



Abbotsford  
HOSPICE SOCIETY

# ANNUAL REPORT

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MAY 2022- APRIL 2023

# Abbotsford Hospice Society

Abbotsford Hospice Society and Holmberg House is a centre where people within our community come for palliative care and support during times of grief and loss. Holmberg House is a beautiful 10-bed facility that provides dignified end-of-life care for adults from ages 19 and older. But there is so much more that goes on inside the walls of Holmberg House. The programs here are free of charge and provide grief support for all members of the family from 3 years old and up who have been affected by the death of their loved one.

## Mission

The Abbotsford Hospice Society helps children, youth, adults and their families as they cope with grief, death and dying through skilled and compassionate support, education, and advocacy.

## Values

- We are community focused
- We build stakeholder trust
- We believe in strong partnerships
- We are patients/clients centered
- We are responsive



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Dear Friends,

We are continuing to champion the legacy of care, hope, and support for individuals and families during a critical time of grief and loss. We are honoured and grateful to have served our community for the past 37 years with our society services and programs, and the physical care now provided with our partner Fraser Health for the past 7 years. The success of our organization can be attributed to the wisdom, guidance, and vision of the AHS Board of Directors and their leadership and representation in our community.

The kind and generous support that continues to come from our community this year allows us to increase our areas of reach for our AHS programs. We have seen great growth in our services and an increased demand for more training from community partnerships, education, and service providers. Partnerships and networks with UFV, Abbotsford School District, Archway, LTC homes, senior's organizations, recovery homes, and other community businesses and nonprofits, have been established to serve, support and educate our community for a greater capacity of influence. As Abbotsford continues to grow and develop, we continue to adapt to the needs of our changing society. We are expanding our services through greater education, more intuitive programs, and more targeted services. Our staff at AHS is a talented and educated team of individuals with degrees in counseling, psychology, accounting, children's therapy, communication, development, and nonprofit leadership. Having multiple areas of education has been beneficial to our clients giving them a more holistic approach and understanding of grief and loss, and has enhanced our education, support and care.

We have seen a significant expansion of our volunteer base and have increased our training sessions to 3 times a year to meet the demands. Additional training has been provided to our volunteers to equip and expand their skills and invest in those who are investing their time and talents with us. Our volunteers are an important part of the workforce of AHS, and we value the exceptional care and diversity that they bring. It is our honour to support those at the end of life, and their friends and families as they walk the journey of grief and loss. We are inspired to engage more volunteers, donors, and businesses to the vision, mission, and values of the Abbotsford Hospice Society, and together, to continue making a difference for our community.

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Executive  
Director's  
**STATEMENT**



Andrea Critchley  
Executive Director

# Board Chair's STATEMENT



Ryan Calder  
Board Chair

Another year draws to a close and I reflect back on the great opportunity I have to be the board chair for the Abbotsford Hospice Society. We continue to see our charity support many lives within our community, helping families and friends who are impacted by death to learn to navigate the grief process and support them along the path to healing. I am impressed with the talented team that our executive director, Andrea, has built, and grateful to see their efforts and their results. Our team works extremely hard to offer grief support and care, not only through support groups and existing programs but also new programs that we are implementing to offer more pathways of education and support. We are very blessed to have received strong financial and moral support from our community. Our team has continued to keep a close eye on monitoring our costs and ensuring that donor dollars are used as effectively as possible. We are focused on maintaining the wonderful building we have to host the hospice and grief support services provided, in addition to continuing to provide and enhance our grief support programs for all ages and cultural backgrounds. I look forward to furthering the strategic focus that our board has to ensure our actions are aligned with our long-term vision and objectives. All of this would not be possible without the fantastic team that we have in place; their contributions, capabilities, and commitment cannot be understated. I am grateful to be involved with such a positive organization that brings peace, comfort, and hope to so many in our community.

