
CENTRE FOR GRIEF & HEALING
BEREAVED FAMILIES OF ONTARIO - HALTON / PEEL

2020-2021
ANNUAL
REPORT

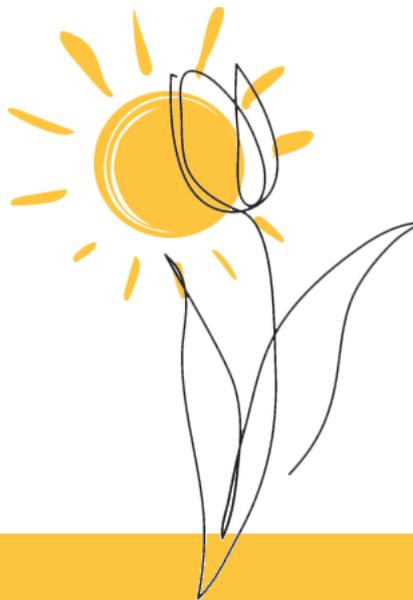
Finding Hope in a Pandemic

www.bereavedfamilies.ca / 905.848.4337 / info@bereavedfamilies.ca



Deep grief sometimes is almost like a specific location, a coordinate on a map of time. When you are standing in that forest of sorrow, you cannot imagine that you could ever find your way to a better place. But if someone can assure you that they themselves have stood in that same place, and now have moved on, sometimes this will bring hope.

~Elizabeth Gilbert



The Centre for Grief & Healing Bereaved Families of Ontario - Halton/Peel is a registered nonprofit charitable organization offering compassion and care for individuals dealing with the death of a loved one.

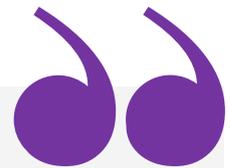
Registered Charity #118803667RR0001

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Our Community, Your Impact

For almost three decades, the Centre For Grief & Healing (Bereaved Families of Ontario - Halton / Peel) has been a beacon of hope, lighting the way for people experiencing grief. Since March of 2020, that light has not only endured but has helped an unprecedented number of residents throughout Halton and Peel.

Grief, trauma, and loss have become daily news as we watch the heartbreaking stories of the pandemic continue to unfold around the globe and here locally. Peel Region, and to a lesser extent Halton, became the epicentre for the virus in Ontario as we continued to worry and wonder what it would mean for ourselves, our families, our organization and our community.



Hope is like a
bird that senses
the dawn and
carefully starts to
sing while it is
still dark.
-Unknown

HOPE AND HEALING

Despite the instability that the pandemic brought, the Centre For Grief & Healing (BFO-H/P) continued to provide consistent support, education and resources for people grieving the loss of a loved one. As a community of griever, we know all too well the isolation inherent in grieving and loss. The pandemic exacerbated grief issues for many participants who were unable to see family members, mourn together, visit loved ones, and participate in grief rituals that would normally bring comfort. As a direct result of the COVID-19 virus, our agency experienced a 107% increase in demand on individual peer-support services. We also saw the number of sessions needed by participants increase as personal support systems were drastically limited as a result of ongoing public health restrictions.

The sudden change in routine and social structures also revealed an urgent need to support vulnerable populations in Halton and Peel Region. With the help of our Strategic Subcommittee, we prioritized programs to respond to community grief needs, including: seniors (65+), BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and people experiencing traumatic loss as a result of COVID-19, overdose, and suicides.

Throughout it all, we continue to be humbled and grateful for the unwavering dedication and commitment from our staff and volunteers. We have cried, laughed, remembered, and shared with a record breaking number of participants again this past year, despite having our physical office space closed since March, 2020.

Throughout the crisis, we are reminded that it is in times of adversity that we do most of our growing. Our growth is only made possible with the support of funders, community partners, staff, and volunteers. Together we are able to bring hope and healing to our community.

With warm regards and gratitude,

Richard Sheppard, Chair of the Board
Andrea O'Reilly, Executive Director



OUR HISTORY

In 1977, John McKibbon, part of the chaplaincy department of the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, whose own daughter had died of leukemia, initiated a parental bereavement support program endorsed by the hospital's chaplain, Hugh Gemmell. Margaret Darte, Marilyn Lee, Diane Oakes Foster and Irene Clarfield, participants in this program then became involved in the development of a bereavement support program now known as Bereaved Families of Ontario (BFO).

