September 2021 charitable #884476904 RR0001

Kids Can Fly Annual Report 2020-2021

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Kids Can Fly– Early Child Development & Parent Support/ Incorporation # 156380 March 2003

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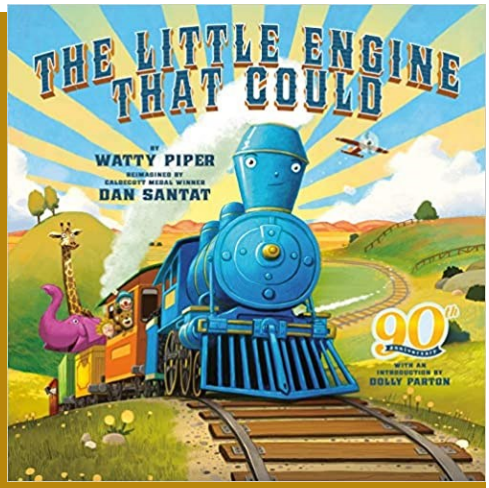
Jane Flinders .
Parachute/ Launch Pad
Alicia Moffat

KIDS CAN FLY TURNS 20!

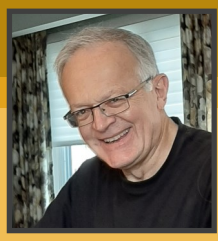


Just like the Little Engine that Could—Kids Can Fly has been chugging along for 20 + years now – a small but mighty contributor in our community. The constant obstacle of getting over the mountain of raising funds has been successfully achieved all these years thanks to our supporters. The foundation cargo remains built on the research of the late Dr Fraser Mustard and children and families are benefitting from quality early learning supports. There are more cars on the train including Launch Pad drop in programs, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Postpartum Depression supports, Roots of Empathy and more. The engine is still powered by the spirit of staff, volunteers and supporters who keep up the mantra" .....

Executive Director Sharon Brooks

"This was a year like no other! The needs of parents were at an all time high and our ability to raise funds was the most limited ever! We are very grateful to our loyal donors and sponsors for supporting our work. We saw postpartum depression cases quadruple- and added extra programs to try to meet this need. We started a program for women having a new baby and trying to deal with the isolation and fear of the virus. We pivoted to bring programs into the home of families virtually and thanks to our talented staff reached a wider audience than ever! Imagination Library was not impacted and the books arriving monthly were a source of normalcy and joy to families. Kids Can Fly turned 20 in 2021 and I am proud to have been piloting this charity for the full two decades. **We are still giving our children the skills to soar!"**

I THINK I CAN I THINK I CAN I THINK I CAN!



Board Chair—Richard Cook Kids Can Fly is 20 years old! Amazing! Many thanks and congratulations to our Executive Director Sharon Brooks who has helmed this ship since it first set sail 2 decades ago. Covid made our 2020-2021 year challenging, particularly in two significant ways. Firstly, our in-person programs could not continue. Our Executive Director and our program facilitator Jane Flinders pivoted quickly & creatively to provide continuing contact (either on-line or in acceptable physically-distanced environments) for, our clients. While a new on-line program by Jane and her granddaughter Lucy helped reach our existing families, its special brand of sunshine was accessed and enjoyed by many others within and well beyond our own local community. Secondly, our major annual fundraising events, for the first time, could not take place. Outside-the-box thinking enabled us to present an on-line version of our annual Royal Tea and our popular Storybook Breakfast events. Other major fundraisers, such as Movie Marathon and the Superhero event, simply could not happen. As uncertainties around Covid remain, finances will continue to be a major challenge throughout the coming year. Thanks to our staff, Board, volunteers, and donors who have stood by Kids Can Fly through this unusual year. A special thanks to our various funding supporters whose encouragement and financial assistance has been a blessing that I cannot find adequate words to express our appreciation for. You have enabled us to continue to support families and to work to improve life for local children. I wish to thank Roger Duck of Digital Duck for his assistance and expertise (or should I say magic) in making our virtual events this past year possible and more professional-looking. Although Covid challenges will continue to be with us into this coming year, the Board will continue to face the uncertain future with optimism, creativity, and determination. We look forward to you joining us in this mission and adventure.

Launch From Home!

Annual Report
March 2020 -February 2021 **Respectfully submitted by Jane Flinders RECEC**

Timeline: March 6,7,8 I attended the The Best Start Conference in Toronto which was amazing and got me very excited about sharing The Brain Story Certification. The following week felt like a twilight zone experience in that each day we were confounded with more information almost hourly about this new virus that was hitting North America. The week of March 15 to 21 was March break for our school systems . Launch Pad is closed during this time. By the middle of the week March 9 we were discussing that we would make modifications to the Parachute program that we offered on Wednesday afternoons so that it would not include baby cuddlers. By Friday March 13 we realized we would not be meeting at all for this program . There was talks of of extended shutdowns of schools until the end of March possibly. We had entered a whole new era of trying to figure out how to continue the work of engaging and supporting families and new parents. I feel we hit the floor running!