*We are thankful for the amazing people that serve on our Board, giving leadership and support to the Abbotsford Hospice Society and the community of Abbotsford.*



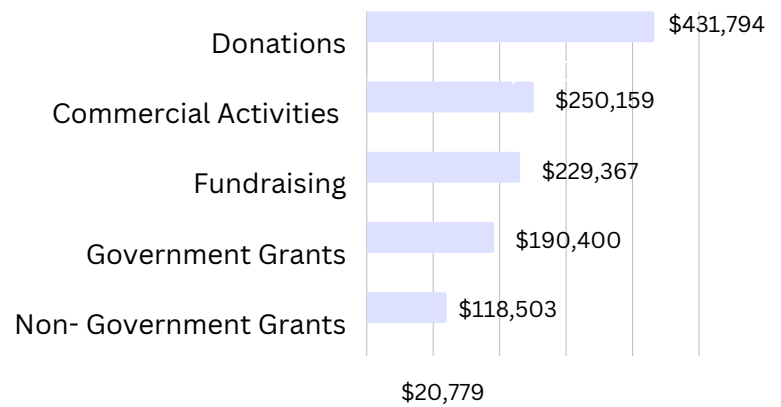
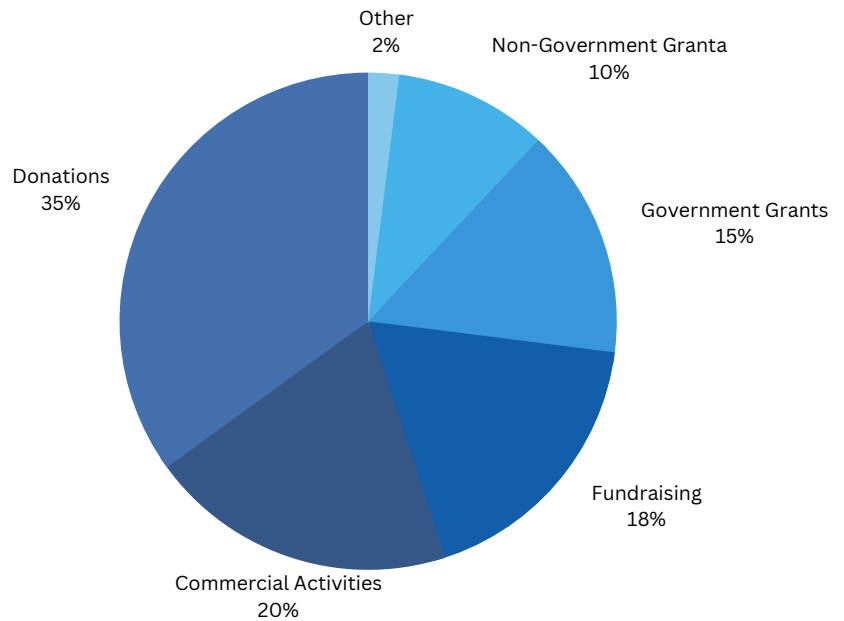
# Financial OVERVIEW

This has been another successful year for Abbotsford Hospice Society. With the help of our generous donors, support from several foundations, and business connections in the community, we ran our programs and building needs at Holmberg House. We continue to seek new sources of funding for the ongoing growth required to meet the needs of the community, as we see the need for grief support growing in schools and the growing community, as well as the continuing upkeep of our facility. We are continuing to expand our program groups and with that comes continued financial need but we are excited about the growth opportunities in the community.



Brendan Adrian  
Finance/Admin  
Director

## INCOME BY SOURCE



*\*totals are preliminary as of June 30, 2023, and subject to review, for final numbers please see CRA Charity Register for T3010 ending April 30, 2023 (expected to be posted in October 2023).\**

*We are grateful for another successful year at Abbotsford Hospice Society.*



## The year in review

This year we witnessed remarkable growth, expansion, and innovation in all our programs, services, and events.

We saw hope and healing being poured out to thousands of individuals through our services for children, youth, adults, and families.

We ran several workshops and training sessions to provide community leaders and individuals with the proper tools, resources, and healthy coping mechanisms for those who are walking with someone journeying through grief and loss or who may be journeying through their own personal grief.

Our heart is to help set children, youth, adults, and families on a proper trajectory to contribute to a healthier and stronger city.

This year did not come without its challenges but we are incredibly grateful to be able to say that this year we offered more service, programs, and resources to our community than ever before.

We are so grateful for our generous donors who continue to invest in the future of AHS.

**See below our highlights this year:**

### Summer Highlights

- Hike for Hospice
- Memorial Butterfly Release
- Horsepower for Hospice Show & Shine
- Peer-to-Peer Training
- Volunteer Training
- Teddy Bear Picnic
- Summer Camps

### Autumn Highlights

- Holmberg Golf Tournament
- Understanding Your Grief Journey
- Wills & Estates Seminar
- Grief Support Programs

### Winter & Spring Highlights

- Giving Tuesday
- Archway Community Service Training
- Abbotsford School District Training
- Wills & Estates
- Holiday Letter
- Volunteer Training
- Christmas Memorial Events
- Moments of Hope Gala



*The hospice staff's kindness have been a shining light in this time of darkness. The best thing I did in the immediate aftermath of my wife's passing was to walk through your front door. It was only a few days into our new journey but am thankful I did it then because I honestly believe it was through hospice support and guidance that kept us from languishing in the darkness moving towards the light as soon as we were able. That is a real gift, thank you."*

- Father of children who joined our children & youth program

For 37 years our palliative program has been caring for people as young as 19 years of age who are dying and has been providing support for the family and friends of our palliative clients.