In 1989, Bereaved Families of Ontario - Halton / Peel became a Registered Charity committed to supporting grieving individuals and families. We are one of eleven affiliates located throughout Ontario, all with strong community spirit that mirrors the commitment made by volunteers and staff. BFO programs are facilitated by trained volunteers who are themselves bereaved.



WHAT PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR SERVICES

"I couldn't function in my day-to-day life when my doctor referred me to Bereaved Families of Ontario - Halton / Peel. Losing my daughter to cancer was too much for me to bare. As a single mother, I was alone and had no where to escape my emotions. Hearing from other group participants was comforting and I knew I would eventually be ok. I still have days when I am not doing well, but I know what coping strategies work best for me on those difficult days."

~Cathy, Mixed Loss Participant

MISSION

To be the recognized leader in the Halton-Peel Community in support of grief and healing.

VISION

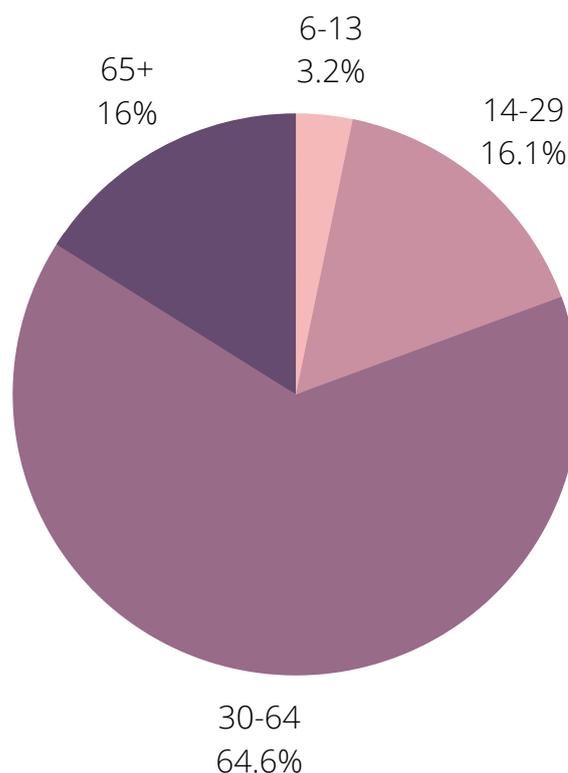
To provide inclusive mutual support, improved awareness and education about grief, that fosters hope, healing and improved health and wellness outcomes in the Halton-Peel community.



OUR CLIENTS 64%

**OF OUR CLIENTS ARE BETWEEN
THE AGES OF 30-64.**

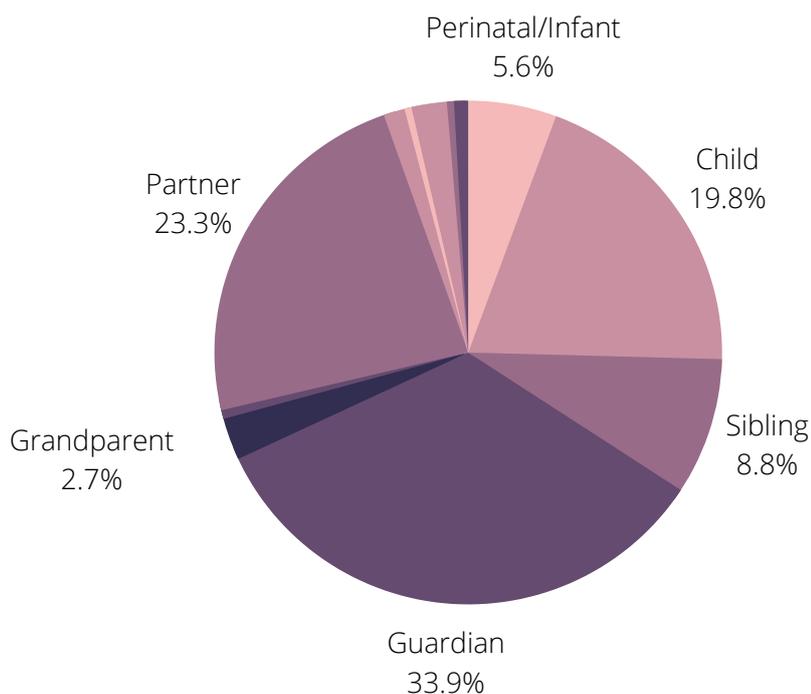
16% of our clients are seniors aged 65+, 16% of our clients are youth 14-29 years old, and 3.2% of our clients are children aged 6-13.