Jane and her granddaughter Lucy were a huge hit with the families isolating at home.

Launch Pad

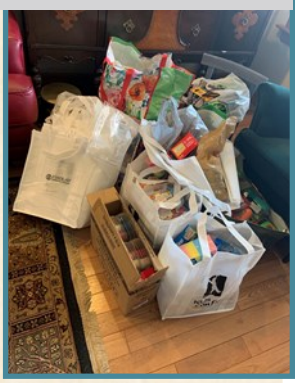
Launch Pad closed it's onsite classroom located at Graham Bell Victoria School on March 12, 2020. We did not "close down" our support and programming to families. We soon regrouped and I began to offer "live" music and story times on Kids Can Fly Facebook pages weekly. My granddaughters became my very popular co-host. The filming was done by my daughter in law Jessica Flinders and filmed in my living room.

By May 2020 we had 30 families registered to receive a programming bag including a book, craft materials, a newsletter full of more ideas, and homemade play-dough.

Lucy and our board chair Richard Cook AKA Spiderman

Each week I created a video of Lucy and I on an adventure to post on Tuesdays, Wednesday we offered the "live" music/story time and on Thursday we spent half an hour in a zoom play group where we tried to create connection with our past and new families we were reaching. Our Wednesday Facebook videos may weeks reached well over 1000 views and it seemed that not just children were watching. Many adults and past friends of Launch Pad let me know they found the presentations fun and comforting. As always the Kids Can Fly Board came together to offer ideas and hands on of putting together these activity bags that have continued to go out to families in our community for this whole year. Families who registered each month would porch pick up their bag. Some bags were delivered when families were unable to pick up.

PACKED LAUNCH FROM HOME BAGS >



When it was deemed safe, still social distancing we began to meet in Mohawk Park on Wednesday at 10:00 am for our story/music time. We continued to Facebook live this experience as well. We took a very soft promotion approach to our weekly park visits. There was usually 8 to 12 families that would attend each week. Because weather was agreeable we were able to meet in the park right into October. Thank you to those who worked with me to provide this programming including Alicia Moffat, Roger Duck, Board members Leslie, Heidi and Richard. Sharon created amazing newsletters for the families and hands on support. It is so rewarding being part of such a caring team.

Storybook Breakfast Picnic

Storybook Breakfast is our largest fundraiser and we were determined to do whatever was needed to run it.

The loyalty of our sponsors and hard work and creativity of our volunteers resulted in a magical event where the characters came to the children's homes—delivering a bag full of picnic food, books and activities. We hired author– illustrator **Werner Zimmerman** to do perform virtually and do a Draw a Long. Roger Duck from **Digital Duck** produced a full program which included skits by **Whimsical Players**, **Jane and Lucy Flinders** doing music and our Chair—**Richard Cook** as MC. We raised **$24000** which Is quite close to our normal profit! We were gratified to learn how excited children were to have a character visit their home and believe we achieved all of our goals including a focus on the enjoyment of reading books.

Our loyal sponsors stuck with us during this pivot and we are very grateful!

PAUL AND MARGOT WILLIAMSON

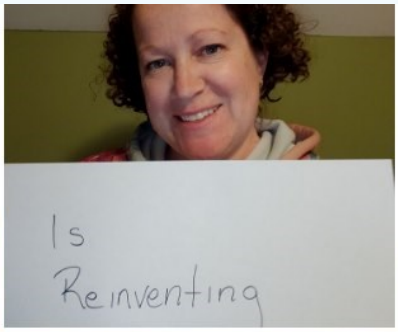
JAMES F BOUGHNER FOUNDATION

TERRACE HILL MEDICAL CENTRE

Longo's

FINDLAY
Personal Injury Lawyers

2020—2021 Financial Report



BOARD MEETINGS ON ZOOM BECAME THE NORM THIS YEAR.

We missed being together but it did not dampen our spirit to help children and families in Brantford Brant

Dr. Ryan Van Lieshout, MD, PhD, FRCPC

Ryan is a perinatal psychiatrist with more than 10 years of experience treating women with psychotherapy and/or medications during pregnancy and the postpartum period. He wrote the Canada's national clinical practice guidelines for the treatment of perinatal depression and co-authored Public Health Ontario's Perinatal Mental Health Toolkit. He has published more than 170 papers on maternal perinatal health and offspring neurodevelopment in scientific journals and is the Canada Research Chair in the Perinatal Programming of Mental Disorders at McMaster University. He has a 4-year-old daughter and lives just outside of Hamilton.

