Unleashing Potential

ASNL Annual Report 2014

Autism Society
Newfoundland & Labrador

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Executive Statement

Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador, continued to offer a range of services, programming, employment and supports throughout 2013 – 2014 to many in our community who have come to rely on our support. Despite the negative impact of fiscal restraint by government these past two fiscal years, we are proud of our many accomplishments this past year. There continued to be many successes to celebrate as our participants developed new skills to improve the quality of their lives; programs were revised and expanded; and a new service delivery model was fully implemented in all four regions, giving access to many more individuals, families, organizations and professionals throughout the province. These stories can be found in the following pages.

Securing an adequate core funding grant continued to be a major challenge for management. Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador, advocated with community partners and government to address urgent needs throughout the province.

With support from our funders, we were able to employ three young adults with ASD at the Elaine Dobbin Centre as regular employees with full benefits, and another six young adults in our Transitions Program (supported employment) for three months.

We continue to see the positive impact of our social enterprise initiatives, which provide real job skills training for participants to make the link to the workforce. Real skills learned in the workplace onsite, for pay, and volunteer opportunities in community settings, are building confidence and trust, improving social and communication skills, and enhancing employability skills. As this is being written, exciting opportunities are being explored with great promise for more employment opportunities for more of our clients.

Follow Us

In Fiscal year 2014, which ended March 31st, 645 clients received 20,837 hours of programming. Hundreds of families came through our doors in search of programs, supports and services that will help transform lives and give hope for brighter futures. Critical to our capacity to meet their needs are the many funding partners and supporters who make our work possible. They include our provincial government funders; regional health authorities; community groups; corporate and individual donors. We must also acknowledge the Board of Directors, regional board members and the staff team throughout the organization who go above and beyond their job descriptions. As well, the many volunteers who give so generously, whether it is through help with program delivery, the Spring Gala, Ride for Autism, Active for Autism Walk/Run, or other activities throughout Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador.

Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador, has finalized its Strategic Plan and developed and prioritized its Advocacy Plan. The first priority was planning, developing and administering a research-based Needs Assessment that involves a research team from Memorial University consulting with individuals inside and outside our organization to provide us with a deeper understanding of where government and community services, and services provided by us too, are most needed. We look forward, with focus and commitment, to advocating for, and supporting, those persons with autism who seek ways to overcome challenges in their lives so they may believe in a future with hope and optimism.

Scott Crocker
Executive Director
Autism Society Newfoundland & Labrador

Board of Directors 2013 -14

At Large

John J. Barry, President
Angela Decker
Karen Flynn, Vice-President
Sandra Goold
Sandra Garland
Derrick Hanrahan
Suzanne Kenny
Joe McKenna, Treasurer
Dr. Fereidoon Shahidi, Secretary
Darrin Tulk