33.9%

**OF OUR CLIENTS HAVE
EXPERIENCED THE LOSS OF A
GUARDIAN**

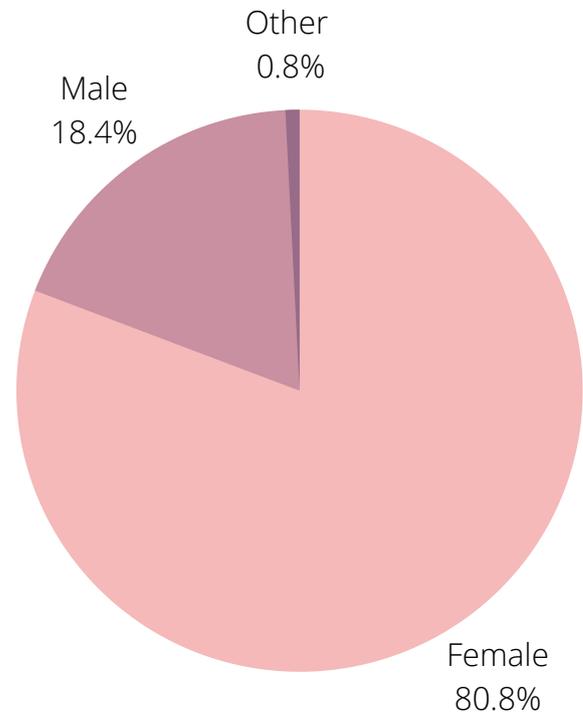
23.3% have a partner loss, 19.8% have a child loss, 8.8% have a sibling loss, 5.6% have a perinatal or infant loss, 2.7% have a grandparent loss, 2.2% have a friend loss, 1.3% have an aunt/uncle loss, and 0.6% have a grandchild loss, 0.4% have a niece/nephew loss, 0.4% have a cousin loss, and 0.9% have experience other losses.



OUR CLIENTS 80%

OF OUR CLIENTS IDENTIFY AS FEMALE

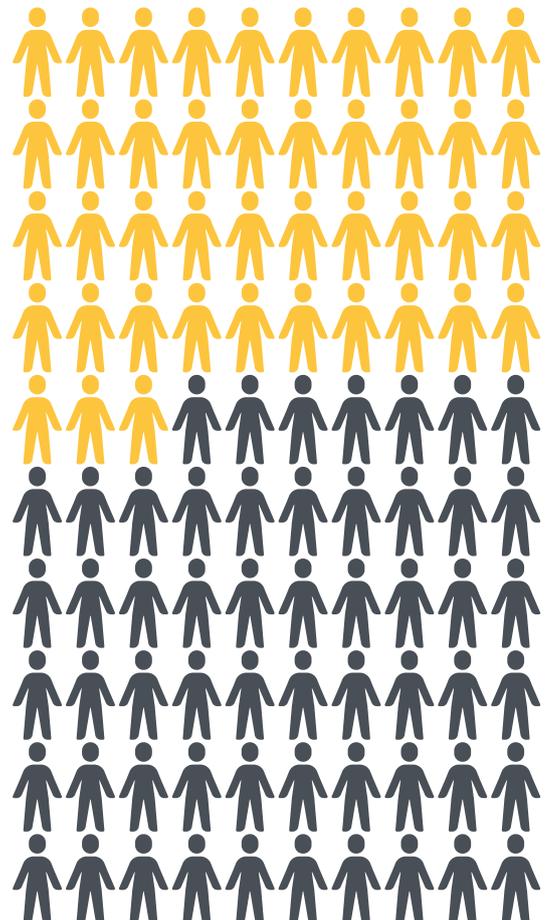
Majority of our clients identify as female, while roughly 18% identify as male, and <1% identifies as other.



43%

OF OUR CLIENTS DEAL WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Over 43% of our clients are dealing with additional mental health challenges, such as depression, anxiety, substance use, PTSD, and trauma.

