



Dr. Jay Children's Grief Centre

A home for grieving hearts

Building Strength, Resilience and Hope



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2017-2018**

MESSAGE FROM CHAIR OF THE BOARD

2017 was a good year at the Dr. Jay Children's Grief Centre (DJCGC). Reflecting on this year's highlights, the importance of resiliency emerges as a key theme. The DJCGC does so much and yet there is always so much more to do. The demand for our services continues to rise while the lives of the families we work with are becoming increasingly complex. This has provided us with the opportunity to be more agile and innovative. Even with a significant increase in the number of palliative and traumatic grief counselling referrals to the Centre, we were able to respond fluidly to the changing and challenging circumstances of our clients.

We piloted a successful 6-week caregiver group program; we journeyed to the northern Indigenous community of Mistissini, QC to share our specialized experience; we engaged in extensive knowledge transfer and resource development with other professionals locally and nationally; we expanded the capacity of Camp Erin Toronto to support more campers and volunteers than we had capacity for; Family Night event attendance tripled; and we found a beautiful new home at 250 Davisville Ave. Through it all, we remained true to our vision, mission, values and commitment to excellence.

Drawing on this momentum into 2018-19, the Board and staff will engage in developing a new strategic plan to set the DJCGC on a path to enhanced success. We are excited about executing long-term initiatives that are both responsive to emerging community needs and will ensure a sustainable future. The DJCGC program synopses, client stories and testimonials in this Annual Report reflect the impact of our work in engaging and developing best practices in the field of children's grief work. We hope that it will give you a clear sense of the vital role the Centre plays in the social services field.

Our supporters are the pillars upon which we build. You inspire us in sharing a vision to ensure that each child, youth, family or community that has been impacted by death will have access to our services when they need it most. Your compassion provides hope and resilience. You empower us with your generosity. We are deeply grateful for your ongoing support. It is heartening knowing that, together, donors, partners, volunteers, staff, Board and clients of the Dr. Jay Children's Grief Centre are ready for the challenges and achievements ahead in 2018-19.

Warmly,



Barbara Slater
Chair, Board of Directors

Dr. Jay Children's Grief Centre

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OUR TEAM

Staff:

Sarah Henderson, Executive Director

Keira Bethwaite, Executive Assistant
Rebecca Diamond, Camp Erin Director
Ceilidh Eaton-Russell, Research & Evaluation
Victoria Pileggi, Research & Evaluation
Ariel Shneer, Development & Communications Manager
Becka Soyka, Intake & Volunteer Coordinator
Alice Tringham, Operations & Human Resources Advisor



Colleen Mousseau, Grief & Palliative Care Counsellor
Tara Noble, Grief & Palliative Care Counsellor
Heather O'Brien, Grief & Palliative Care Counsellor
Megan Porter, Grief & Palliative Care Counsellor
Lysa Toye, Grief & Palliative Care Counsellor



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Our Mission:

To provide care, support and education to grieving children, youth, families and communities around death and dying while building strength, resilience and hope.

Our Vision:

To build healthy and compassionate communities to support children, youth and families living with dying, death and grief.

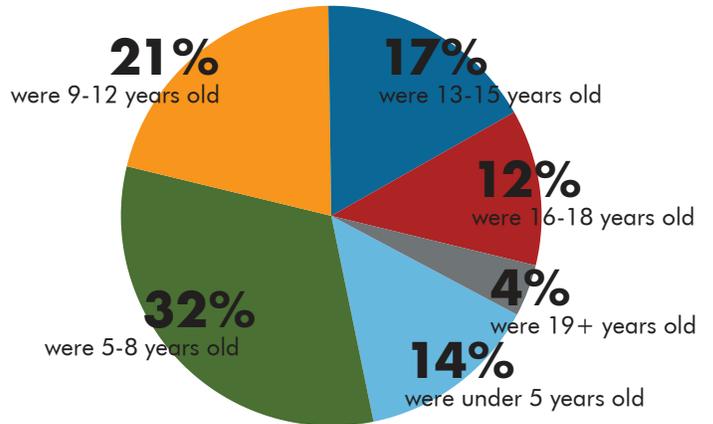
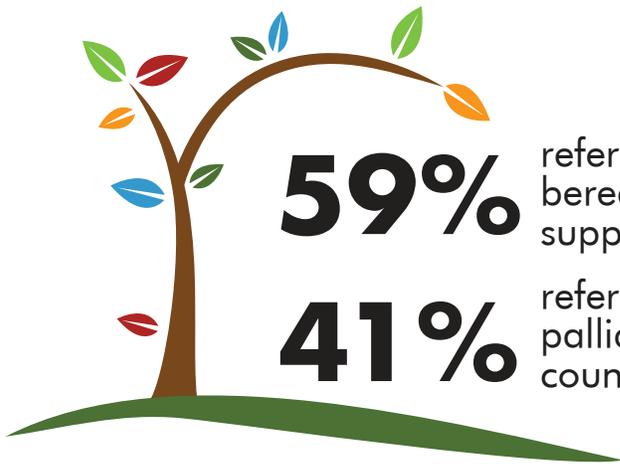




