

2019-20

*Activities
and
Achievements*

plea

KidStart

Our Story



156 children
were served this
year



10 years is the
average age
children are
matched with a
mentor

“You can walk around trouble if you have somewhere to walk and someone to walk with.”

- Ann Alexander, KidStart Co-Founder

About Us

KidStart is a one-to-one volunteer mentoring program for children aged 6-12 who are at risk of experiencing serious difficulties in their lives. Our goals are to provide each child with opportunities to develop a supportive relationship with a caring adult, to experience a sense of personal achievement, and to strengthen their resilience. We recruit, select, and support volunteer mentors who are consistent and positive role models. They meet weekly with the child they are assigned to and engage them in a variety of community activities that are fun and have the potential to create new interests, discover inherent talents and abilities, and reinforce strengths.

We served 156 children this year. 62% were female, and 38% were male. The average age when their file was opened with us was 10 years old.

“Thank you so much for everything everyone does at KidStart. This program has helped me and my family through so much.”

- KidStart participant

“The mentors are caring, kind and have the best interests of the children they serve.”

- KidStart stakeholder

“I like that it helps me with my problems and lets me connect with someone”

- KidStart participant

Our Achievements



68 children and youth went to summer camp



Increased the monthly honoraria to \$40 per month/ volunteer mentor



Each year we seek to improve KidStart and make our program more effective and efficient in helping children. This year, we...

Educated the public on the 'benefits of mentorship'

In speaking to post-secondary institutions, as well as partaking in many career fairs, our team was able to connect with individuals looking to help their communities. We received 180 applications to be a KidStart mentor and of these 59 were matched with a child.

Refreshed our orientation process for new volunteer mentors

We now have a new orientation booklet which is reviewed by each new volunteer mentor alongside their coordinator. Volunteers also participated in an in-person group training with a PLEA Registered Clinical Counsellor on Boundaries and Trauma Informed Practice.

Relaunched KidStart for children aged 6-12s in the Tri-Cities

The decision to do so was due to an increase in demand for this type of support for children of this age group who are living in this community. So far 6 children have benefited from this program. Next year we hope to help many more.

Increased the honoraria provided to volunteer mentors from \$30 per month to \$40 per month

This is the first time these have been increased since KidStart began more

than 35 years ago. Mentors have been excited to expand some of the activities they engage in with their mentees.

Held group activities for mentors and mentees to connect in the community

They included a cooking class, arts and crafts and pottery workshops, a trip to science world and pumpkin carving.

Sent 68 children and youth to camp this year through our Summer Camp Fund

Many of the popular camps include those that feature horseback riding such as Timberline and Webb's Holiday Acres. Camps through YMCA of Greater Vancouver, Camp Jubilee and camps through the Boys and Girls Club of South Coast BC are also popular. The camp fund continues to be a big success with many participants looking forward all year to participate.

Received 188 tickets from Kids up Front

These tickets enabled KidStart mentees and their mentors to attend concerts and sporting events. Theatre under the Stars, Bard on the Beach and the Vancouver Canucks were big hits with our mentors and mentees this year! The total estimated value of these tickets is \$5,830.

“Have a little adventure, encourage them to be curious, work on their capacity to learn, honour their dreams, let them feel joy, let them be the kids they see on TV for once but most of all just spend time with them having fun.”

– Ann Alexander, KidStart Co-Founder

“I can really see a difference in my mentee from the beginning to present. My mentee shows more confidence and I can truly say that they look forward to my company.”

– KidStart Volunteer Mentor

Our Participants



78% of kids said yes to “Overall, KidStart has helped me”



85% of kids said “My Mentor has helped me try new things”

The children we work with experience both big and little triumphs. The following illustrate the kind of growth and development that can occur with the support and guidance of their mentors:

Peter's Story

James was matched with a young boy, Peter, who presented with some challenges relating to change – he liked doing the same things and never wanted to try anything new. This was something Peter's mother had struggled with for a long time. At the introduction meeting, James asked Peter if he wanted to try Geocaching but Peter said he just wanted to work on his computer and wasn't interested in trying anything new. On their first outing, James convinced Peter to give geocaching a shot. He loved it so much that it became one of their favourite activities to do together and they even created some geocaches of their own.

Monika's Story

Monika and her mentor Lisa have been matched for only 4 months so far, but Lisa has had a big impact on her mentee. Lisa made a care package for Monika during the Covid-19 pandemic which had lots of neat art supplies for Monika to do while she was at home. Monika's mom reported "Lisa's an amazing person and a wonderful and thoughtful mentor to Monika. She was able to get her interested in Kickboxing too! I just wanted to thank you so much again for what KidStart has done for us!"

Izzie and Dana's Story

Izzie and Dana are two sisters who were both referred to KidStart. While they were hesitant to initially meet their new mentors, they quickly warmed up to the idea of having someone to spend time with after deciding "they were pretty cool". They both have been connected ever since and continue to enjoy their outings with their mentors including going for ice cream and bowling!