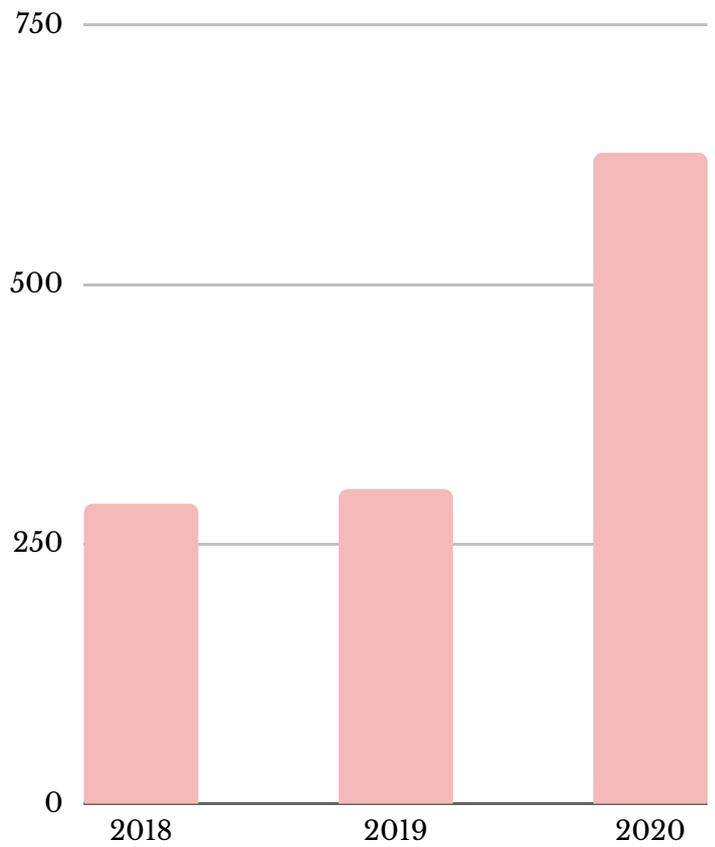


OUR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT SERVICES

107%

INCREASE IN DEMAND

We have seen over a 107% increase in our one-to-one services from 2019 to 2020, with 626 individual support sessions completed in 2020.

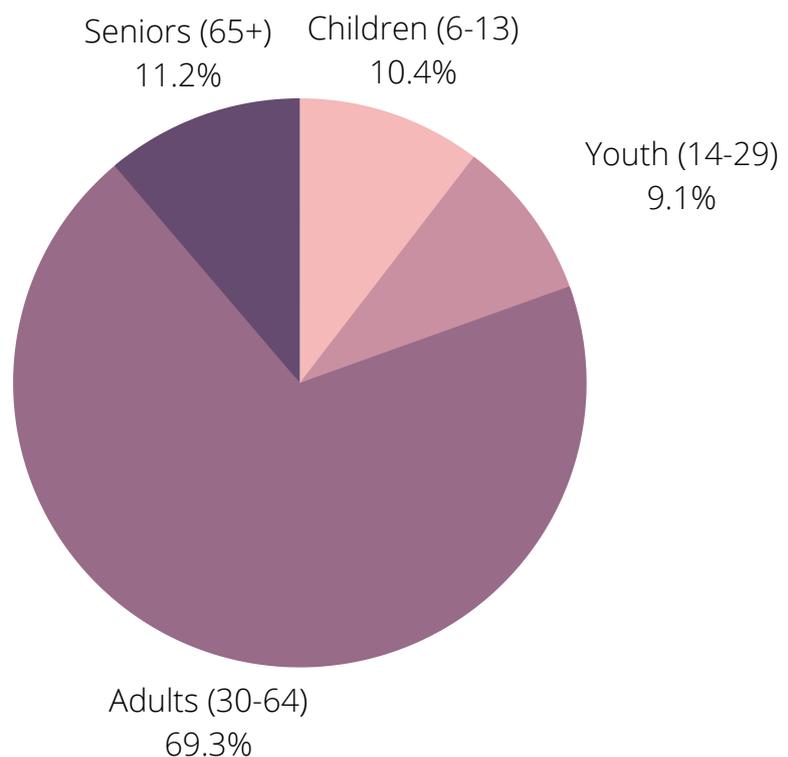


331

TOTAL INTAKES IN 2020

331 new individuals joined our community in 2020.

