



FINAL PROGRAM REPORT, APRIL 1st, 2022 – MARCH 31st, 2023

**A SHELTER FROM THE STORM
PLUS
YOUTH BADLY IN NEED OF A SHOWER**

The masks came off this past year. Underneath were troubled faces on kids who forgot how to socialize; unable to face the music of an indifferent world, interact with other homo sapiens and to perform basic life skills such as hygiene.

“Find your power, take a shower” - an all too popular refrain this year.

Most arrived having given up on school and on people. Around them, the world appeared in turmoil, and the teens had simply checked out. When they stepped off the bus, it was like receiving refugees. They tiptoed to the front door more gingerly than other years.

Their caregivers were also in a funk. It's not easy, especially for Indigenous parents, to send their kids to a boarding school. One Elder chastised us for even using the term. Use “Land-Based Live-In Learning Instead.” We had seventeen parent incidents over the year, a quintupling of the usual.

And yet, the outcomes our students achieved were beyond outstanding. Families and social workers, and especially the students themselves, described total transformations.

The meshing of land, food and curriculum, so our students told us, was captivating. The kids just couldn't resist the allure of nature. Completion rates were very high.

On the business side of things, Boundless is on a solid growth trajectory, with Covid seemingly in the rear-view mirror. We served more kids. We scaled back our social enterprise to make room. That lost revenue was replaced by donations.

Notwithstanding the human resource shortage, it was an outstanding year for our little charity. For the kids, it was a shelter from the storm, both inside and out.

BY THE NUMBERS

	<u>2020/2021</u>	<u>2021/2022</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>
Total Students served	113	264	317
Total Student Days Delivered	2145	6415	7728
Student Completion Rate All Programs	98%	95%	96%
Behavioural Incidents	116	218	243
Serious Health and Safety Incidents	0	0	2
Students Completing Full Diploma at Boundless	26	54	63
Increase in English curriculum grades compared to public school scores	28%	38%	31%
Increase in Math and Science grades compared to public school scores	32%	38%	41%
Number of Indigenous Students	66	108	122
Budget Surplus/Deficit exclusive to Youth Programming	\$110,000	\$136,000	\$84,000

PROFILES OF OUR STUDENTS BEFORE ARRIVING AT BOUNDLESS

- 100% of our students had achieved credits below their grade level
- 100% experienced long-term school interruptions
- 18% had been suspended or expelled
- 44% identified as Indigenous
- 100% presented diagnosed mental health and learning challenges
- 86% reported significant familial dysfunction
- 11% had criminal histories
- 100% reported as low-income

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- 1) Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
- 2) Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- 3) Inuuqatigiit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families
- 4) Toronto Catholic School board
- 5) Renfrew County School Board – Indigenous programs
- 6) Central Toronto Youth Services
- 7) Michael Garron Hospital Anxiety Clinic
- 8) You Turn (Ottawa)
- 9) Ottawa Children’s Aid Society
- 10) Renfrew County Children’s Aid Society
- 11) Mind Forward Acquired Brain Injury Services
- 12) Ottawa Carlton District School Board



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST YEAR

- The kids tested soil, created and consumed an organic garden, and planted trees to re-wild the land. Imagine earning a science credit for this. For kids who have a history of despising school, this holistic approach blindsided them with joy.
- The Indigenous program is flourishing and growing swiftly. Trust has been established.
- While behavioural incidents are at record numbers, a calm and patient approach is carrying the day. More young people with mood and personality disorders are completing the program and graduating high school at Boundless
- Health and Safety incidents were minimal (although two were severe with safe endings)
- Our approach to addressing adolescent anxiety and depression is attracting praise from our community partners, teachers and social workers. We are told that our mental health model is yielding more resilient teenagers
- Our budget and balance sheet were solid
- While donations were down, they were enough
- Our roster of community partners is growing, especially in the Indigenous community; but also in programs for anxiety and depression. This sets the stage for much growth in 2023/2024