Self-Advocate

Tom Jackman

Eastern Region

Connie Robertson

South Central Region

Elizabeth Barlow

Western Region

Mark LaCosta

Executive Staff

Scott Crocker
Executive Director

Alex Collins
Manager, Finance & Administration

Kendra Lane
Manager, Programs & Services

Greg Knott
Manager, Revenue Development & Communications

Tom Taylor
Manager, Property & Facilities

Roxanne Hogan
Manager, The Pantry Cafe & Catering

Adam Chafe
Executive Assistant

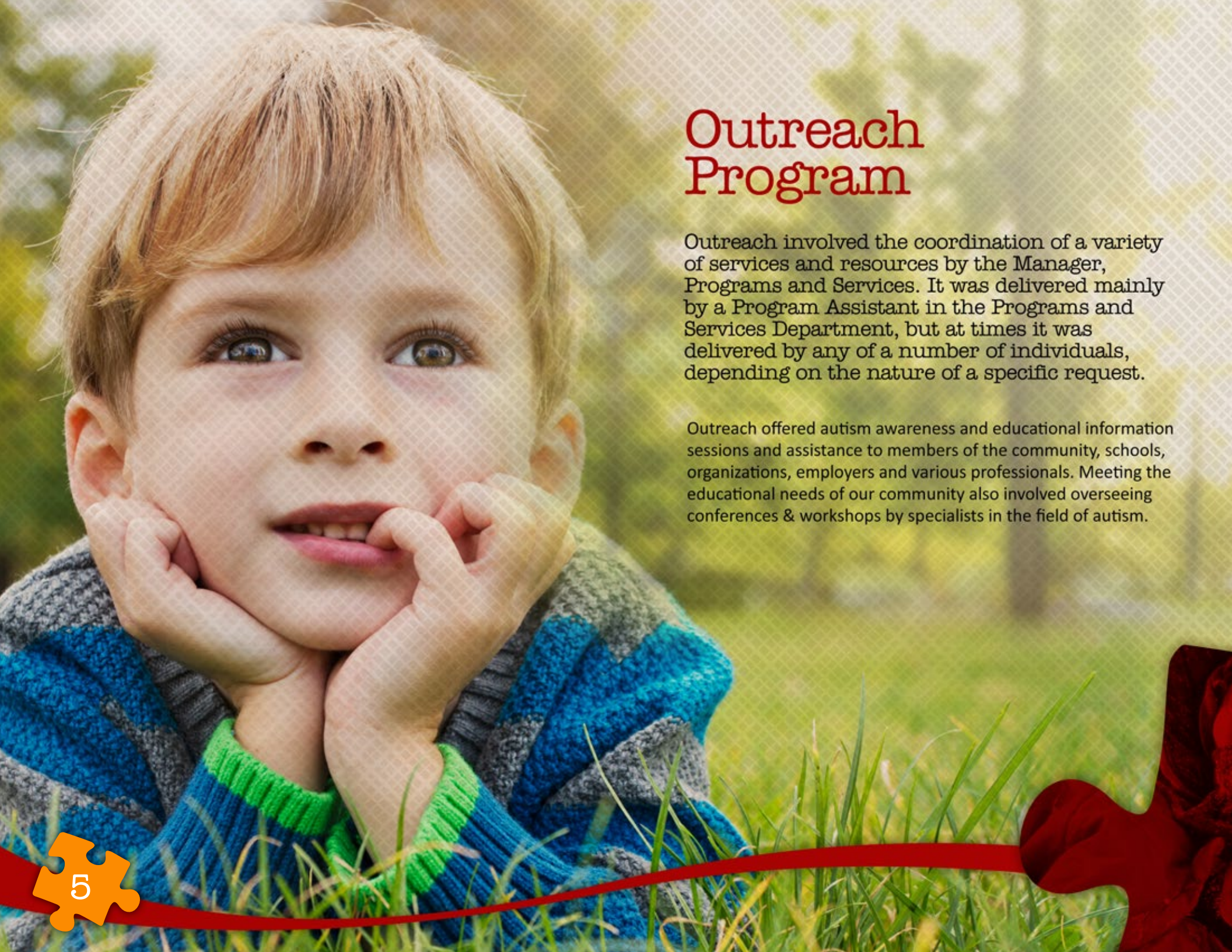
Advocacy

Advocacy is the process by which Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador, aims to influence public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions.

Advocacy initiatives during the year included many activities: campaigns using various media, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research, presenting briefs, multiple meetings with government Ministers and officials, and lobbying directly with MHA's on key issues affecting the autism community. Increased use is being made of social media to get our message out to the public and better facilitate engagement and collective action.

A re-branding of the organization, complete with new logo and signage, Family Resource Kits, Policy Position Statements on Key Issues, and public campaigns demanding movement on priority issues occurred. These issues included: lengthy wait times for assessment and diagnosis; lengthy wait times for follow-up Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Therapy services; removal of IQ 70 as the criterion for providing adult services and adding an adaptive functioning assessment; adding criteria for allocating Student Assistant time in the schools; reinstatement of funding cuts to Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador; and an increase in the overall core funding grant; and establishment of a regional office in Labrador.

The organization planned and implemented a research-based Needs Assessment that resulted from our Strategic Plan. It is being conducted throughout the province by a research team from Memorial University and will drive changes and directions for Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador, moving forward. The final report, with recommendations, is expected in the spring of 2015.



Outreach Program

Outreach involved the coordination of a variety of services and resources by the Manager, Programs and Services. It was delivered mainly by a Program Assistant in the Programs and Services Department, but at times it was delivered by any of a number of individuals, depending on the nature of a specific request.

Outreach offered autism awareness and educational information sessions and assistance to members of the community, schools, organizations, employers and various professionals. Meeting the educational needs of our community also involved overseeing conferences & workshops by specialists in the field of autism.