Out of our 626 individual support session, 65 were with children, 57 were with youth, 434 were with adults, and 70 were with seniors in our community.





WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR ONE-TO-ONE SERVICES

My support worker is honestly a gem! It's just that I myself struggle with Borderline Personality Disorder so my feelings and emotions are always in overdrive no matter what...despite anything or any efforts. It is of no fault of my support worker - she is a miracle worker! - Participant

The counselor is excellent, caring and supportive and I don't think I could be in better hands. This has added a crucial role in the level of my care. What has been impossible, now shows some hope. It's very promising. I'm very impressed. - Participant

My support worker has been a literal life-saver for me. There have been times I've been so close to giving up on life, and talking with her has helped tremendously. I'd be lost without the support she's given. - Participant

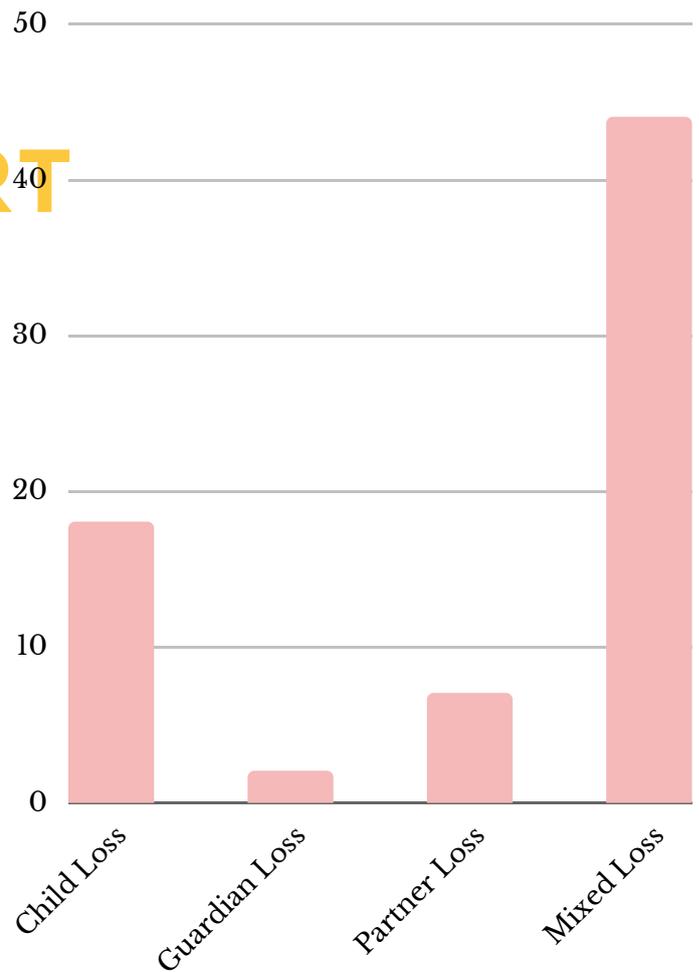


OUR GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

71

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS IN 2020

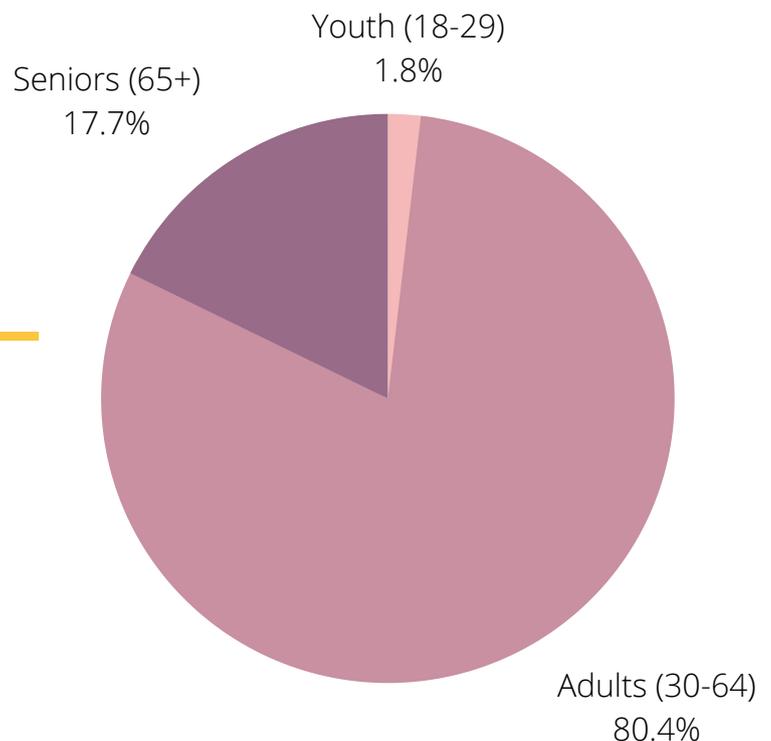
In 2020, we ran 71 grief support groups including: mixed loss, partner loss, child loss, and guardian loss.