As a result of responding to a community need and opening on April 18, 2016, all 10 beds in Holmberg House Hospice have been at full capacity with an attending 100% waitlist attached.

This last year we continued, with the help of our specially trained palliative volunteers and two AHS team members, to do the following: provide at-home palliative support, extended-care home support, support for the Palliative Critical Care Unit (PCCU) Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre and Holmberg House.

The palliative care program at Holmberg House took part in various initiatives and services to ensure we provided high-quality holistic care, support, and comfort to patients and their families during their end-of-life journey. We provided vigil services for the last 72 hours of life, spiritual care services for palliative clients and loved ones, Abbotsford Regional Hospital visiting, support for the "drop-in client" (palliative), lending library and computer/internet access, palliative support groups, workshops with registered trained facilitators (therapists, psychologists, or psychiatrists) for palliative clients and their families, caregivers support group, and additional supports for palliative clients and their caregivers.

Recognizing the challenges families face during end-of-life care for their loved ones, our palliative care program established an anticipatory grief support group. This group provides a safe space for families of residents to find solace, share experiences, and gain valuable insights from others going through similar situations. Our weekly Afternoon Tea Service is a cherished tradition that brings comfort, social connection, and a sense of normalcy to Holmberg House patients and their families and was continued this year as well. Moreover, AHS staff and volunteers ensured special milestones that brought joy and celebration for patients and their families were celebrated. We were able to not only help families commemorate wedding anniversaries and birthdays by organizing small, intimate gatherings but also facilitate a wedding ceremony at the PCCU! These special events brought immense joy and allowed families to create cherished memories with their loved ones. Additionally, AHS also facilitates a Walking Group at Mill Lake to ensure families are able to build a community around their grief while taking care of themselves. Likewise, we also provide grief support via one-to-one companionship sessions to ensure families were supported after losing their loved one and were not walking this journey alone.

“

*"AHS will forever be dear to our hearts as they allowed my family and I to have the best possible months with our mother at the end of her LIFE."*

“

*"Words can never say enough. I thank you for your kindness while my husband was in Hospice. It is truly the most wonderful place to be, when one is facing the end of one's journey. The care and Love that was felt was amazing by everyone there. I thank you from the bottom of my heart, our family is forever grateful."*

Patients in Palliative Care  
**633**



# Palliative SERVICES



Makenna Loft  
Volunteer & Development  
Coordinator



# Adult Grief & Loss SERVICES



This past fiscal year has once again brought an increase in requests for our adult grief and loss services. We continued our programs supporting our community members with in-person support.

Our community bereavement services we offered included:

- Community crisis support and debriefing, including drop-in and phone supports
- One-to-one volunteer companionship support
- Grief support groups:
- Widows Group, Infant Loss, Understanding Your Grief Journey, Compassionate Friends, and Walking Group.
- Anticipatory grief and loss support
- Complementary therapies for bereaved clients and caregivers, such as music and pet therapy support
- Workshops for school staff and administrators, businesses, and church groups
- Abbotsford Regional Hospital support (PCCU)
- Telephone grief support
- Public outreach and resource library
- Memorial services

We are thankful to continue to provide meaningful services to our community in need.

Grief has continued to impact our community as we are still recovering from the pandemic and flood that affected the Fraser Valley in 2021, and the recent unrest of wars in the world.

Grief has come in various forms and to ensure everyone's needs are met, our bereavement services have continuously evolved to introduce both in-person and virtual support groups this past year. We also hosted our Christmas Memorial Event this winter where families gathered around the table to make a picture collage of their loved ones while sharing memories of them. This event allowed us to share and understand the significance of creating a treasured picture. This can often help create a safe place for individuals to unwind, reflect and remember their loved ones.

I am honored to work with the team here at the Abbotsford Hospice Society and walk alongside those who are on their journey of grief.