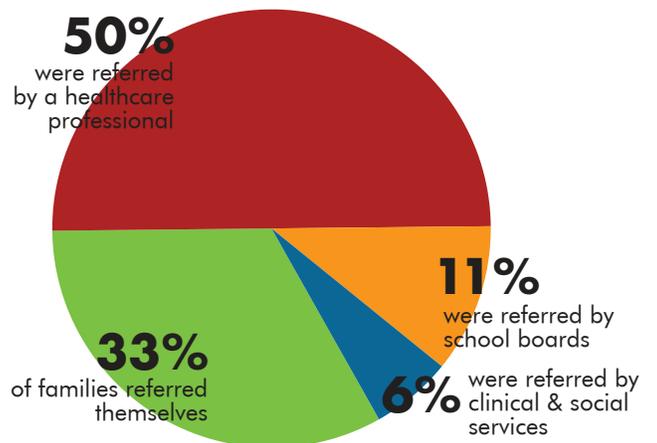
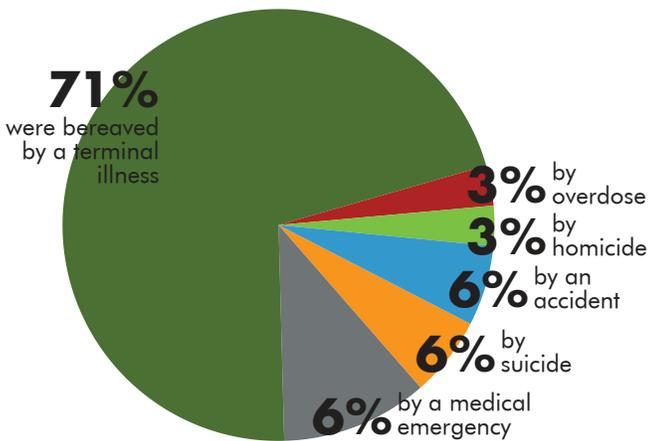
2017-18 CLIENT REFERRALS:

A Clinical Snapshot

This year, our Centre received referrals for **135 new families**, representing: **236 children and youth** being cared for by **201 adults**.
Of all the young people accessing our service:



- 53%** were grieving the death of their father/step-father
- 32%** were grieving the death of their mother/step-mother
- 8%** were grieving the death of a sibling
- 7%** were grieving the death of a custodial grandparent



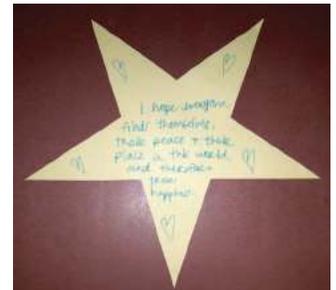
OUR IMPACT

"I just wanted to sincerely thank every single one of you at the Dr. Jay Children's Grief Centre. You all have been nothing short of outstanding in the care that you have provided me and my son. It warms my heart to see him interacting with others like himself. He said the other day that he was 'not shy and able to talk about his dad' and this means more than the entire universe to me. Thank you for providing such a warm and supportive environment on behalf of those affected by bereavement. Appreciation for all of you cannot be put into words." - *Parent of a Child*



"This is a very welcoming environment where people can share their thoughts and feelings without feeling judged. At first, it was pretty awkward to talk about my feelings, but now I feel good and comfortable with sharing my ideas and talking about grief. It was really good to take part as I got to share my experiences with people who can relate. I feel like I have changed so much. The most important thing I learned is that I am not alone in this adventure and I always have someone to talk to." - *Youth Group Client*

