events like Timberline Ranch Family Camp in Maple Ridge, skating in Victoria, family photo sessions in Taylor, bowling in Penticton, and much more!



887

Participants in 10
Facebook groups

1383

Requests for
support

YOUTH

We believe that youth in government care need permanent, positive, healthy connections and real-world, real-life skills to survive and thrive after age 19.

31,178

visits to the Speak-Out Youth Zone website



“*Thank you for brightening up my day and showing me that the Ministry hasn't forgotten about me.*

– AgedOut.com user

*Presentations made to **77 social workers** and **25 community agencies***

185

Facebook followers



“It’s a good group. We make a lot of friends and have fun. It’s the best group I know of! You’re not alone in the Speak-Out Youth Group.

– Janelle

THE NEED

Every year, over 600 youth age out of government care in BC when they turn 19. These young people are considered independent adults and no longer receive any financial or personal support from the government, foster parents, or social workers. Meanwhile, 92% of their peers who weren't in foster care continue to receive financial, social, and emotional support from their parents well into their twenties.

OUR RESPONSE

This year, our 15 Speak-Out Youth Group (SYG) members created connections at 21 group meetings, workshops, and events. They built real-world skills while working on the third annual *Speak-Out Youth* newsletter, the Speak-Out Youth Zone website, and a radio podcast project.

SYG members also created a poignant documentary about their experiences with permanency: *Striving for Permanence* will premiere in June 2016.

Seventy-seven social workers at 25 community agencies heard our SYG members advocate about the importance of permanency and adoption for youth in care.

Five adoptees and youth from government care received financial assistance through our Howard Legacy Youth Fund and AFABC Youth Bursary. These bursaries offer improved access to educational programs through financial assistance, which enhances educational outcomes for BC youth.

AgedOut.com is an interactive website designed to support and empower young people as they leave government care. This collaborative project between AFABC, MCFD, and a youth advisory group launched in June.

four
Alumni
members

15
Speak-Out
Youth group
members



15

Adoption awareness
month events held
across BC

COMMUNITY

We believe adoption strengthens our communities.

39

Infant and direct
placement adoptions



“We built our family through adoption and want to support AFABC. They helped us get started over 10 years ago. I talk with a lot of younger couples looking for answers about adoption and I always send them to the AFABC website. Sometimes I even give them a Focus magazine or business card. It helps to know where to begin and they often seem relieved to have a safe starting point.

– Ethan, adoptive dad

342

AFABC members

1191

Hours volunteered
to AFABC

117

International
adoptions

369

Foster care
adoptions

THE NEED

One in five Canadians are touched by adoption. We work to connect our families to the community at large, to normalize the adoption experience, and to celebrate the successes of our families.

OUR RESPONSE

In February we signed a landmark memorandum of understanding with Métis Nation BC to ensure our programs are sensitive to the needs of children and youth with Métis heritage and to keep kids connected to their culture.

Adoption Awareness Month is proclaimed each year by the Province of BC and we head out into the community to celebrate. This year we celebrated with our carnival-like Family Fun Day in Burnaby, joined Steve Nash Fitness Clubs for an exclusive preview of Cirque du Soleil's KOOZA, cheered on our BC Lions at a football game, walked in a parade in Duncan, and held games nights, family skates, and more!

We celebrated champions of the adoption community with the 2015-16 Adoption Awards. Anne Clayton was recognized for her dedication to improving outcomes for children and youth in government care. Also recognized were longtime volunteer Sandra Banks; Insight Support Services for their work at the annual Kamloops Family Fun Day; longtime donors Treena and Kevin Innes; The Victoria Foundation, for their work with the Lex Reynolds Adoption and Permanency Trust Fund; and Lori Culbert, Tracy Sherlock, and the Vancouver Sun for the BC Adoption series that painted a realistic portrait of adoption in British Columbia.

FUNDRAISING

We believe how we fundraise is a reflection of our community; it personally connects us with individuals and organizations that want to see us succeed.

