



Children First Fund

IMPACT REPORT - 2020-2021

When Nicole didn't have anywhere else to turn, we were there to give her the support she needed to overcome some big challenges in her life.

I am writing this letter to wholeheartedly thank you for your donation to F&CS. It has made a huge difference in my life!

As a former crown ward of Guelph and Wellington County, I worked in the restaurant industry in order to support my passion as an artist. However, when COVID hit, I could not work and found myself without the same support nor resources that most other young people had, such as parents to return home to.

Kieran, my social worker, has always held space for me with open ears. Yet, due to social distancing, funding limits, and the fact that I was over the age of 21, it just was not enough. I went searching for my biological parents hoping they would provide me a safe place to stay. Needless to say, that did not happen and consequently I ended up on a trauma ward for three weeks.

After my discharge, Kieran called me and he was able to provide financial support thanks to you. It was life changing! With your donation, I managed to afford medicine for my PTSD which led me to a sound mind, and thereafter had the financial ability to secure a safe and nourishing living environment. That had a huge impact on me.

What's more, the ability to pay off my previous student loans has now allowed me to apply for school in September for massage therapy, a place to heal others.

Thank you for giving me a chance to survive and succeed!

- Nicole, Former Youth in Care and Children First Fund Recipient

BUILDING YOUTH SUCCESS THROUGH EDUCATION



14 Youth received educational awards & scholarships



11 Youth supported through skilled trades programs



\$23,245 in scholarships & awards granted

SUPPORTING YOUTH TRANSITIONING OUT OF CARE



1 Youth supported through a skills training program



\$7,494 Granted to make the transition out of care a little easier



6 Youth supported with furniture & other needs

MEETING BASIC NEEDS

26

Youth & Families supported in meeting their basic needs



20 Youth & Families received housing supports



5 Families received support for baby and children's needs



9 Youth & Families received health and mental health support



14 Youth & Families received support for clothing, food and personal needs



2 Youth received support for other basic needs

ENRICHING LIVES



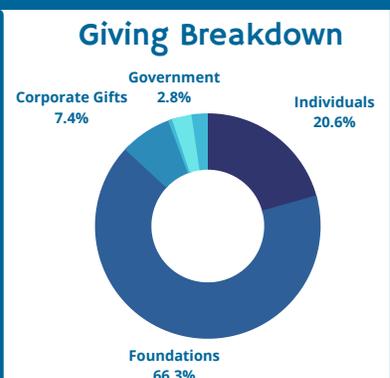
73 Youth received special holiday meals and stockings



5 Children & Youth received academic enrichment support



1 Parent received a skill building opportunity





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The Children First Fund's support toward a piece of technology changed everything for a family this year...



Patrick, a teenager with autism, had been really struggling this year. Patrick requires constant support to help him stick to his schedule, but this year, began to react increasingly violently when his mom tried to give Patrick the reminders he needed. Patrick's mom was extremely concerned for her safety and that of her young daughter, and didn't know how to give Patrick the support he needed in a way that wouldn't trigger him.

Patrick, his worker, and his family found that a piece of technology, a Fit-Bit, would help Patrick to stick to his schedule on his own through pre-set reminders, in a way that wouldn't be triggering to him. Unfortunately, Patrick's family had one more problem ahead of them - the price. Patrick's family was disheartened that the Fit-Bit was so expensive. Despite how badly they needed this device, they just couldn't afford it. So, Patrick's worker reached out to the Children First Fund for support.

With the support of the Children First Fund, Patrick was able to get his new Fit Bit, a purchase that was completely transformational for him, and his family. Patrick now had a way to keep himself on track without help from his mom, and was even motivated to become more active!

Thanks to the Children First Fund, Patrick is now more independent than ever before, and his relationship with his mom has improved dramatically. Patrick and his family are forever grateful for the support of the Children First Fund in supporting this piece of technology that has made such a big difference in their lives.



Leaving care can be a challenging and isolating experience, but the Children First Fund can make the transition a little easier for youth like Mikayla

"I'm a youth in care with the Guelph agency and this year I've received support from the Children First Fund to help furnish and move into my own first apartment. I just wanted to take the time to thank the Children First Fund for what you do as it helps a lot! I'm so happy to be able to furnish my own place without worrying about money so much as I was before.

It really felt like a breath of fresh air I never knew I needed. I even mentioned to my worker it felt like winning the lottery! I'm so grateful to everyone who made this support possible. Because of you wonderful people, I'm now able to make my first place feel like a home. It's been a long time since I've felt at home, so I really am beyond grateful for this help financially; it has saved so much stress for me."

- Mikayla, Former Youth in Care and Children First Fund Recipient



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Family & Children's Services
of Guelph and Wellington County