434

PARTICIPANTS IN OUR GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Out of our 434 group participants, 8 were youth, 349 were adults, and 77 were seniors in our community.





WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

A very helpful environment to be in to grieve ones loss. Feels a sort of comfort thinking that there are others in the same boat as myself. Thanks for listening and sharing. = Group Participant

A service that is very helpful and comforting in a time of loss in ones life. Keep up the great work being done for the Community. = Group Participant

I know online groups are hard for some, missing that in-person interaction, but for me, the zoom meetings have been a big part of why I've continued to attend almost every week since I started with BFO. There have been so many days that I know driving 30 min to a meeting would be a big reason to bail, but being able to access them from the comfort of my own home has been why I've attended, and I'm always happy I do.
= Group Participant



OUR COMMUNITY EVENTS



161

PARTICIPANTS AT BFO EVENTS

In 2020, we had 161 individuals participate in our community events include our GriefTalks, Walk to Remember, Loving Memory Ceremony, Annual General Meeting, and Healing Through Art Nights.

184

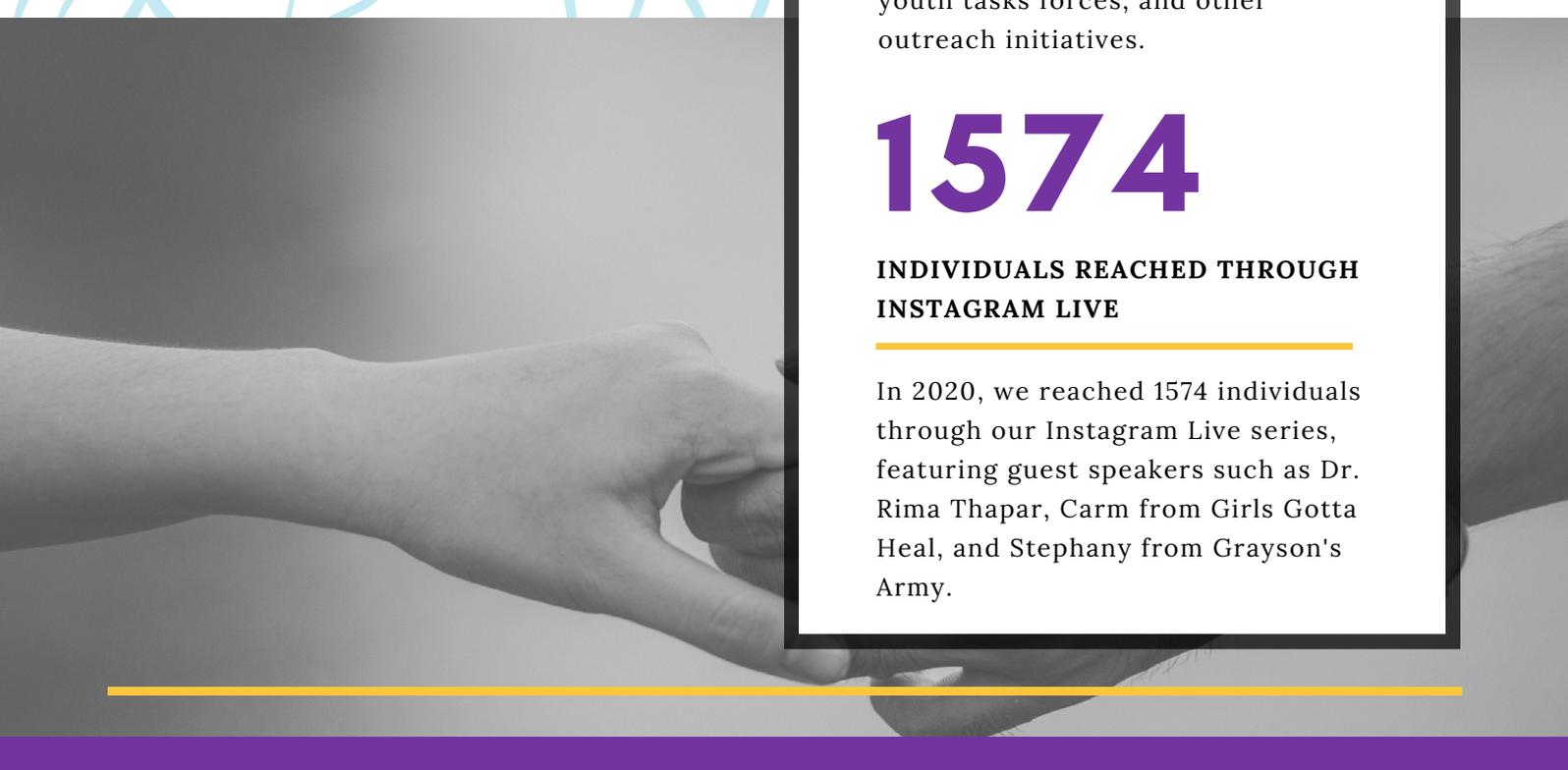
INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