Sophie's Story

Jan and her mentee, Sophie, were matched in 2012. Sophie was a shy young girl who was having challenges both academically and socially. Sophie's younger sister has autism, so much of her parents' attention is focused on the needs of her sister. Because of this, Sophie did not have a lot of opportunities to get out of the house. While Jan and Sophie's initial time together was short and quiet, the visits soon became longer, laughter-filled outings. Highlights include watching an exclusive dress rehearsal of Ballet BC's *The Nutcracker*, going snowshoeing, and running into Ryan Reynolds downtown and snapping a photo with him! Fast forward 8 years later, and Sophie completed high school with honours, while working part time to save for her education, and was accepted into the psychology program at Simon Fraser University. It's clear this is just the beginning of a lifelong relationship for the two.

“Love that there is a place and time to talk about struggles and triumphs with other volunteers...love that you provide trauma awareness training... love that there is always a newsletter with things happening in the community available.”

– KidStart Volunteer Mentor

“One experience can change a life. We have seen it. We have seen it in their faces.”

– Ann Alexander, PLEA Co-Founder

Our Volunteers



29 mentors
celebrated
2 years with us



9 mentors
celebrated
5 years with us



"There are not enough words to express our gratitude for all that our volunteers do for our program. They are a huge component of what makes KidStart so special, and this program would simply not exist without the unwavering enthusiasm, passion, and selflessness displayed by each and every volunteer."

-Arnel Gabriel, Coordinator of Volunteers

We are lucky to be supported by a roster of 156 volunteers who dedicate a significant amount of time to the child they are matched with.

*We acknowledge them here:

Al-Bariq Ali	Heman Ly	Natalie Cinitis
Alexandra Nicolas	Iris Ting	Neoma Parent
Angelika Hipolito	Jannie Ko	Nicole Hildebrand-Edgar
Annie Wang	Jason Speidel	Noelle Cheung
Anurada Amarasekera	Jenny Furuc	Paige Dong
Avneet Basra	Jon Satok	Patricia Belanger
Balraj Panesar	Joseph Heldal	Rachel Allan
Beverley Hart	Julia Gallicano	Ry Forsythe
Breanna Kray	Julia Zepedeo	Ryan Wu
Calvin Ha	Kait Huziak	Sabrina Haloulakos
Carissa Gauthier	Karen Forsyth	Stephanie Hipkin
Celine Modschielder	Katly Macmillan	Taya Umrikhina
Clemcy Gomez	Lisa Simion	Taylor Krieg
Courtney Mcmillan	Madison Klettke	Toby Mustill
Darren Barnfield	Margaret Erickson	Tom Larose
Dimitris Andriopoulos	Maria Angoso	Trevor Maxwell
Dylan McCansh	Maya Peled	Vaneesha Singhawachna
Elizabeth Gregory	Michael Song	Wesley Shum
Galacia Tan	Michaela Brain	Zhenfu Lin
Ginny McLean	Monica Gosal	
Heather Symes	Nahida Hussain	

*Some volunteers wished to be anonymous

"Our volunteer mentors are the heart and soul of the KidStart Program. They selflessly dedicate their time, care, and attention, and have the ability to create significant positive change in the life of a child. They inspire us all to look at the different ways we can give back to our communities."

-Erika Fryer, Coordinator of Volunteers

Our Donors

Kids Up Front provided us with \$5830 worth of event tickets for our participants



Thank You!

We are extremely thankful to have such incredible supporters who have donated funds to KidStart over the years. These supporters have been vital to our success and growth of both the program and the children it serves. Whether it is a small or large contribution, every dollar has helped us provide much needed to support to children facing challenges in their lives. We truly appreciate all current and past support, and in this report specifically acknowledge the following who gave \$500 or more this fiscal year:

Community Partners

BC Council for Families
Family Services of Greater Vancouver
United Way of the Lower Mainland

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Delta Land Development
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Pedro Espinoza
RBC, Kingsway & Nanaimo Branch
Roofing Contractors Association of BC
Safeway/Sobeys
TELUS Corporation
Vancouver Regional Construction Association-U40

Foundation

Ames Family Foundation
Andrew Mahon Foundation
Canadian Bank of Commerce (CIBC)
Childhood for Children Foundation

Gordon Fund, held at the Vancouver Foundation
Face the World Foundation
First West Foundation
Hamber Foundation
Reay & Lynda Mackay Fund held at Fiera Capital Foundation
Pacific Blue Cross Health Foundation
Phylliss & Irving Snider Foundation
RBC Foundation
Stewart Fund, held at the Vancouver Foundation
Volunteer for Children Fund, held at the Vancouver Foundation

Municipal

City of Surrey
City of Vancouver

Individuals

Ann Alexander
Britta West
Elaine Murray
Jen Graham
Joan Andersen
Joyce Preston
Judy Zelmer
Kera McArthur
Michael Jeffreys
Nancy Gordon
Paul Barnet
Tim Agg
Tim Veresh

We also gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.

“We are very lucky to have donors who are both generous and engaged. Their passion aligns with our purpose to make a difference - and supports us in creating real and positive change in the lives of the children we serve.”

– Tim Veresh, PLEA Executive Director

Most of the data provided in this report has been captured by our Case Administration Management System (CAMS). If you are interested in the capabilities of this software please contact us.

For more information on our services or to view our program annual reports go to

plea.ca

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Names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.

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