Roots of Empathy

Due to COVID 19 we made the difficult decision to put the Roots of Empathy Program on pause during the 2020– 2021 school year.

CBT RESEARCH for postpartum depression

Kids Can Fly is proud to continue our partnership with Dr. Ryan VanLieshout and McMaster University on Cognitive Behaviour Therapy research. Women who have recovered from Post partum Depression, train and facilitate the workshops under the Dr's auditing. Results have been extre3mely positive both in the mother's recovery and the baby's stress levels as monitored. COVID 19 forced these groups to go virtual and the positive results were that they were almost equally successful, attendance was improved and it demonstrated that this can be done virtually which bodes well for providing this method to women in northern Ontario or other remote areas where group attendance would be challenging. Sadly during the pandemic the incidence of PPD increased but we were able to add extra groups and provided support for almost 4 times the women as we had been. With funding from the Ontario Brain Institute grant we hired **Robin Brennan** as a research assistance and she has done an amazing job of helping to recruit, screen and build enrolment in the classes by local and area moms who can attend via ZOOM. Our dedicated facilitators took on extra classes to be sure women were supported.

Alesia is very excited that her Dolly Parton's Imagination Library book was written by a REAL astronaut—Canadian Chris Hadfield >

Nolan enjoyed reading the book he received from Storybook Picnic with his mom

The pandemic did not allow us to run our annual ECE Awards Banquet but we wanted to bring some public appreciation to our front line early learning professionals. During this time they were challenged to the maximum; reinventing how they provided safe, quality care to children, families and their peers. This was compounded by having to deal with the real concern and stress for their own health, Every year we want to celebrate and thank them but in 2020 we were humbled by their professionalism, dedication and determination.

They were SUPER HEROES!

Funding from Child Care Services allowed us to create lawn signs to thank them and the ECE Committee blanketed the community with the signs.

Kids Can Fly staff, Sharon Brooks, Alicia Moffat and Jane Flinders putting up signs.

2020 E.C.E. Awards Brant

Cooking with Audrey

Audrey is Food Network Canada's Junior Chef Showdown Champion

Kids Can Fly invites you to join us for Cooking With Audrey MacKinnon

Thursday, July 30th • 7 p.m.

You can live stream this event by making a donation to Kids Can Fly
Go to **www.kidscanfly.ca** to access the link

Kids Can Fly is thrilled to show case Audrey's culinary skills!
There will be draw prizes and an online cooking lesson

This event is sponsored by our local Farm Boy store

Showcasing the power of youth in our community.

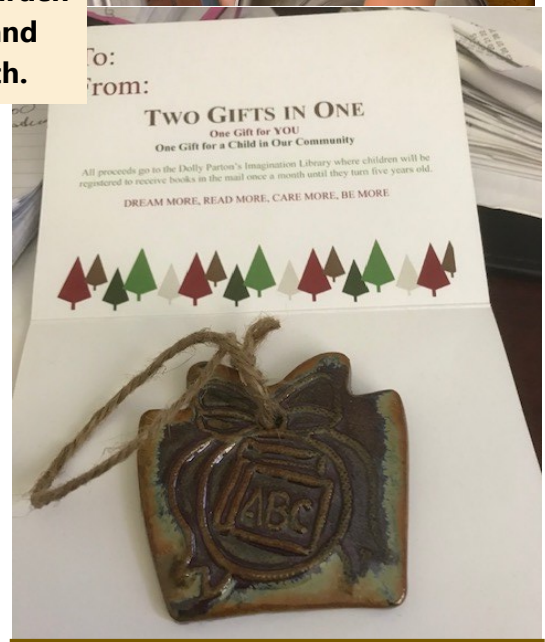
Covid 19 made group fundraisers difficult. We engaged Canadian Junior Chef Champion Audrey MacKinnon to do an online Cooking Event for children and then had her as the Celebrity Chef for a garden dinner at Donn Zvers. This raised some money for Kids Can Fly and helped to showcase this amazing accomplishment of a local youth.

Sadly our Movie Marathon and Super Hero Events were cancelled due to Covid 19

ROYAL TEA FUNDRAISER

We pivoted and made our Royal Tea a virtual event thanks to Roger Duck of Digital Duck, Richard Cook our MC and Donn Zver providing take away Tea Boxes from Café Troy.
Guests booked online and volunteers delivered the delicious treat boxes complete with a tea bag in time to enjoy during the virtual program.
Musical entertainment, Tea Trivia and of course greetings from the Queen herself were part of the fun.

We raised $5000 for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library!