In 2020, we connected with 184 individuals in our community through wellness fairs, town halls, youth tasks forces, and other outreach initiatives.

1574

INDIVIDUALS REACHED THROUGH INSTAGRAM LIVE

In 2020, we reached 1574 individuals through our Instagram Live series, featuring guest speakers such as Dr. Rima Thapar, Carm from Girls Gotta Heal, and Stephany from Grayson's Army.



SOCIAL MEDIA

The following data is as of June 21, 2021.

1,480

INSTAGRAM

An account that has seen consistent growth over the past year.

470

FACEBOOK MAIN PAGE

Slow, consistent growth.

84

FACEBOOK SUPPORT GROUP

Started March 2020.

494

LINKEDIN

Remains consistent.

310

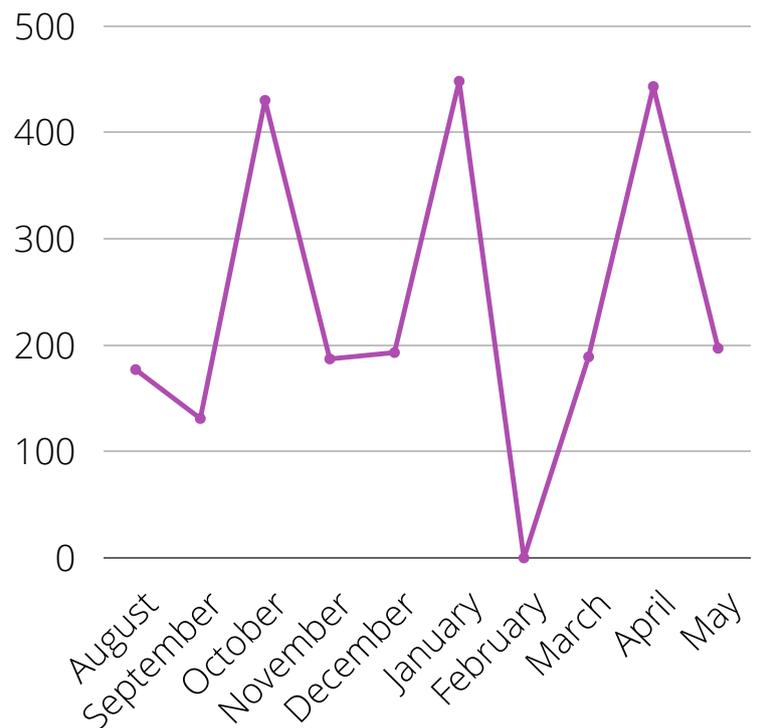
TWITTER

Remains consistent.

In 2021, we are working on establishing and developing Youtube for non-profits. This form of social media will enhance outreach efforts, increase support through the sharing of educational materials, lived experiences, and support resources for clients. The existing social media platforms will also be used to increase outreach and awareness of our support services.