ASNL also offered opportunities for families, parents, siblings and caregivers to meet monthly in the **Parent 2 Parent Network**, and adults with ASD met regularly in a group called **Connections**. ASNL is committed to providing opportunities for families to engage with additional family supports. Outreach also included the planning, development, and liaising between other organizations within the community that share similar goals.

Outreach coordinated resources such as the Barbara J. Hopkins Library and Targa Technology Centres. Each region holds and maintains their own library collections; however any resources from the Barbara J. Hopkins Library are made available to any member of ASNL across Newfoundland & Labrador. The library holds a variety of resources: books, magazines, curriculum resources, occupational therapy materials, and the Targa Technology Centre. The Targa Technology Centre developed out of the partnership with Targa Newfoundland. Targa Technology Centres hold a variety of Assistive Technologies and Augmentative Communication devices. Targa Technology Centres provide one-to-one, group and/or webinar instruction on how to use adaptive devices. Each Apple device processes an assortment of applications to enrich education, leisure, self-regulation, time-management, and communication.

The volunteer initiative supported and promoted the use of volunteers in several facets of the daily operation of the centre. ASNL utilized its volunteer supports through events, fundraising, family-based activities, administrative duties, and programming. The engagement of volunteers with programming enhanced the delivery of programming supports to individuals and gave valuable support to staff.

Services & Supports

The Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador, provides a variety of needed supports and services to persons with autism, their families and caregivers, and professionals in the community who interact with people with autism.

a.

TEACCH Certified Practitioners, trained by experts in autism from the University of North Carolina, upon request, provide professional development to professionals who work directly with persons with autism. They include educators, police, firefighters, paramedics, medical students, etc. Services are provided with a 'fee for service' which includes an hourly rate and expenses.

b.

The Program Assistant, Outreach, upon request, provides training and awareness sessions to a variety of stakeholders in the community. They include recreational workers, classroom students, daycare workers, parent groups, community organizations that have adult or youth members, etc.

c.

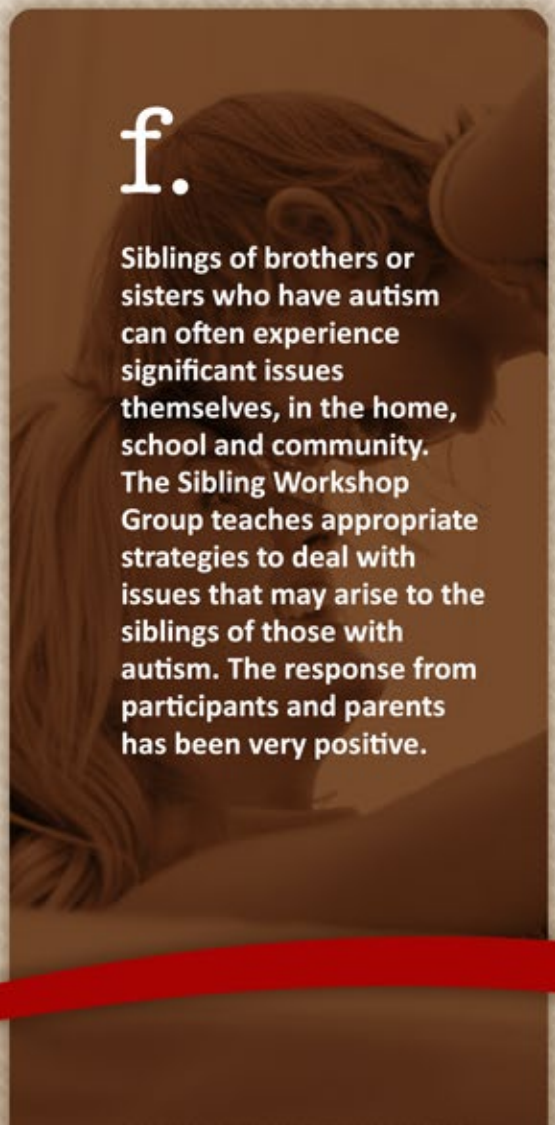
Families often request that an ASNL representative attend secondary or post-secondary school meetings with them, either to advocate on their behalf, help with IEP/ISSP meetings, raise awareness levels of the staff about certain issues, or help reassure students with autism who are having difficult adjustment periods in the school setting.

d.