Susanne Fehr  
Programs/Services Director



**One-to-One  
Companionship Clients**

**169**

**Support Group  
Participants**



**741**



**Volunteer Hours**

**10511**

**Active Clients**



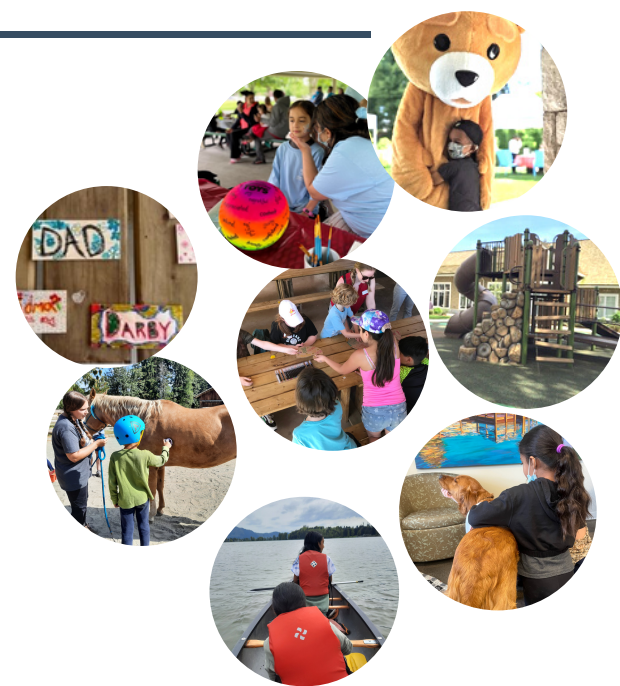
**910**

# Children & Youth SERVICES

We are excited that we have had the opportunity to begin hosting larger events for children and families again! This year, families were able to come together and drop in to celebrate special events and holidays in a safe place. These events offered families activities to remember their loved ones. All the events in the Children & Family Services Program are intentionally created to support healthy expression of grief and encourage families to share feelings with one another while taking part in joyful celebration of the connections that remain.

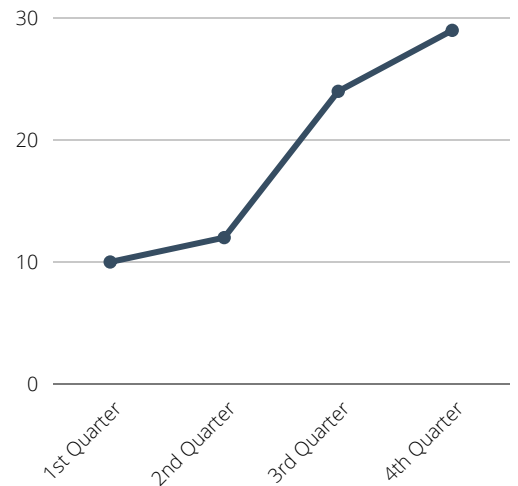
This year, we partnered with the Abbotsford School District to offer an eight-week Middle School Grief Support Group. This movement toward the schools was motivated by a low-barrier approach, as there is a great need for additional support in the schools. School-based support groups have the advantages of reducing student isolation, providing peer support, and assisting in connecting students to school resources.

We continue to prioritize our anticipatory grief and grief one-to-one support for children and youth. Services offered include 8 sessions of one-to-one companionship where we explore different aspects of play and art therapy. Children and youth have opportunities to explore their grief feelings and develop coping strategies. In addition, we cover topics relating to naming and regulating emotions, and when needed, we provide resources to caregivers to support children at home.



## ∞ Activities & Events our Children and Families Enjoyed:

- One to One Sessions
- Family Art & Movie Night
- Pet Therapy
- Kids' Book Club
- Middle School Grief Support Group
- Back to Nature
- Teen Grief Peer Support Group
- Adventure Day Camp
- Teddy Bear Picnic
- Memoiral Butterfly Release
- Equine Thereapy Camps
- Spooktacular
- Family Christmas Event



The need for our services continue to increase. The chart above shows a constant increase of children/youth who have received one-to-one grief support.



Janessa Neufeld  
Children & Family Services Coordinator (Maternity Coverage)



Katherine Martens  
Children & Family Services Assistant

Participants in Children & Youth Program 

# 1,035

## LOOKING FORWARD

- We are excited to be offering a Caregivers Workshop: How to Support Your Grieving Child.
- We hope to expand our Middle School Grief Support Group to more schools within the Abbotsford School District.
- We plan to offer three Teen Grief Support Training during the school year.
- We plan to continue focusing on children and youth through one-to-one support.