"I just wanted to express my appreciation for the conversation that we had this morning. I am sure you start many days like this – talking about death and dying - but for me, it's an atypical experience and your words of help, healing and wisdom are ones I appreciate and know the family will benefit from as well. Thank you again for your kindness, your professionalism and the help you provide." - *School Social Worker*



"I wanted to reach out after Family Night because it was truly such a special experience. Seeing the families connect with one another while remembering their loved one was so beautiful. As well, the comments made by some of the younger children about their loved ones were so meaningful and showed that the program had such an amazing impact. I was so happy to be a part of such a special experience for these families and the centre, and I am looking forward to many more events like that!" - *Family Night Volunteer*

"Camp Erin made me realize that it's okay to be happy even if you're still grieving. Also, I cried for the first time since my mom died, and it made me realize that it's okay to cry whenever you need to." - *Camp Erin Camper*



CAMP ERIN HIGHLIGHTS

Camp Erin Toronto 2017 was incredibly successful, and we settled in nicely at the fabulous Camp Manitou. We were blessed with incredible weather, our ceremonies were beautiful, and campers had a profound experience. Volunteers were also moved and grateful to be part of this event. For the first time in our history, we were able to support a camper from a remote First Nations Community, incorporate gender inclusion in the camp experience, and provide trauma training to our volunteers. Stories of this year's Camp were published in the Toronto Star, The Globe and Mail and Active Life Magazine.



104
Campers

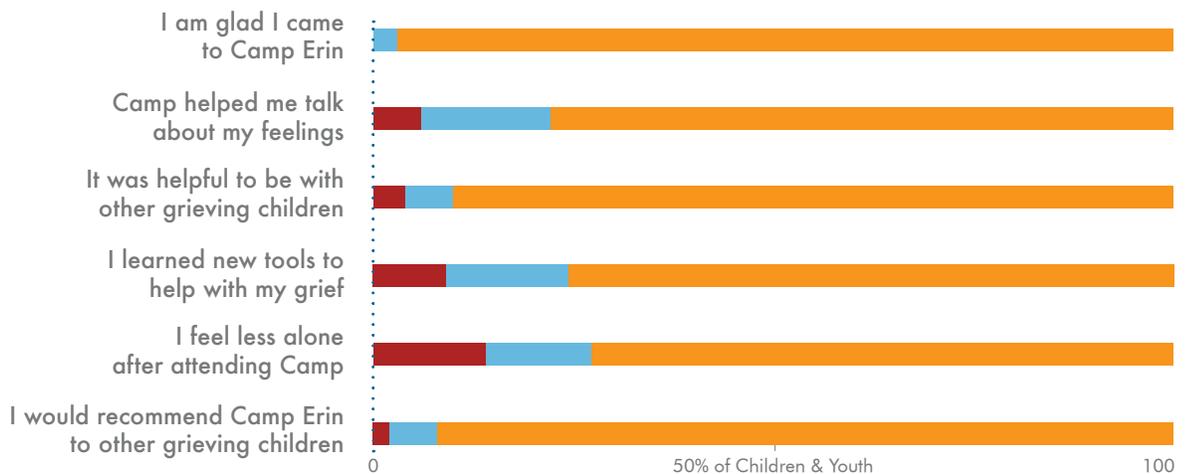
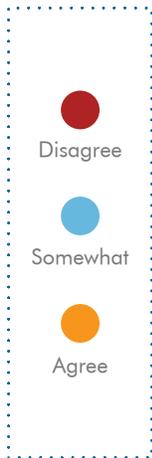
13
Leaders in Training

72
Volunteers

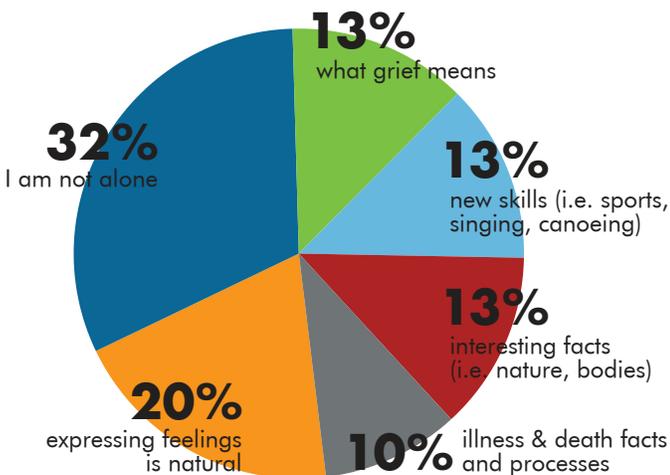
3
Days

"It was helpful to meet kids who know what you're going through. In everyday life, your friends or people around you may not know how you feel. I didn't feel as different and left out at Camp Erin."