Parents of children, youth and adults with autism benefit from the support provided by other parents with the same experiences. They meet on a regular basis. Our Parent 2 Parent Support Network operates in many communities throughout the province, led by a parent volunteer or ASNL staff member.

e.

The Connections group provides an opportunity for adults with autism to meet regularly and interact in a safe and comfortable environment, either at the Centre or a suitable location in the community. Sharing with others through discussions on topics of interest, describing personal experiences, detailing personal triumphs, each of these has benefits for the entire group.



f.

Siblings of brothers or sisters who have autism can often experience significant issues themselves, in the home, school and community. The Sibling Workshop Group teaches appropriate strategies to deal with issues that may arise to the siblings of those with autism. The response from participants and parents has been very positive.

Programs

Programs are offered to persons across the lifespan with autism in our four regions. Most are staffed by ASNL employees but some are staffed by community workers (i.e. recreational employees).

Therapeutic Recreation

Therapeutic Recreation programming uses treatment, education, and recreation services to help people with autism develop and use their leisure in ways that enhance their health, independence, and well-being. Therapeutic Recreation involves individuals with autism and their families in fun, enjoyable and meaningful activities both at the Centre and in the community. Each program we offer attempts to address the deficits of Autism, namely socialization, communication and repetitive and restricted behaviours. Using community inclusion initiatives, ASNL strives to have individuals with autism engaged in activities near and with their peers in the community.

Programs offered include: Playtime (ages 2-5); Splish Splash (ages 2-6); Early Intervention Music Therapy (ages 2-5); Interactive Music Therapy (for adults 18+); Sensory Art (all ages and abilities); Let's Talk Science (ages 8-12); Bowling Club (all ages); 1:1 Swim Program (age 7+); Equine Interaction (all ages); Future Strides (all ages); and Adult Leisure (18+).

Social Thinking and Social Club

Social Thinking, a term coined by Michelle Garcia Winner, is a learning strategy that aims to invest people with cognitive social deficits, most common in high functioning autism and Asperger's Syndrome, with the capacity to encode and decode unspoken social conventions. ASNL's Social Thinking Program focuses on these skills, and the development of successful social interactions in persons with Asperger's Syndrome and High Functioning Autism.

The concepts covered in Social Thinking include:

- Appropriate Social Interactions
- Conversation Building
- Problem Solving
- Perspective Taking
- Emotional Understanding
- Emotional Identification

The program is structured so that it is available to several age groups: pre-teen (9-13 year olds), teens (14-18 year olds) and adults. Participants attend the program in small peer group settings, consisting of three to six participants of similar age and interests.

Transitions

One of the biggest challenges facing youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is finding meaningful community involvement upon leaving the structure of secondary school. The Transitions Program aims to identify the strengths and interests of individual participants and provide a full year of enriching community employment, volunteer and learning experiences. This program is funded through the Department of Advanced Education & Skills, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The **Transitions Program** uses approaches specifically designed for individuals with ASD to assist participants in setting and attaining appropriate goals for community involvement and integration. It is designed to provide an opportunity for youth and adults with ASD to discover interests and make connections in the community. An individualized approach allows for skill development "appropriate to each participant." Meaningful community involvement beyond school years is crucial to the continuing social growth and development of individuals with ASD and the **Transitions Program** aims to build confidence and overcome challenges faced by this population when seeking employment or volunteer opportunities. Participants have a new volunteer experience monthly, where different areas of learning are identified and worked on during Centre-based sessions. Participants build skills based on their interests and goals and work on individualized areas of improvement. The program curriculum is fluid in nature and responds to the needs of the participant. *The intended outcome is to have each participant secured in an appropriate volunteer and/or employment placement at the end of the program.*

a. Food Services

ASNL employs one adult with ASD in The Pantry Cafe. That person is a Kitchen/Server Assistant, and while assisting the Manager and Chef with daily tasks, learns important social and employability skills.

b. Property & Facilities

Two adults are employed in this department: one as a Custodial Assistant, the second as a Grounds Assistant. A broad variety of employability skills are learned as they complete the varied tasks associated with each role.

c. Employability Training and Preparation

The **Transitions Program** has four (4) participants per year. In groups of two, they attend 12 hours of programming a week at either community or centre-based training sites. There is a set schedule of 4 days a week, 3 hours per day. Program staff includes a Program Coordinator and a Program Assistant.