# Our VOLUNTEERS

The volunteers at Abbotsford Hospice Society play an invaluable role in our mission to provide compassionate care and support to individuals facing end-of-life care and their families, including bereavement services. Their unwavering dedication and selflessness are the cornerstone of our program's success. Throughout the year, these remarkable individuals generously give their time and expertise to assist patients and their families. Whether it's providing companionship and emotional support to patients in their final stages of life, facilitating grief support groups, offering one-on-one counseling to bereaved individuals, or organizing memorial events. Our volunteers extend a helping hand during the most challenging times. Their genuine compassion and empathetic presence offer comfort and solace during challenging times.

We currently have over 200 active volunteers that share their time with us at Abbotsford Hospice Society. The trained volunteers at AHS serve in many capacities, whether at Holmberg House, PCCU at ARH, or at our Community events.

All our volunteers take part in a 30-hour Grief Support Training that happens three times a year. We also offered Facilitating Training as well as Meal Assist Training for our volunteers.

We were honoured to recognize all our volunteers during Volunteer Appreciation Week. We also hosted a special Christmas Banquet for the volunteers in December.

The volunteers did a beautiful job of decorating and taking down for the Christmas season at AHS.

Without their commitment and tireless efforts, our program would not be able to deliver the exceptional bereavement services and care that we strive for. We are immensely grateful for the incredible contributions of our volunteers, who embody the spirit of kindness and bring comfort and healing to individuals and families in their time of need.



## Brandie-Lynn's AHS Story

*"Loss and grief have unfortunately been a huge part of my life from a young age. The ups and downs of my own grief journey have been long and difficult but it has also shown me the passion I have to help people throughout their own grief journeys. As much as it can be difficult being an ear or sounding board for people going through the hardest moments of their life it is such a rewarding experience. After my very first day of volunteering, I got into my car and the song that was played at my brother's funeral came on and I instantly felt peace. I knew it was a sign that I was doing the right thing. AHS gave me the opportunity to do the work my soul has been searching for and I couldn't be more grateful."*

 **Volunteers**

 **Volunteer hours**

**220**

**10511**



Charanpreet Mahal  
Program Support  
Coordinator



Makenna Loft  
Volunteer & Development  
Coordinator

## EVENTS



Divya Sandhu  
Events Coordinator  
Maternity Coverage



Carley Tonn  
Development/Communications Coordinator  
Maternity Coverage

Despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic, natural disasters of floods and heat waves, our Events team resumed

### Fundraising Summary

Horsepower for Hospice Show & Shine

**\$28,510**

Holmberg Memorial Golf Tournament

**\$55,795**

Moments of Hope Gala

**\$161,470**

this year to hosting in-person events in our community. We are excited to share this year's successes as these events have become a staple in bringing our community together.

Our second Annual Horsepower for Hospice Show & Shine was a huge success with over 1000 individuals in attendance at the gorgeous Mt. Lehman Winery. This family-friendly event showcased a variety of classic and modern vehicles drawing crowds of all ages.

Our Annual Holmberg Memorial Golf Classic took place at the beautiful Ledgeview Golf and Country Club where attendees enjoyed their day of golf with breathtaking views all whilst enjoying the beautiful weather, great company, refreshments, live and silent auctions, and dinner.

Our Annual Moments of Hope Gala returned this year as an in-person event hosted at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Centre. Guests enjoyed live performances from two bands, live and silent auctions, and a gourmet dinner and dessert. This event was a huge success, and it has become the most successful Gala in AHS history to date. All proceeds raised will contribute to our palliative and grief support programs as well as the ongoing operation of the Society.

## GRANTS

In the aftermath of the pandemic, we have seen a need now more than ever for effective grief support for our community. As the need for our services continues to increase, the need for grants continues to play a vital role in being able to provide palliative and bereavement support to our community. This year, we were grateful to see many of our grantors give generously to our programs and services and partner with us as we cared for the needs of our community. We were fortunate to continue to grow and deepen our existing relationships and build new relationships with many Foundations across Canada that understood the importance of the work we do and the impact grief support has on children, youth, adults, and families.

Because of our generous grantors not only were we able to continue many of the grief support programs we offer, but we were also able to innovate and launch new and effective programs to better help and support our community.

It is an honour to be a part of an organization like AHS, that continues to make a great impact in the lives of our community.