PROGRAM IMPACTS



One thing I learned at Camp that I didn't know before...



"Camp Erin helped me by showing me that I'm not the only kid who's gone through something like this. I met amazing people who taught me that grief is a mix of all types of emotions, some good and some bad. I learned that my feelings are valid and should always be felt rather than held in. Despite the unfortunate events in our lives, we can still have fun and we should never feel guilty for that."



FAMILY NIGHT HIGHLIGHTS

197
Caregivers

280
Children & Youth

112
Volunteers

10
Events

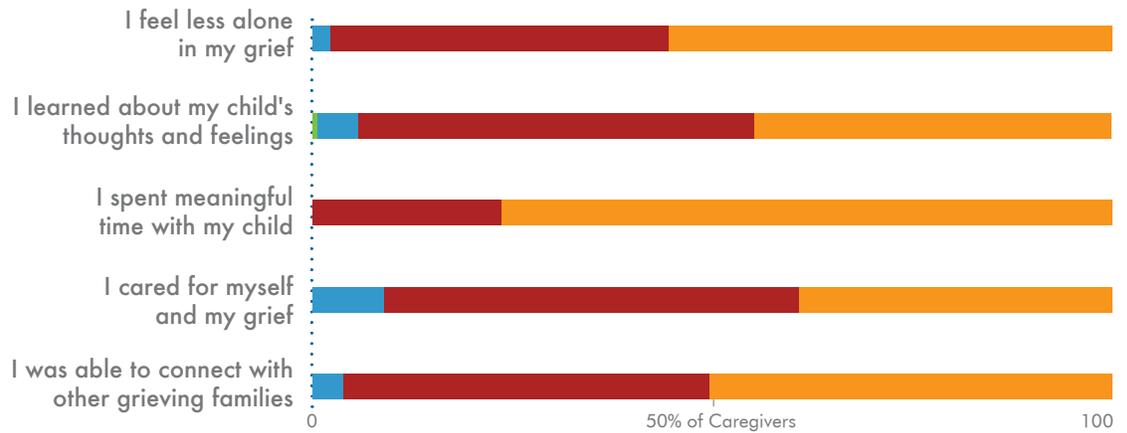
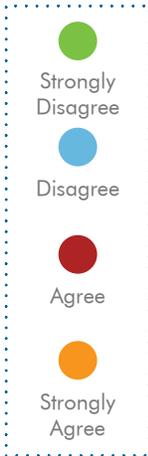
Family Night Events provide a chance for bereaved families to come together to build a community of support around the experience of grief, and the opportunity to participate in activities that encourage children to express themselves, remember, honour and feel connected to one another and the person who died. This year, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of our Gingerbread event. We also served a record-breaking number of family members at our events.



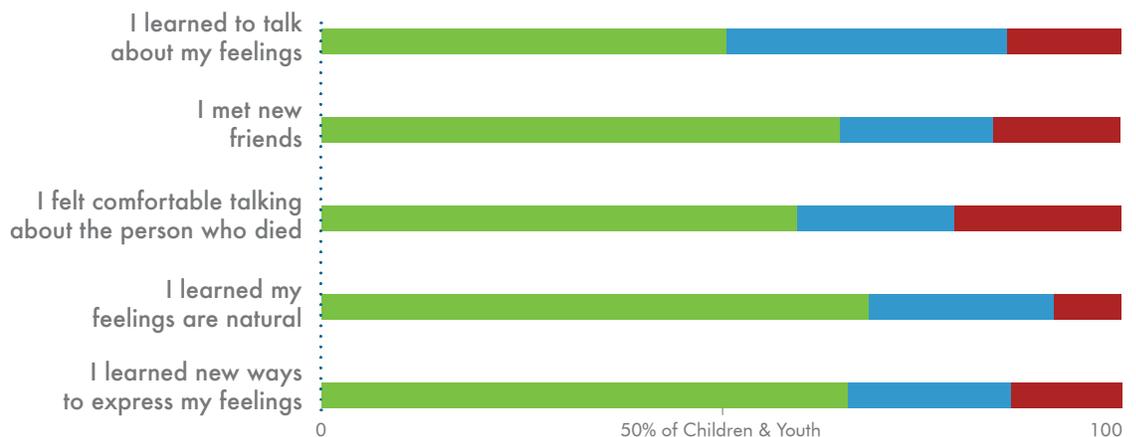
"If I could tell other children about my time at the Dr. Jay Children's Grief Centre, I would say that your feelings of sadness will get better and other kids have lost their mommy and daddy. You can feel happiness again with new friends. This is the best place for families that are mourning a loss. It makes me smile and happy."