LOWLIGHTS

- The human resource shortage is taking its toll. Thankfully not for teachers or social workers, but in shortages for support staff, seasonal and maintenance staff, and alarmingly, in outdoor recreation instructors. We are hanging on.
- As per above, our whitewater canoeing program may not last another twelve months. The river has been the mainstay of adventure programming at Boundless for four decades. We have already dismantled our climbing program.
- We had two severe health and safety incidents, originating from mental health episodes that exposed some holes in our risk management system. While the outcomes were resolved satisfactorily, they were scary. We learned a lot.
- Donations are down relative to one year ago. The economy is largely to account for this, but the drop exposes our vulnerability to this volatile source of revenue. This matters a lot because we are lowering our reliance on social enterprise revenue.
- Re-wilding our conservation area is far more expensive than we reckoned. We don't have enough funding to pursue our lofty goals. The land can wait, we can too. But we still must attract more donations in conservation to keep things moving along.
- We have resurrected programming with two school boards, now that their Covid policies are less restrictive. Yet navigating these bureaucracies remains highly restrictive. A large swath of kids in these programs are being underserved.

OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Instead of wishing the human resource crisis away, we must assume it shall remain for years, and we must adapt. To this end, we are piloting a community program that shall see greater numbers of youth participants, while requiring fewer Boundless staff. Select community partners shall send more Elders, community builders and pursue their own unique agendas. This model will be introduced in addition to our core programs, not replace them. We are setting the stage for a possible transition to more of this programming in the years ahead, lowering our staffing requirements.
- We anticipate a significant expansion of youth participants, both in the Indigenous community and in the mental health sector that treats anxiety and depression
- More planted trees. More land remediation. More nature based curriculum
- A last ditched effort to save the whitewater program by adapting recruitment strategies and provide more training. And yet, the development of land-based curriculum and a new community model of delivering programs will more than compensate for the loss of running the rapids. We are of mixed minds on the matter.

AN EXTRA SPECIAL PLAN FOR THE YEAR AHEAD
HAVE WE REALLY DISCOVERED THE NEXT BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD?

Our approach to helping kids navigate anxiety and depression, a model that combines CBT, mindfulness, physicality and behavioural activation, is yielding outcomes that make our community partners observe in awe.

From a mental health perspective, have we struck gold? It's easy to claim anecdotally. But not so easy to prove.

As such, we are launching a two-phase research project that will look at our approach and its outcomes. We believe of all the things we do at Boundless, our mental health initiative is the most replicable.

Phase one, a qualitative assessment, begins in September and shall conclude about a year later.



**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE 12 MONTH EDUCATION PROGRAM ENDING
MARCH 31, 2023**

EXPENSES EXCLUSIVE TO OUR YOUTH PROGRAM

	Year Ending March 31, 2021	Year Ending March 31, 2022	Year Ending March 31, 2023
Teachers and Staff	914,000	1,260,000	1,314,000
Travel	16,000	34,000	39,000
Insurance	62,000	74,000	77,000
Program/Educational Expenses	338,000	394,000	380,000
Admin	20,000	25,000	25,000
Total	1,350,000	1,787,000	1,835,000

REVENUE

	Year Ending March 31, 2021	Year Ending March 31, 2022	Year Ending March 31, 2023
Donations to youth program	720,000	848,000	812,000
Revenue from Boundless Social Enterprise	225,000	560,000	592,000
Central Toronto Youth Service Contract	515,000	515,000	515,000
TOTAL	1,460,000	1,923,000	1,919,000
Surplus (Deficit)	110,000	136,000	84,000

PROJECTED SERVICE TARGETS 2023/2024

	2021/2022 (Actual)	2022/2023 (Actual)	2023/2024 (Target)
Total Youth Served	264	317	360
Total Student Days Delivered	6415	7728	8775
Indigenous Youth Participants	108	122	150
Indigenous Student Days Delivered	2560	2860	3250