## COMMUNITY & BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

In 2022, as we emerged from Covid-19 Protocols, our programs rapidly expanded to meet the new demand, and our Development Team went to work to fund them! New corporate partnerships were developed, and we want to expressly thank Reimer Hardwoods who followed up their generous 2021 donation of \$50,000 toward the Children's Programs with another \$20,000 over the year. Additional corporate donations from Ecotex Healthcare, Quantum Properties, RBC, Adventurer Foundation, First West Foundation, and others are laying the groundwork for new, expanded programs that allow our Program Team to provide the needed support for our community.

We held our second annual Horsepower for Hospice Show and Shine, again at Mt. Lehman Winery which was a family-friendly event and was appreciated by all who attended.

Our 6th Annual Holmberg Golf Classic was held at Ledgeview and was the most successful tournament that we have run. These two events ensure that our finances remain strong through the quiet summer months.

Our new Community Support Butterfly Wall highlights donations from individuals and businesses. This wall honours members of our community that have supported Abbotsford Hospice Society. As this wall grows, so do our donations toward our programs. Thank you to all who help the butterflies fly!

Once again, I am proud to be a part of such a dedicated staff that works together as a team, and as a family, to ensure that we serve the needs of our community.



Rick Barkwell  
Manager, Development &  
Business Partnerships

# COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

This fiscal year we increased our reach on all our communication platforms to ensure our voice was heard and our community was kept aware of our presence in the community. We tagged businesses and donors when possible and shared impactful stories to our community at large.



## Newspaper Ads

We continued to work with The News and placed ads when necessary to communicate to our community and spread awareness of our events, programs, and services. The News continues to be a supportive sponsor, not only at our events but also offering support in the way of discounted or pro-bono ads.

## Seasonal Mail-outs

Donation ask letters were sent out twice this year to our entire mailing list. One in December for the Holidays and one in May in honour of Mother's Day.

## Mass Emails

We continued to stay connected with donors, clients and our community through mass emails and personal emails, sharing highlights, and events, and to express our gratitude for their continued partnerships.

## Website

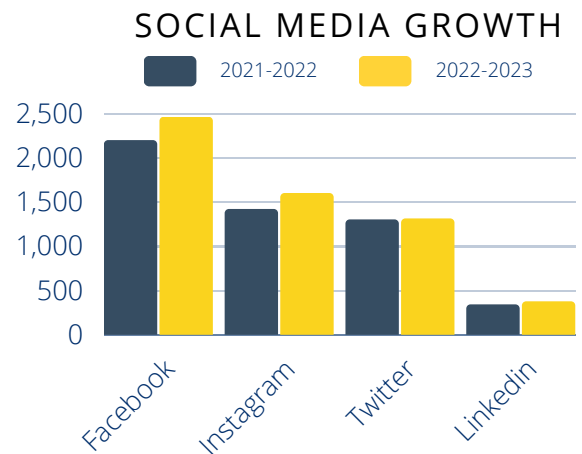
This year we continued to ensure our website was up-to-date with the correct information, easily accessed, and user-friendly for our community to understand the mission and vision of Abbotsford Hospice Society.



Carley Tonn  
Development/Communications  
Coordinator (Maternity  
Coverage)

## Social Media

This fiscal year, we ensured we were using social media as a tool to have a voice in the community and grow awareness. We transitioned our social media posts to be more interactive and relevant to our audience through interactive reels, clear brand identity, and sharing the mission and impact AHS makes in our community.



Our audience continues to grow at a 12.3% growth rate

# THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF

*Thank you to the dedication and compassion of our staff who continue to bring hope and care to our community.*



Andrea Critchley  
Executive Director



Rick Barkwell  
Development/Business  
Manager



Susanne Fehr  
Programs/Services Director



Brendan Adrian  
Finance/Admin  
Director



Divya Sandhu  
Events Coordinator  
(Maternity Coverage)



Charanpreet Mahal  
Programs Support  
Coordinator



Carley Tonn  
Development/  
Communications Coordinator  
(Maternity Coverage)



Gurveer Sahota  
Office/ Administration  
Coordinator



Janessa Neufeld  
Children & Family  
Coordinator (Maternity  
Coverage)



Katherine Martens  
Children & Family Services  
Assistant



Vanessa Aparicio  
Children & Family  
Coordinator (currently on  
maternity leave)



Makenna Loft  
Volunteer & Development  
Coordinator (currently on  
maternity leave)



Michelle Whalen  
Development Coordinator  
(currently on maternity  
leave)



# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Working with communities in BC's Interior, Lower Mainland, Central & Northern Vancouver Island

*We are so grateful to the generous community leaders who make it possible for us to continue providing hope and care to those in need.*