The Christmas Ornament from Donn Zver was a gift this year and we sold $8000 worth. Funds support Imagination Library

Respectfully submitted by Jane Flinders RECEC

In early March moms were meeting at TB Costain Community Centre each Wednesday afternoon for music time then the baby cuddlers would slip into the rooms and the moms would slip out of the room to enjoy a time of sharing challenges and experiences of their new mom role all over a cup of tea. At this time we had 6-8 moms regularly attending our group. When COVID-19 concerns made it evident that we could not come together physically we immediately transitioned to a Zoom virtual room. Many of the moms found this very challenging . For a variety of reasons a number of our group chose not participate in the Zoom. Each week we would have 3-5 participants. When the weather was good and it was safe to do so we met in Mohawk Park for a socially distanced music time. It was wonderful to check in with the many moms that did not feel comfortable in Zoom virtual room. Each week on Tuesday from about June until October approximately 8-12 moms and babies met up at Mohawk Park. I also live videoed the music time on the Parachute Facebook page. When the weather was too cool we once again reverted back to Zoom only each week. Our topics included sleep, self-care, anxiety, introducing solids, self-compassion. Each week was a check in and sometimes the topic was a parent driven reflection what the moms needed to talk about. During the pandemic we delivered care bags with goodies for the moms and baby activity bags at 4 different times. The Launch from Home bags were not age appropriate (safe) for the babies so a special bag was created for them including a newsletter and activities

HUGS4NewMoms

This program evolved as we realized that new moms were really struggling with isolation at the begi9nning of the pandemic. The absence of support from family members and connection with other moms was making this transition really hard. . Experiencing childbirth in February, March, April of 2020 was not they way these moms envisioned life with a new baby. In a normal world you would have baby showers, family and friends visiting you, attending mom and baby groups on early child development sites. In our COVID 19 world grandparents were at risk to leave their homes and even visit the new baby. New moms not only had to experience the role as a new parent in a lot of isolation but they also experienced grieving the lost experience of sharing their new baby with friends and family all with the undercurrent of stress of keeping safe from a a possibly deadly virus. In April of 2020 **HUGS** began on in the spring on Mondays at 10:00 am in Zoom format . We soon had a consistent group of moms that would join us. What was magical about meeting in a Zoom room you did not have to live in the same town. We would regularly have 6-8 moms come together each week. One of the moms was from Toronto, Woodstock and Haldimand -Norfolk. This group was very group directed with me facilitating in a minimum way. . This group of moms developed friendships and would connect outside of our Monday Zoom meetup. A highlight was a Christmas Photo shoot with 10 moms who came individually to Mohawk Park for a Christmas photo with their baby in the snow. Carissa Muise, one of the moms - did the photos

20 YEARS Kids Can Fly Giving our children the skills to soar

Kids Can Fly has always been proud to be a catalyst—to be able to pivot and address current community needs of parents and children. The COVID 19 Crisis challenged us to do things in different ways to best support families. We feel we met this challenge and surpassed it. We look forward to another 20 years providing more of the same.

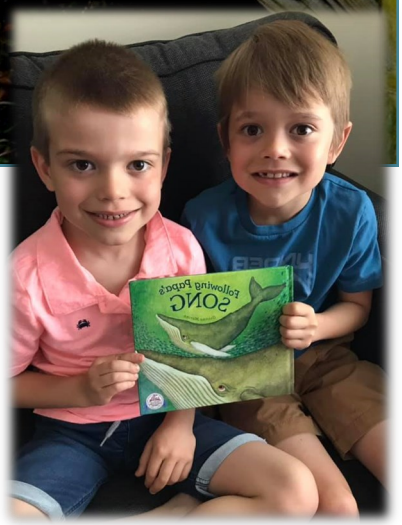
Simple. Effective.

Kids Can Fly works to builds a foundation for reading and learning through providing books from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Our commitment is to enroll children, promote the program, and raise $50.00 per child each year which results in a significant and positive change. The Dollywood Foundation manages the selection and distribution of books.

Alicia Moffat Imagination Library Coordinator

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library provided normalcy during Covid 19 for families. When libraries and book stores were closed—the books kept being delivered to homes via the mail. We are so thankful this year especially for all of the sponsorship of community partners and donors as well as the efforts of our volunteers to raise funds. A major contribution from S.C. Johnson is allowing us to grow and maintain our numbers which is enriching our community. Families provide feedback on how much they love this free program!

Thanks to so many wonderful supporters, S.C Johnson, Donn Zver, Brant Community Foundation, Rotary Club of Brantford Sunrise, the County of Brant, City of Brantford and so many individual donors.



~DREAM MORE~

"You can never get enough books into the hands of enough kids! "

DOLLY PARTON

163946

Books have been sent to children in Brantford/Brant since the program started here in 2010

241442

Books were mailed from April 2020 to March 31, 2021

1875

Brantford/Brant Children enrolled in the program

3249

have graduated.

25%

Of all children under 5 living in Brantford/Brant County are enrolled in the program as of March 31, 2021