“We give to AFABC because they helped us through our adoption process. We value and want to support their programs. It’s important. Also, the people we have met through AFABC are first class!

– Erick and Taylor, adoptive parents



342

Donations
to AFABC

16

Corporate
donors

14

Charitable
foundation
donations





THE NEED

Providing services across such a large and diverse province requires the financial support of many community partners. Everything we do requires funds: from postage for our library services to ensure parents in the Kootenays can borrow materials to workshops in Northern BC for family finders to understand the need for finding permanent connections for foster youth. Developing new programs for emerging areas, like older child adoption and Aboriginal permanency options, requires extensive resources, time, and partnership.

OUR RESPONSE

This year, corporate donors and charitable foundations helped us through financial contributions, in kind donations such as free night stays from our partner Accent Inns, and hands-on assistance like the marketing expertise from our SVP Vancouver partners. We also entered into an exciting new partnership as the charity of choice for Steve Nash Fitness Group.

Individual donors also made a big impact with their financial contributions, including our monthly donors who allow us to plan and develop multiple program areas as needs within the adoption community change. Individual donor Peggy Howard was also nominated for a Victoria Leadership Award for her work in creating the Howard Legacy Youth Fund, a bursary that supports former youth in care who pursue post secondary education.

Our donors also help us engage our community through great contests and giveaways, including tickets to the Vancouver Whitecaps FC, BC Lions, and Theatre Under the Stars; silver jewelry for Mother's Day from Taraxca Jewelry; and camera prizes for our photo contest from Broadway Camera.

A heartfelt thank you to all of our donors and supporters. Your gifts are lifting up the lives of children, youth, and families all across BC.

YEAR END

Highlights from the Treasurer

Fiscal 2016 was another year of growth and expansion with revenues and expenditures increasing 11% and 15%, respectively. Areas in focus this year were expanding education programs for parents and launching AgedOut.com for youth.

Government service contracts and project grants continued to account for over 60% of our revenues, while donations have increased significantly and represented 11% (7% in fiscal 2015). To support the above programs, we will continue to diversify our revenue sources by investing in fundraising initiatives that will grow and broaden our donor base. To support this strategy, a new director of fund development role was created. We are proud that about 90% of our revenues were invested in programs, services, and projects that benefited children, youth, and families.

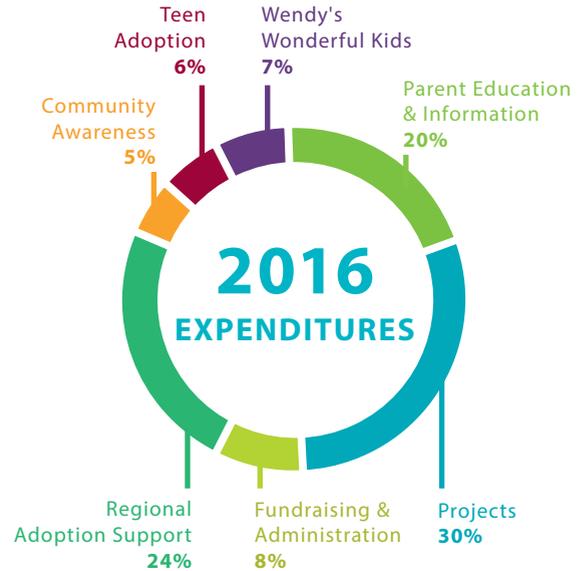
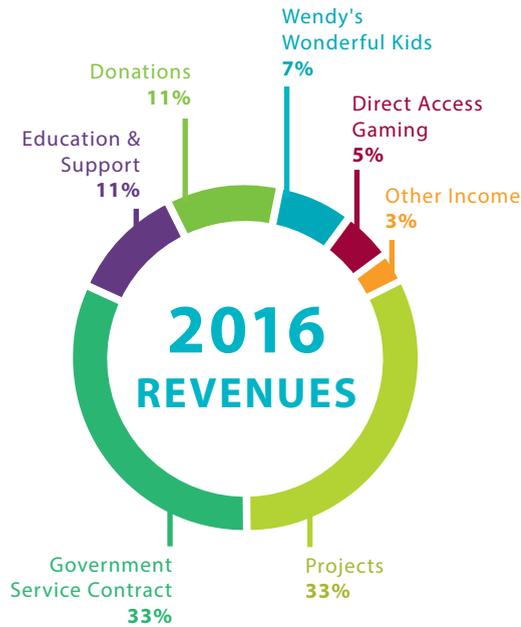
During the year, a surplus of \$11K was earned. In addition, we have been able provide much needed funding for summer camps for adopted children and their families and five bursaries for youth. It is also important to note that approximately 1,200 hours of volunteer hours were generously provided to AFABC to support its various program areas, all of which are not reflected in the financial results.