"Thank you for an amazing night making ginger bread houses at the Rogers Centre! You have been there for my family throughout this journey. The kindness and support you have offered is simply amazing. You've helped us find our strength. You've been there to listen and to help us share our story. You are a part of that story."

CAREGIVER IMPACT



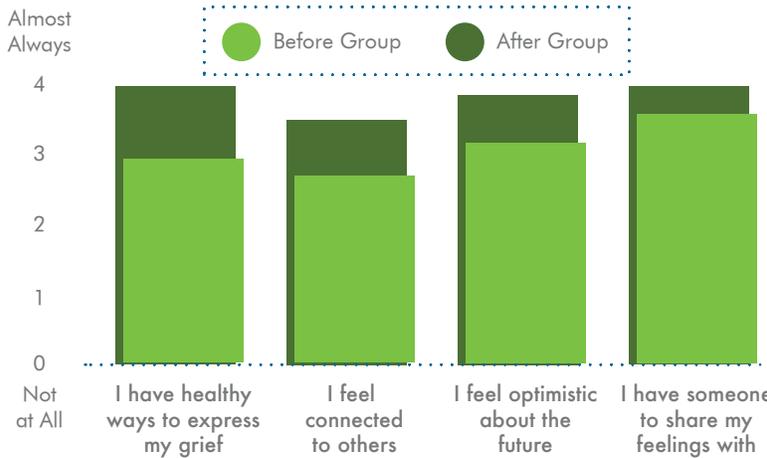
CHILDREN & YOUTH IMPACT



YOUTH GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

This season's Youth Support program was a tremendous success. This year, in addition to activities such as yoga, improv drama, and art, we expanded our "Ask the Doctor" session to include a Police Officer. This new "Ask the Expert" segment was a great addition to the program and allowed for a wider learning opportunity for all our youth. Many of our youth also became Leaders-in-Training at Camp Erin Toronto. Their commitment to our younger campers was extraordinary. This year's youth created such a meaningful community that many have expressed a desire for ongoing contact with each other and our Centre.

PROGRAM IMPACTS



"I feel like I have changed so much since the first group meeting. The way I think and the way I communicate have definitely grown."

21
Youth
Participants

2
Volunteers

12
Weeks



CAREGIVER GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

11
Caregiver
Participants

5
Volunteers

6
Weeks

For the first time in our history, we were able to offer a program exclusively for caregivers by piloting a bi-weekly caregiver support group. Evening sessions ran for 2 hours each night, and the group discussed topics such as: managing expectations, communication, and self-empathy. This program pilot was an amazing opportunity for caregivers of young children (8 and under) to build a support network of peers bereaved by the death of a spouse or partner. Creating this community was a great success. Alongside the meaningful connections that caregivers have maintained independently, we also facilitate quarterly reunions with all alumni of the program.

The concurrent children's group also facilitated a special forum for attendees to build friendships with other children who understood their grief. **We look forward to offering this program again in 2018-19!**



"The chance to find such an open and trusting group without judgement and with such a deep understanding of my situation was extremely positive and helpful."

Program Impacts:

Caregivers felt better able to nurture their children after the group than they did before it began. Caregivers' concerns about their children and their parenting decreased significantly after the group ended. Participants felt that the support group provided them:

- A sense of community;
- An improved understanding of grief; and,
- Regained confidence in parenting;
- Renewed optimism for the future.