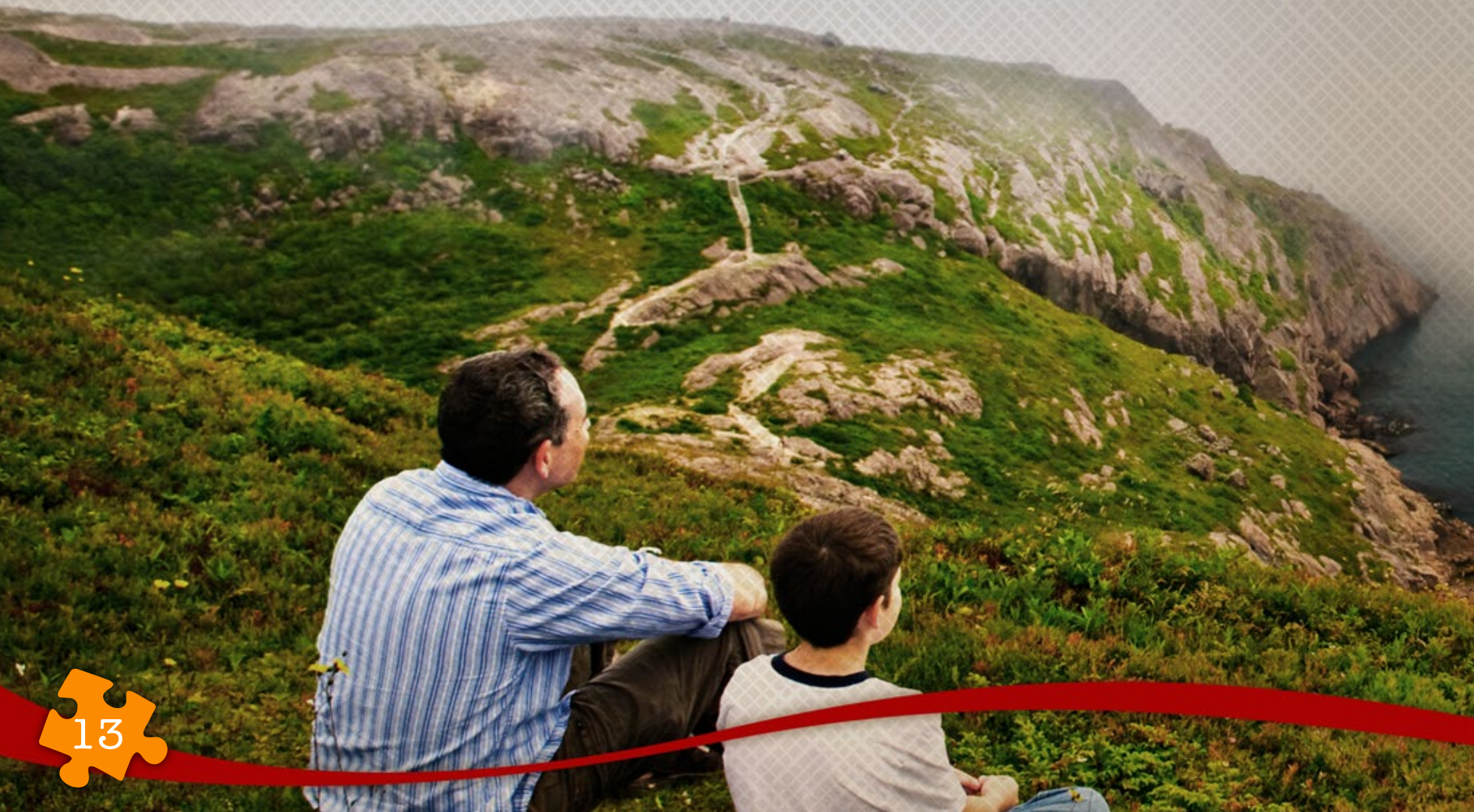
Participants gain valuable skills and experience through: community volunteer opportunities, centre-based training modules, individualized goal selection, and social thinking curriculum instruction. Participants also have the opportunity to job shadow the individuals with ASD working at ASNL and learn the social and professional expectations of being part of a team.

d. Social Enterprises

ASNL operated three social enterprises in 2013-2014. They included The Pantry Cafe, a popular daily dining operation; the Greenhouse, and its associated ventures of berry production, vegetable growing, and growing and selling plants and flowers, with or without handmade flower boxes; and the Community Garden, with 26 beds that are leased to people in the community annually - clients in Transitions plant, water, weed and harvest the vegetables.

