

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



2024 IN REVIEW

The Astley Family Foundation supported projects and programs which encouraged the personal development of vulnerable youth in Waterloo Region to help them realize their full potential.

This report highlights the Foundation's activities supporting youth. The Foundation includes a donor-advised fund which is not covered here.

The Astley Family Foundation granted to many local organizations. Grants totalling \$819,500 were made to organizations through the Foundation's call for applications.

We lived our mission by working with organizations on initiatives that promote youth engagement and belonging as well as emotional, psychological and social wellbeing of our community's youth.

We're seeing that youth are becoming role models to other youth in many of the programs we support. The ripple effect of mentorship and community support empowers youth to lead and inspires changes in themselves and their peers.

The reports we receive from grantees highlight how their programs foster a sense of belonging for youth that may not have experienced this sense of community before. Additionally, the youth appreciated the opportunity to discuss sensitive topics like mental health, emotions and other types of available support. This is good news and the Youth Impact Survey confirms that youth are experiencing an increased sense of belonging. However, other areas of youth wellbeing are decreasing according to the Survey. This concerns us, as well as all who support youth. We still have work to do.

More and more, we hear that incentives are effective in motivating youth to speak about their experiences and provide their input.

The large number of youth participating in programs has emphasized the importance of accessible community programming. The many programs we support, significantly contributed to participants' personal development, confidence and fostered a sense of empowerment.

IMPACTS

At the Astley Family Foundation, we value community belonging for youth. Our grants do that, whether it's through recreation programs, homework clubs or summer gatherings. The social ties that accompany a sense of belonging are protective factors helping manage stress and other behavioural issues. When youth feel supported and are not alone, they are more resilient, often coping more effectively with difficult times. Coping well with hardships decreases the physical and mental effects of these situations.

Studies find that a sense of belonging is associated with numerous beneficial outcomes, whereas a broken sense of belonging increases the risk for psychological and physical dysfunction. Belonging is strongly tied with another area the Foundation is passionate about - improving the mental health of youth in the Region. Accessing mental health supports, such as counselling services, is one key way the Foundation looks to help improve the wellbeing of young people in our community. A part of that is offering the services in places where youth already are, like in schools or at community centres they regularly attend for other programming. We believe this helps remove one of the barriers to access.

As for youth engagement, another of our top priorities, we've been encouraged by the growing number of organizations that live the « nothing for us, without us » philosophy. The more those being supported and mentored are engaged and involved in problem-solving, the more impactful and meaningful that support will be. Engagement can be both formal and informal. We have heard that grantees have success with both of those approaches with one-on-one conversations showing the most promise.

Our community is quickly growing and the number of youth and young adults make up a significant amount of that growth. We are seeing progress and recognize our community still has areas for improvement. Therefore, we continue to address needs locally so we can be a part of creating an inclusive and equitable community for youth here in Waterloo Region.



Jennifer Astley-Kinsey, Executive Director

Robert Astley, Director

Judith Astley, Director

Derek Astley, Director

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE YOUTH

The Foundation granted \$819,500 to support vulnerable youth in 2024 through our call for applications to the following organizations.

Adventure4Change - Waterloo Youth Initiatives

Another Youth Creation program - **Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health**

Canadian Mental Health Association - Eating Disorders Program Intake Worker

Youth On Boards - **Capacity Canada**

Child Witness Centre - Critical Mental Health Supports

Teen and Caregivers Coaching and Connection - **CJI**

Drayton Entertainment - Youth Academy

Neighbourhood programs - **House of Friendship**

Keep Your Head Up - Concussion Support Programs for Youth

Youth Engagement Position - **KidsAbility**

Kitchener Public Library - Grand River Black Music Festival and Conference

Youth Council - **KWAG**

Langs - Brief Intervention Services

Emergency Department and Diversion Team - **Lutherwood**

Marillac Place - AfterCare program

Teen and Caregivers Coaching and Connection - **Muslim Social Services**

Muslim Social Services - Resilient Youth Project

Therapeutic Supports for Youth in Cambridge - **Porchlight**

Reception House - Newcomer Youth

STEAM Summer Program - **Shad**

Social Venture Partners - SVP Teens

Youth In-school Counselling - **Woolwich Counselling Services**

YMCA of Three Rivers - Youth Drop-in Basketball

A LOOK AT THE PAST FIVE YEARS - KEY METRICS

*excluding assets for donor-advised grants

Year	Total Assets (year end)*	Total Mission-related Grants	Percentage Disbursed for Mission-related Grants
2020	\$11,109,811	\$436,650	3.93%
2021	\$11,817,427	\$710,000	6.01%
2022	\$9,225,786	\$633,000	6.86%
2023	\$10,052,867	\$641,500	6.38%
2024	\$10,381,362	\$819,500	7.89%