

# LIGHTS



## CELEBRATING 10 YEARS IN THE COMMUNITY

### August 2020



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Our world has changed, both globally and in Toronto where LIGHTS operates. Dealing with the unforeseen challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a significant toll on people who have an intellectual disability and their families. The 3,600 individuals waiting for long-term housing in Toronto were already on the edge of crisis and are now facing even greater barriers to seeking a home of their own. The emotional, physical, and financial drain on them will be even more overwhelming now.

A few people in the LIGHTS family had the opportunity to meet with Minister Todd Smith's staff by phone earlier this summer. We heard that the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all individuals who have an intellectual disability. The challenge is huge and changes in how services are delivered and funded need to occur.

This Ministry believes in a system that supports a responsive, person-directed approach that is sustainable for many years. Minister Smith's staff shared with us that the Ministry will be undertaking Developmental Services Sector Reform. This approach needs to include long-term policy and program changes and they understand this may take up to ten years to completely put in place. Hopefully, the core fundamental elements will be solid and lasting. They told us that the approach to our sector will be individualized, needs-based, person-directed, responsive, and seamless.

**DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?** This is the LIGHTS approach!

The current system is broken, partly because it is crisis driven. The LIGHTS model of supporting families **BEFORE** a crisis occurs, and empowering them to make their own choices, has been proven to be successful in reducing more complex problems later, related to care needs and finances.

In partnership with:

COMMUNITY LIVING  
Toronto

A couple of months before the pandemic started, Community Living Toronto created and presented to the Ministry a proposed Individualized Funding Framework for the delivery of services, citing examples from Australia, British Columbia, and Ontario's own LIGHTS program.

#### LIGHTS

c/o Community Living Toronto  
20 Spadina Road  
Toronto, ON M5R 2S7

647-588-9465  
sylvie.labrosse@cltoronto.ca  
Charitable Registration  
#10769 4143 RR0001

This proposal talks about improving choice, enhancing service quality, and decreasing system costs – **ALL ASPECTS OF THE LIGHTS PROGRAM**. With the help of easy-to-understand information, individuals and families can be empowered to make their own informed decisions about their service needs and how to navigate the system efficiently. And families can do this when they are **READY**, another key characteristic of individualized funding. The planning for support is provided by individuals and their families and this can reduce overhead costs and improve efficiency.

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This Individualized Funding Framework proposal was well received by the Ministry. But then the pandemic descended. Everything paused. Over the past few weeks, the issues in congregate care settings have been highlighted, and the importance of the LIGHTS individualized care settings reinforced. Thus, although our discussions with the Ministry have slowed down, we continue to talk, and have optimism that our LIGHTS approach to long-term housing support will happen across Ontario, not just in Toronto. Families who have a son or daughter with an intellectual disability are waiting.

Over the last year, LIGHTS families have continued to receive support through our advisory services, presentations, and many workshops. 3,500 families received this support; 320 families are being helped in their search for independent long-term housing; and nearly 80 individuals are living outside their family homes, working and contributing in their communities.

Specifically, during this pandemic, our LIGHTS facilitators have kept close contact with everyone we support - by phone and email and FaceTime. They have helped families manage their funding, and distributed PPE equipment to their family members' homes, as well as entertainment kits, including arts and crafts supplies. Family members could not visit for a period of time, and life was lonely. A few individuals have moved back to their parents' homes until this pandemic is over. And **NO ONE** receiving LIGHTS support has caught the virus!

We had a dream, and an imagined vision, and we boldly developed a strategy and a work plan. Then we launched the LIGHTS program, all with the help of Community Living Toronto. The program has operated extremely well for the families we support. We now wait, hoping the Ministry will adapt our program across Ontario. It could take several years before all the pieces are in place, but if done carefully and thoroughly, with meaningful, sustainable government policy changes, individuals who have an intellectual disability and their families will be the well-deserving beneficiaries.

And you, our generous donors, will know that your support and contributions have greatly bolstered our vision. Our efforts will have been collective, and we are always grateful for your compassion and support. **THANK YOU!!**

## Matching Gift Campaign — We did It!

In February we announced that a few generous donors committed \$100,000 to be matched up to June 1st.

Given the pandemic, the deadline was extended to the end of July and we're now thrilled to announce that we've reached our goal raising just over \$200,000! These additional funds will help 10 more young people begin their journey with funding of up to \$20,000 for one year. What an amazing accomplishment in such a short time frame!