In the Community & Across the Province

The goal of programming and outreach in the regions is to reach clients outside of the St. John's Metro area and provide learning and growth opportunities to persons with autism and their families in all areas of the province.



Programming in the regions is composed of core and speciality programs; they can be ASNL-staffed or non-ASNL staffed.

Core programs include Social Thinking and Therapeutic Recreation. These are offered in Eastern Region by one ASNL staff member. In addition, a second ASNL staff member provides outreach to the entire region, with regular visits to designated "hub" towns, either initiated by ASNL or upon request from communities in the region.

One ASNL staff member provides outreach to South Central Region and another ASNL staff member provides outreach to Western Regions, in the same manner – with regular visits to designated "hub" towns.

Each region offers a small number of speciality programs which are tailored to the membership in the region. They include Swimming, Music and/or Art and other specific Therapeutic Recreation Programs that are facilitated by ASNL but offered by non-ASNL staff in different communities. ASNL pays all costs related to staffing, professional development and travel. In addition, when outreach costs reach a certain level, ASNL assists the region with covering expenses. All rental and operational costs are borne by the regions themselves, through applications for grants and funds, or through fundraising initiatives and donations.

In some communities within each region parents come together to lend support to each other. These **Parent Support Groups** meet regularly, have information sessions, share experiences, and organize fun activities for children with autism.

ASNL: In the Community & Across the Province

- **Avalon**
- **Eastern**
- **South Central**
- **Western**
- **Parent Support Groups**

Autism Society, Newfoundland & Labrador: Measuring the Impact

645
clients provided programming with varying weekly hours

1,000
Government Services Booklets printed for distribution around the province for families of persons of all ages with autism

3
regular, permanent employees with ASD contracted to work at Elaine

20,857
programing hours provided to clients in 2013-14

$416,672
in 'net' fundraised dollars during the fiscal year

1,000

Family Resource Kits printed for distribution around province for families of present and newly diagnosed children with autism

1,700

Policy Position Booklets detailing priority advocacy issues printed and distributed around the province for general public

3

regions had new service delivery model implemented, providing greater access to all communities and families in each region

$3750

leveraged another

$26,250

for a total of

$30,000

to fund MUN Research Team conducting 'Needs Assessment' of autism community in Newfoundland and Labrador

6

months is current wait time at Janeway in 2014 for 'initial' assessment by pediatrician

10-12

months for the 'actual diagnosis' at Janeway in 2014

Financial Report, Fiscal 2014

Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador Inc.

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures - Year Ended March 31, 2014

	2014	2013
REVENUE		
General Operations (Schedule 1)	$ 1,041,243	$ 1,205,727
Fundraising Activities (Schedule 2)	581,662	470,711
	1,622,905	1,676,438
EXPENDITURES		
General Operations (Schedule 1)	1,467,291	1,498,672
Fundraising Activities (Schedule 2)	164,990	105,094
	1,632,281	1,603,766
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES FROM OPERATIONS	(9,376)	72,672
OTHER INCOME (EXPENSES)		
Loss on disposal of assets	-	(3,309)
Interest income	11,614	17,139
	11,614	13,830
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES	**$ 2,238**	**$ 86,502**

Statement of Changes in Net Assets - Year Ended March 31, 2014

	Unrestricted Net Assets	Investment in Capital Assets	Restricted Net Assets	2014	2013
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	$ 609,312	$ 1,339,388	$ 364,093	$ 2,312,793	$ 2,226,288
Excess of revenue over expenditures	2,238	-	-	2,238	86,505
Capital asset additions	(2,824)	27,416	(24,592)	-	-
Investment income	(5,493)	-	5,493	-	-
Amortization	83,176	(83, 176)	-	-	-
NET ASSETS – END OF YEAR	$ 686,409	$ 1,283,628	$ 344,994	$ 2,315,031	$ 2,312,793