INSTAGRAM LIVES

Views per month (September 2020 - May 2021). Peak months shared 2 posts, where February shared no posts.





VOLUNTEERING

- 930** total hours **63** volunteers collectively dedicated
- 3** volunteer group facilitator trainings
- 23** total bilingual or trilingual volunteers
- 1-2** support groups that ran weekly/bi-weekly from **Jan 2020-December 2020**
- 5** support groups that are running **weekly** from **Jan 2021-June 2021**
- 100** percent total of dedicated, empathetic, driven, and supportive volunteers

A special thank you to each and every one of our valued volunteers. We are so fortunate to have a dedicated team of individuals who provide leadership, facilitate Grief Support Groups, help organize our events, and participate on our Board, Professional Advisory Committee and Subcommittees.



WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE SAYING



You have helped me in so many ways unseen, and I thank you for your positive impact upon me.

- **Volunteer**

With your guidance, I am blossoming into the kind of support that group members want and feel comfortable with. I am beyond blessed to have found you.

- **Volunteer**

I appreciate being appreciated by yourself and this wonderful organization. I think there are many amazing things ahead and I could not shine without the support you provide.

- **Volunteer**

You always have innovative ideas and you make sure our voices are heard. Thank you and everyone else on the team.

- **Volunteer**



2020 FINANCIAL REVIEW

Statement of Financial Position as of December 31st, 2020

ASSETS	2019	2020
Cash	151,550	222,591
Accounts Receivable	1,034	13,139
Prepaid Expenses	2,773	2,142
Due from affiliate	1,959	2,059
Capital Assets	2,592	664
TOTAL ASSETS	\$159,908	\$240,595

LIABILITIES	2019	2020
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	12,046	35,100
Government Remittances Payable	2,149	2,653
Deferred contributions	37,543	43,602
Due to affiliate	1,609	1,672
Government loan	-	30,000
Deferred contributions: Capital assets and database	911	501
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$54,258	\$113,528

NET ASSETS	2019	2020
Unrestricted net assets	80,469	103,404
Invested in capital assets	1,681	163
Internally restricted	23,500	23,500
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$105,650	\$127,067

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$159,908	\$240,595
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OUR FUNDERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Our sincere thanks to our Funders & Donors



United Way
Halton & Hamilton

An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA**

**ONTARIOPOWER
GENERATION**



OUR TEAM MAKES A DIFFERENCE

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Andrea O'Reilly, Executive Director

Julia Duz, BACYC Adult & Youth Program Manager

Victoria Berry, SSW, BSW, Volunteer Coordinator

Irish Dhindsa, BBA/BCOM/Cert. Wellness Coach/ Cert. Thanatology
Community Outreach Worker

Karen Omand, BASoc, BATHan Peer Grief Support & Intake Worker

Eran Derandonyan-Asombang, Financial Bookkeeper

2020/2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Richard Sheppard, Chair

Adrienne Jaroslowski, Secretary

Bikram Deol, Treasurer

Naveli Gandhi, Social Media & Marketing

Janice Moro, Fundraising & Strategic Planning

Susan Palijan, Strategic Planning

Ashley Pereira, Social Media & Marketing

Julia Suk, Governance

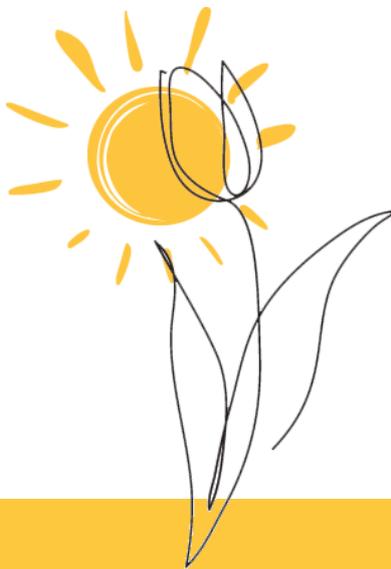
Mayuran Vallipuram, Human Resources & Governance

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Martha Brunet, MSW, RSW

Dr. Flavia Ceshin, PhD

Poonam Patel, MSW, RSW



**Centre For Grief & Healing
Bereaved Families of Ontario - Halton/Peel
33 City Centre Drive
Suite 610
Mississauga, ON L5B 2N5
905.848.4337
info@bereavedfamilies.ca
www.bereavedfamilies.ca**