OTHER CENTRE HIGHLIGHTS

OUR COMMUNITY

We continue to grow our social media outreach and connect with our community. At the end of 2017-18, our online impact is:

878
Followers

50,510
Facebook Post Views

1077
Followers

433,197
Twitter Impressions

1042
Newsletter Subscribers

RESEARCH & EVALUATION

In addition to evaluating all of our ongoing Centre programming, our Research & Evaluation team expanded their reach this year. We partnered with the Help Us Understand Grief program at Heart House Hospice in Peel to launch our PaGES (Parenting through Grief Experiences Survey) as a pre-post measure of impact. We were also accepted to present an oral presentation at the Association for Death Education & Counselling International Conference in Portland, Oregon.



COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Alongside our partners at the Peel Children & Youth Grief Network, we contributed to the NEW Handbook for Supporters. To date, this resource has been distributed over **800 times**, and used by community partners working with grieving teens across multiple sectors, including: education, healthcare, clinical and social service.



AWAASH ISHPEYIMUWIN 2017: "CAMP HOPE"



Building on the relationship formed in 2016-17, two Dr. Jay counsellors travelled to northern Quebec this summer to collaborate with the Cree Community of Mistissini in supporting their grieving children and youth. This past August, our team launched Mistissini's first Children's Grief Camp, "Camp Hope", in conjunction with The Health and Social Development Department. Camp Hope was a wonderful success and will be implemented again in 2018.

EDUCATION & TRAININGS

Our clinical team continues to be recognized as experts in the field of children's grief and bereavement. This year, we were invited to lead a number of education sessions and clinical consultations with a variety of important community partners, many of whom refer clients to our Centre. This includes: The Toronto District School Board; Nurse Practitioners at The University Health Network; and, SickKids Paediatric Advanced Care Team. Our counsellors also co-facilitated the Hincks-Dellcrest Certificate Program in Children's Grief and Bereavement.

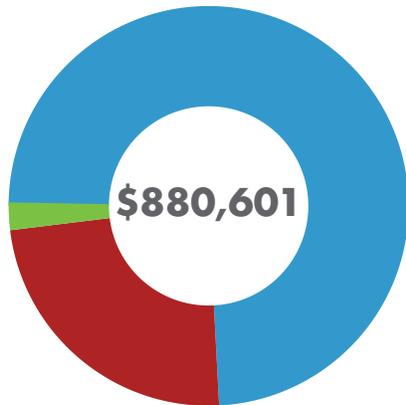


10
Sessions

21
Teaching Hours

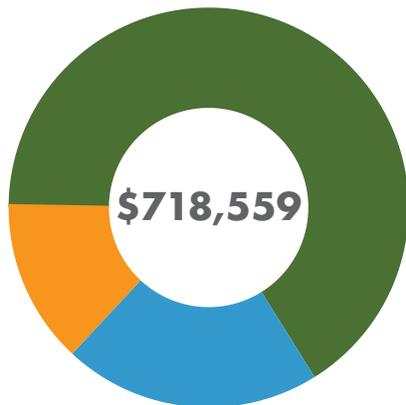
190
Audience Members

FINANCIALS



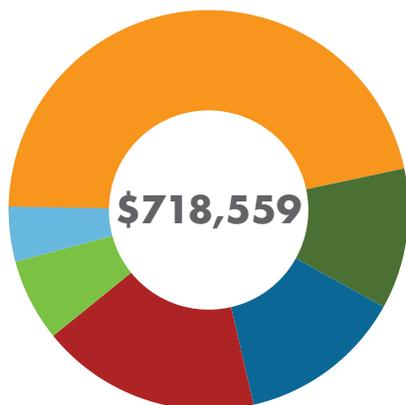
REVENUE

74%	Grants & Foundations	\$652,717
24%	Individual Donations	\$209,715
2%	Other Revenue	\$ 18,169



TOTAL EXPENDITURES

66%	Program Salaries	\$474,890
21%	Program Support	\$147,965
13%	Operating & Administration	\$ 95,704



PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

47%	Counselling Program	\$334,337
18%	Family Support Program	\$127,366
13%	Youth Program	\$ 95,525
11%	Camp Erin Toronto	\$ 81,727
7%	Volunteer Program	\$ 47,762
2%	Research & Education	\$ 31,842

NOTES:

1. This summary is based on the information in the Dr. Jay Children's Grief Centre 2017-2018 audited financial statements.
2. Copies of the 2017-2018 financial statements may be obtained from the Centre.

OUR DONORS

THANK YOU from all the families we serve at the Dr. Jay Children's Grief Centre!

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