The full set of financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2016, along with the auditor's report are available on our website at www.bcadopt.com



FINANCIAL POSITION

	2016	2015
Assets	\$1,795,847	\$2,462,035
Liabilities	989,549	1,664,188
Restricted funds	549,062	553,672
Unrestricted surplus funds	257,236	244,175



REVENUES

	2016	2015
Government service contract	\$720,920	\$714,725
Projects	715,522	556,720
Education and support	238,910	230,981
Donations	235,319	131,104
Wendy's Wonderful Kids	156,553	151,182
Direct Access Gaming	105,000	100,488
Other Income	58,642	128,876
TOTAL	\$2,230,866	\$2,014,076

EXPENDITURES

	2016	2015
<i>Programs, services, and projects</i>		
Regional adoption support	\$536,942	\$548,231
Projects	661,581	511,573
Parent education and information	446,549	391,051
Wendy's Wonderful Kids	156,546	153,199
Teen adoption	127,334	73,389
Community awareness	114,424	101,776
SUBTOTAL	\$2,043,376	\$1,779,219
Fundraising and Administration	179,039	162,205
TOTAL	\$2,222,415	\$1,941,424

thank you

Every gift builds a future.

www.bcadoption.com/donate

SPIRIT PARTNERS (\$100-\$199)

BC Lions Football Club
Darlene Glasner
Guildford Town Centre
Jacqueline Robinson
Lori Rose
Marion Wilkinson
Mona Brash
Nakamura / Sewell Family
Smarty Pantz Escape Room
United Way of Calgary and Area
Vancity Community Foundation
Vivian and Doug McCollor

COMMUNITY PARTNERS (\$200-\$499)

Barbera Ann Pretty
Bert Hendriksen
Donald Mark
Heidi Arais
Heming, Wyborn & Grewal
Hollyburn Family Services
IMAGEN Promo
Jennifer Hillman
Katherine Snelling
Mandy Johnson
Mark Bailey
Robin Sauve
Schmidt & Funk Financial
Stephen Reichert
Treena Innes
Trina & Stuart Rowles
Vancouver Whitecaps FC

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERS (\$500-\$4,999)

Accent Inns
Al Roadburg Foundation
Bill Hartley
Broadway Camera
Chimp Foundation
Community Foundation
David Egan
Ed Lyszkiewicz
Edward Lyszkiewicz Professional
Law Corporation
Harold Schellekens
Jodi Regts
Karen Madeiros
Kevin Innes
Larry Achtemichuk
P'nina Shames
Provincial Employees Community
Services Fund
Rachel Harrington
Sonja Weissenbacher
Spencer Creo Foundation
WestJet

FRIENDSHIP PARTNERS (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Lex Reynolds Adoption and
Permanency Trust Fund
Peggy Ann Howard
Pug Pharm Productions
Taraxca Imports Ltd.

FAMILY PARTNERS (\$10,000-\$24,999)

Chris Spencer Foundation
Steve Nash Fitness World and Sports Club
Telus Corporation
United Way of the Lower Mainland
Victoria Foundation

LEGACY PARTNERS (\$25,000 and up)

Fernwood Foundation

May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

SVP Vancouver

Adoptive Families
Association of BC

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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.



Our Adoption Awards are generously
donated by Eclipse Awards

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