Statement of Financial Position March 31, 2014

	General Fund 2014	Autism Centre Fund (Note 7) 2014	2014	2013
ASSETS				
Current				
Cash	$ 368,027	$ -	$ 368,027	$ 248,629
Investments (Note 4)	372,738	344,994	717,732	710,843
Accounts receivable	59,607	-	59,607	82,179
Inventory (Note 5)	21,005	-	21,005	20,011
Prepaid expenses	26,281	-	26,281	25,859
	847,658	344,994	1,192,652	1,087,521
CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 6)	33,743	1,249,885	1,283,628	1,339,388
	$ 881,401	$ 1,594,879	$ 2,476,280	$ 2,426,909
LIABILITIES				
Current				
Accounts payable	$ 63,979	$ -	$ 63,979	$ 66,508
Government remittances payable	25,748	-	25,748	24,986
Deferred contributions	71,522	-	71,522	22,622
	161,249	-	161,249	114,116
NET ASSETS				
Unrestricted net assets	$ 686,409	-	686,409	609,312
Investment in capital assets	33,743	1,249,885	1,283,628	1,339,388
Restricted net assets (Note 7)	-	344,994	344,994	364,093
	720,152	**1,594,879**	**2,315,031**	**2,312,793**

Thank You

Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador, wishes to express a sincere thank you to each of our funders, donors and community partners for their generous commitment to, and support of, our work during 2013-2014. Thank you to individuals who donated as well.

Major Funders

Government of Newfoundland & Labrador
Department of Health & Community Services
Department of Advanced Education & Skills

Government of Canada
Service Canada

Major Donors

United Way
of Newfoundland and Labrador

Cal LeGrow Foundation

Ice Caps Care Foundation

Ron Joyce Foundation

Rotary Club of St. John's

Naturals Group of St. John's Rotary Club

Newfoundland and Labrador
Association for Community Living

Community Partners

A. Harvey Company Ltd
Anglican Parish, Lake Melville
ARE AUDIO
Atlantic Rivers Outfitting Company
AutoParts Network
Beachy Cove Elementary
Belfor Property Restoration
Bell Aliant Pioneers
Blue Knights of Newfoundland
Boilermakers Local 203
Bonavista Lions Club
Canada Fittings and Flanges Inc.
Central Cycle and Recreation
Charton Hobbs
Chive709
City Honda
CNA Students Union – Grand Falls-Windsor Campus
Coast 101.1 FM
Coldwell Banker ProCo
Cooperators Insurance
Cougar Helicopters
Craig's Locksmithing and Autoglass
Crosbie Group Limited
DF Barnes Group
Discovery Collegiate
Enactus Memorial
Fahey Building Ltd
Fast Signs
Flanker Press
Goulds Leo Club
Grand Banks Social Club
Gros Morne Academy
Hashpipe
Hibernia
Hickman Nissan Clarenville
Humber River Cruise
Igloo Lake Lodge
Investors Group
Kinsmen Club of St. John's East
Kiwanis Club of Grand Falls-Windsor
KKC Millwrights Workers Local 1009
K-Rock
Lake Academy
Maersk Supply Service
Mavericks RC
Mount Pearl Intermediate
Newfoundland and Labrador Cadet Detachment
Newfoundland Chocolate Company
Newfoundland Hydro (Central Regional Office)
Newfoundland Power
Norex
Norris Arm North Recreation Committee
Nunatsiavut Group of Companies
O'Regan Agencies
Ocean Choice International
OneSubSea
OPEN Communications
Peacock Primary School
Pennecon
Penny Posh
Phantom Fore Golf Tournament
Pipers
Port Union Lions Club
Porter Airlines
Portobello's Restaurant
Powell's Supermarket
Provincial Airlines
RBC
RCMP Golf Tournament
Re/Max
Rebekah District Association #6
Rennies River Bridge Four
Retired Teachers Association of NL
Sci-Fi on the Rock
Shorefast Foundation
Simmons Honda
Sisters of Mercy
Snuggle Buddies
Southern Antique Car Club
St. Michael's & All Angels Anglican Church
Stantec
Starbucks Coffee
Statoil
Steele Communications
Stella and Dot
Stone Photography Studio
Subsea7
Suncor
Suncor East Coast Social Club
Sweetland Photography
Talon Energy Services
Targa Newfoundland
The Racing Reverend
Tim Horton's
Town of Marystown
Tri-Ware
United Church Women (Lumsden)
Universal Helicopters Newfoundland Ltd
Verafin
Virginia Park Community Centre
Vivint
VOCM
99.1 Hits FM
VOCM Cares
Wedgwood Insurance
WestJet
Women's Group of St. Shott's
Woodland Primary School

ASNL Headquarters

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Autism Society
Newfoundland & Labrador