## Our Mission

*Through partnership with families, philanthropists, government, and established agencies, LIGHTS will make supportive housing a reality for individuals with an intellectual disability. As a result, these citizens and their families will have a greater quality of life.*



# 78



People have moved into independent living after LIGHTS facilitation.

# 36



Families have moved on from LIGHTS.

# 54



Families have chosen LIGHTS funding.

# 321



Families have received advisory services.

# 190+

Presentations to date, reaching more than 3,500 attendees.

LIGHTS was founded in 2011 by a group of concerned community members and families.

2011

## Partnerships

- Government of Ontario (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services)
- Community Living Toronto
- Community donors (foundations, corporations, individuals)
- Families

## Funds Raised To Date

\$7M+

- Over **7 million** pledged to date
- Funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for Facilitators

## Funding to Families

\$20,000/yr

Up to a maximum of **\$20K annually** for up to 5 years per family. Some families do not need funding but still benefit from LIGHTS facilitation.

## Operating Costs

\$5,000

Our only salaried positions are paid for by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and the majority of other costs are a gift-in-kind partnership with Community Living Toronto. Printing, some communications materials and brokerage fees are less than \$5,000 per year.

## Result

98%

A cost effective program that enables about **98%** of our private donations to leverage our government funding for the staff who create the opportunity for person-directed living arrangements that would not otherwise exist.

Through LIGHTS, there has been increased parental job productivity and a broad increase in quality of life for both individuals with an intellectual disability and members of their family. In addition there has been an opportunity for developmental services staff to learn and build an innovative program while providing person-directed supports to individuals with an intellectual disability. Because of LIGHTS, long term societal opportunities for inclusion and a more fulfilling life are increasing for these individuals, and costs to society are decreasing.

Aug 12, 2020

## Our Vision

Enabling citizens with an intellectual disability to live in a home of their own, thereby enriching our communities.

# THANK YOU!

**LIGHTS is a partnership between donors, volunteers, families and government. The following represents LIGHTS donors and sponsors with cumulative or committed giving in the amount of \$5,000 or more.**

**\$1,000,000 +** Li Ka Shing (Canada) Foundation, Robert and Mary Pat Armstrong

**\$250,000 to \$499,999** Anonymous, John Clark, Minto Corporate Services Inc., The Harold E. Ballard Foundation

**\$100,000 to \$249,999** BMO Financial Group, CIBC, George and Katherine Dembroski, Greg and Linda Cochrane and The Cochrane Family Foundation, Harry E. Foster Foundation, Patsy and Jamie Anderson, R. Howard Webster Foundation, TD Bank Group, The Henry White Kinnear Foundation, The John C. and Sally Horsfall Eaton Foundation

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**\$5,000 - \$9,999** Behaviour Inc., Bruce and Karen Etherington, Capital Group, Carol Gray, Chris and Diane Keating, David and Barbara Payne, , Duff and Patricia Scott, Empire Life, F.K. Morrow Foundation, Sir Joseph Flavelle Foundation, George E. Nutter, George Enns, Ira Gluskin and Maxine Granovsky Gluskin Charitable Foundation, Jordan and Lynne Elliott Family Foundation, Kiwanis Club of Toronto Foundation, Robert and Karen Glass, Robert Comish, Robert M. Ogilvie, Spin Master Ltd., The Christina Mary Hendrie Trust, The Purpleville Foundation, The Ralph M. Barford Foundation

Donors who contributed to the 10th Anniversary Matching Gift Campaign are also recognized above.

**We would like to recognize the following events for their fundraising contributions to LIGHTS and the many other donors and event supporters not listed above - An Evening with Arthur Fleishman, LIGHTS Golf Gathering, PLAY IT FORWARD Tennis Gala, Skate the Six and Shoot the Six.**

Supporting the dreams of people who have intellectual disabilities is only possible through the support of many. To renew your gift visit [LIGHTS.to](http://LIGHTS.to), mail a cheque payable to Community Living Toronto with LIGHTS in the memo line or contact Sylvie Labrosse, Manager, Fundraising at 647-588-9465 or [sylvie.labrosse@cltoronto.ca](mailto:sylvie.labrosse@cltoronto.ca).

**The above information is correct at the time of printing. We apologize for any errors or omissions.**



In partnership with:

