

Murray McKinnon Foundation

2023 - 2025 Annual Report



THANK YOU



Murray McKinnon Foundation

Message from the **Chief Executive Officer**

Murray McKinnon Foundation | Annual General Report 2025

Strong leadership requires the courage to assess what isn't working, to listen, to learn, and to adapt. That's how growth happens. It's what sharpens our focus, strengthens our resolve, and propels us to take our mission to the next level.

First and foremost, I extend heartfelt thanks to our —senior leaders, administrative staff, all program teams, maintenance and nursing staff, clinicians, and teachers. Thank you also to all the staff who sit on committees and groups representing collegial stewardship and help to raise awareness of agency initiatives, including members of the vital training teams who keep staff certified and safely skilled. You constantly advance our mission. Each one of you plays an integral role in delivering on our promise to the youth we serve. Together, we can build a stronger and more accountable yet compassionate organization, grounded in purpose and guided by the belief that every young person deserves the opportunity to thrive in second chances.

This year, we've continued to evolve—leaning into change with honesty and intention. We've made tough but necessary decisions to strengthen our programs and ensure long-term sustainability. Through it all, our Strategic Plan has served as both our map and our motivation—keeping us aligned, focused, and forward-looking.

Challenges and Opportunities

Over the history of MMF, its greatest challenge has been operating within a single-funder model while navigating outdated budgets and service mandates. Like many Transfer Payment Agencies, we've also faced limited access to youth mental health services and shortages of family doctors and counsellors.

McKinnon House continues to serve justice youth from across Ontario, including out-of-region and level-downs from Secure facilities, with increasing complexity and needs. Staffing has been another ongoing challenge that continues to test our capacity. The appointment of two Senior Supervisors has served to help with many new licensing compliances. Despite these pressures, opportunities have emerged.

Through patient collaboration and advocacy, MCCSS has entrusted MMF with expanding capacity additional beds. Many of the staff who began their careers at SRR remain dedicated through this transition, finding lasting reward in the positive impact they continue to make on the lives of young people within Ontario's youth justice system. Murray McKinnon House has since undergone renovations, growing from a six to a nine-bed facility.

After a multi-year pilot, the **Supportive Reintegration Residence** successfully transitioned into a four-bed open custody and detention facility, helping to ease the province's critical need for additional beds. Many of the staff who began their careers at SRR remain dedicated through this transition, finding lasting reward in the positive impact they continue to make on the lives of young people.

This past summer, the **Community Based Programs** saw a change in location. After operating out of the Simcoe Street United Church manse building for nearly nineteen years, they relocated in June 2025 to a bright, accessible new space in the Oshawa Centre, enhancing our ability to deliver responsive, youth-focused programming.

Lavender Hill overcame staffing challenges in 2023 through renewed hiring and training efforts. By Summer 2024, the program was accepting referrals again and hosting meaningful community engagement sessions that built trust and collaboration. The Youth In Transition Worker has greatly complemented the staff with the on-going challenges children and youth experience in the shadows of exploitation and trafficking.

In Fall 2024, we launched the **Durham LEAVE (Lived Experience Anti-Violence Engagement)** project—funded through the Region of Durham's Building Safer Communities Grant—to reduce youth violence and promote resilience. The project has already surpassed its goals, demonstrating the vital need for this program.

The **Culture 4 Success (C4S)** initiative continues to strengthen our workplace culture. Workshops, social events, and wellness activities—like the 2025 Step-a-thon and seasonal staff appreciation treats—have helped build a more positive, many connected, and supportive environment across the Agency.

To every staff member and manager—thank you. Your commitment, professionalism, and compassion are what make MMF a great place to work and grow.

Highlights

The 2024–25 fiscal year marked another period of significant growth, with service intake increases of approximately 20–30% over the previous year overall. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) continues to rely on Murray McKinnon Foundation's 54 years of expertise in supporting positive youth reintegration following sentencing and program completion.

Through the last few years of steady advocacy, MCCSS reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening support to help stabilize funded agencies. We were honoured to host the new Assistant Deputy

Minister, who spent a full day with our staff and leadership team. His visit underscored the Ministry's confidence in our work and their recent investment in expansion—a powerful vote of confidence in our shared vision.

MMF's leadership and impact are also gaining broader recognition.

- The Region of Durham featured our Community-Based LEAVE Program in their service video.
- Durham MPP Todd McCarthy highlighted MMF in his infrastructure funding announcement, our second consecutive year of infrastructure support.
- We proudly launched and hosted our first sold-out Youth Justice Forum, a landmark event that brought together youth, community partners, and system leaders to collaborate on solutions and share best practices in youth justice including Oshawa MPP Jennifer French who brought Opening Remarks.

MMF Shining Stars

Notably over the last few years, MMF employees have nominated two North Star Awards; Jeremi Bittorf 2023, Tony Clarke 2024, a number of Youth Recognition Awards and celebrated many milestone years of service awards across the agency.

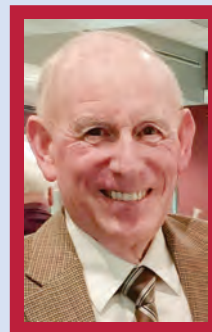
Looking Ahead

As we prepare to renew both our Collective Bargaining Agreement and Strategic Plan in March 2026, I wish to extend sincere appreciation to our entire Board of Directors—past Chair Lyle Hargrove, current Chair Peter Stephenson, Vice Chair Melissa Redden, and Secretary Kevin Pumphrey—for their unwavering leadership, commitment, and belief in our mission.

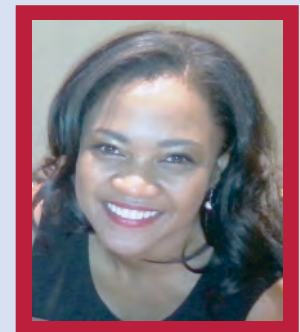
Your guidance has helped MMF remain resilient, responsive, and ready for what's next. Together, we are building on another year of strong service delivery, strategic partnerships, and meaningful impact under our collective leadership



Suzette Lewis
Chief Executive Officer
Murray McKinnon Foundation



Peter Stephenson
Chair, Board of Directors



Suzette Lewis
Chief Executive Officer

Residential Programs

Murray McKinnon House

Murray McKinnon House is a custodial six (6) bed residence in Oshawa providing service to males and those identifying as male in the Durham region and surrounding communities. Multi disciplinary service is offered for males/trans males 12-17 years of age at the time of their offence.

We help young people reach their full potential, successfully reintegrate and become productive members of their community. Our goal is to support youth through meaningful engagement and evidence-based programming designed to meet their diverse needs. This is further demonstrated by providing them with opportunities for learning and improving outcomes as evidenced by their increased skills, abilities and successful transitions (e.g. community connectedness, family reunification, educational plans and culturally relevant supports).

Murray McKinnon House continues to partner with Durham District School Board, Grove School and is supported with a Section 23 Classroom. A teacher along with a Classroom Youth Worker are a dynamic team throughout the school year and with the addition of summer schoolteachers, our program was able to offer a year-round educational opportunity.

The agency remains committed to employing well trained, diverse, competent, and professional Youth Workers to provide 24 hour a day supervision while fostering a safe environment for young people. Murray McKinnon House staff team has had numerous changes during this past year as we have had the privilege of welcoming many new faces to the organization and Murray McKinnon House in particular, in various roles. The staff continue to be trained in the male youth justice version of the SNAP (Stop, Now and Plan) program. This program teaches the youth how to recognize triggers, self-regulate their emotions and develop recognition of the impact of their behaviours. SNAP is designed to be applied to 'real time' situations to process an event. Youth experience improved emotional regulation and program solving abilities.

2023/2024
Detention 40
Average Stay 27 Days
Open Custody 6
Average Stay 40 Days
Credits Earned 64

2024/2025
Detention 61
Average Stay 16 Days
Open Custody 15
Average Stay 55 Days
Credits Earned 35
College Credits Earned 2
DZ Licence Achieved 1



OSHAWA PROGRAM TEAM DAY



MCKINNON YARD BEFORE



MCKINNON YARD AFTER

Specialized Services / Lavender Hill

Lavender Hill stepped lively into 2025 with continued development and successes. A full year of service delivery is nearing completion, and the program continues to gel and thrive.

Staffing and human resources were a focus of the early part of the calendar year, and we welcomed both new full-time staff and a host of incredible part-time staff to our team. Most notably, the critical role of Care Coordinators were filled by accomplished professionals who have breathed energy, exceptional care management skills and youth care into our administrative team. Part-time staffing additions are from our local community and arrive with a zest for this work and a passion for advocacy. We are in a position of steadiness which allows for renewed focus on building on MMF foundational pillars. We held an emphasis on accomplishing strategic plan tasks and shoring up our internal structures to better serve our young women.

Lavender Hill's referral inquiries showed increased growth this past year and were from across the province and from a variety of sources; Children's Aid Societies proving to be our highest referral pool. The complex and unique needs of the young women remain high, and our referral and intake processes require constant and careful considerations, matching program services with the requirements of the young women. We remain advocates for the needs of the vulnerable young of our province and necessary reforms on legislation, law enforcement and community responses for housing and mental health supports.

We continue to participate in local and regional anti-human trafficking coalitions and sit notably on the Province's Out of Home Children's Residences Working Group, hosting the first in person meeting at our site in the Fall. We are a routine presenter at Trent University's Child and Youth Services session on the Intersections of Systems and Vulnerable Youth and will be hosting Lavender Hill's first virtual Lunch and Learn Series in the late Fall of 2025.

We continue to attend local university and college Job Fairs to educate the public about Human Trafficking and sexual exploitation as well as advancing our hiring pool and community footprint.



LH TEAM



DIRECT CARE FACILITATORS
ON THE SCENE



LH WALL OF FUN



LH FUN

Specialized Services / Lavender Hill (con't)

Lavender Hill's internal Survivor Advisory Initiative has maintained its contribution to the Specialized Services internal programs and processes. Meeting once a month, they have provided critical feedback to our housing services, reviewing documentation and offering insights into day-to-day program activities. There is tremendous appreciation for their time and contribution in a manner that is reflective of their experience and expertise. We recently concluded the Advisory's first year and are preparing a call for new/additional members in the new year.



LH BIRD HOUSE ART

MMF's LH Youth In Transition worker continues to contribute mightily to our Specialized Services, providing community care and supports to over 15 young women last year. They have forged a path of recognition and expertise within the community and are included in consultations (Peel Region's nCourage) and invited to contribute to local forums (Victim Services Victims of Crime Week) and Community hubs (Northumberland's Youth Wellness Hub), as well as Durham Children's Aid Society's Youth in Transition Collaborative Committee

The AHT YITW has expanded to support young people in Durham Region as well as Peterborough and Northumberland County, due to an increase in inquiries from community partners such as Kawartha Haliburton Children's Aid Society, Peterborough Regional Health Centre – Mental Health Nursing Staff and Women's Health Centre Forensic Nurses, Peterborough Northumberland Victim Services Human Trafficking Support Specialist, Kawartha Pine Ridge School Board Social Workers, and others.

2023/2024
Clients Served
Lavender Hill 2
YITW 8

2024/2025
Clients Served
Lavender Hill 5
YITW 5

Supportive Reintegration Residence

The Harold McNeill House – Supportive Reintegration Residence (SRR Program) with the continuing support of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) provides an innovative service to youth referred by Probation Services. The house provides five (5) beds to youth justice involved males or those identifying as male; between the ages of 16-20 years and who are homeless or living in unsafe or unsustainable housing.

The program is voluntary and youth informed. Youth are mentored on a daily basis as they gain stability, develop positive relationships and work on their individualized goal plan with the goal to assist them in acquiring appropriate housing to meet their future needs. Youth engagement and harm reduction strategies are key components of the program. Our focus remains a holistic case management approach to supporting youth with education, employment training and/or employment, life skills, physical and mental wellness, community and cultural engagement, family reconnection (where appropriate), financial literacy, positive tenancy, and meaningful daily activities.

SRR continues to partner with Durham District School Board, Grove School and is supported with a Section 23 Classroom. The teacher and Classroom Youth Worker are a formidable team throughout the school year and with the addition of summer teachers, our program was able to offer a year-round school opportunity to SRR youth, as well as to a number of Community students.

2023/2024
Youth Served 6
Classroom Students 8
Credits Earned 11.5
and 10 Credits were PLAR
Certificates 58
(Citation Canada)

2024/2025
Youth Served 11
Classroom Students 4
Credits Earned 12
Certificates 5
Driver's Licence Achieved 1



Community Based Programs

Durham Region's changing landscape has provided opportunity for the team to encourage and inspire young people from all backgrounds and walks of life. The needs of youth are expanding, and the best and promising services provided by the CBP have been a boon to the youth, their families and the community at large.

The dedicated and intuitive Community Based Team consists of 10 Front-Line Staff in 2023/2024 and 11 Front-Line Staff in 2024/2025, 3 teachers from Grove, an Administrative Assistant and a Program Manager. As a team we continue to offer an experienced, strength-based and care-focused approach to helping youth realize their potential.

Ajax Learning Centre

The ALC works in collaboration with the Durham District School Board, Grove School and the MCCSS Ajax youth probation office. The program is available for youth who want to pursue their education in a setting that can be specific to their needs, with the goal of returning to their home school or transitioning towards other educational pathways.

McKinnon Attendance Centre

The MAC program has been an alternative community-based option for custody bound young persons, since 2005. All programs are evidence-based and can be facilitated individually or in a group. The Center offers a variety of programs that cover healthy relationships, substance education, self-esteem and the Center also works in partnership with the Child Development Institute (CDI) to offer SNAP (stop now and plan) a program that guides youth towards understanding that their thoughts, behaviours and actions are all connected. We provide, through the Durham District School Board, a Grove classroom where students can attain high school credits in a supportive environment. These programs can service all of Durham Region by being mobile and/or meeting at satellite locations in Ajax. The Attendance Center passed its milestone 2000th client this spring, marking a time for reflection and pride for many front-line staff to recall how much they have contributed to youth growth and success over the years.

Ajax Learning Centre (ALC)
2023/2024
10 Youth Served
Credits Earned 5 and 9 via PLAR

2024/2025
Youth Served 14
Credits Earned 6
1 OSSD High School Graduate

Attendance Centre (MAC)
2023/2024
Youth Served 74
SNAP Certificates of Completion 37
Youth Served in Classroom 12
Credits Earned 26 and 32 via PLAR
1 OSSD High School Graduatee

2024/2025
Youth Served 91
SNAP Certificates of Completion 28
Youth Served in Classroom 27
Credits Earned 35 and 14 via PLAR
1 OSSD High School Graduate
1 OSSC High School Certificate

MAC has provided opportunities for student placements both from Durham College and Ontario Tech University. This unique experience allows students to grasp real world application of the fundamentals of youth justice work as well as a chance for staff to stay current with younger demographics.

Reintegration Support Outreach Program

The RSO program is committed to supporting young persons who are involved in the youth justice system. Our workers are mobile and responsive to meet the immediate needs of the young persons in areas of education, court support, employment, identification, financial support, housing, life skills, etc. The workers provide gender role modeling, build on strengths and help youth to shape a new outlook by taking part in the development of a collaborative risk reduction plan. The ultimate goal is to help young people reintegrate successfully and stay connected to their communities.

**Reintegration Support
Outreach Workers (RSO)
2023/2024
Youth Served 75**

**2024/2025
Youth Served 85**

LEAVE Project

Durham Lived Experience Anti-Violence Engagement (LEAVE) Project is a transformative initiative under the Community Safety and Wellbeing Fund. The Durham LEAVE Project is committed to helping individuals 12-24 yrs old already involved in, or exiting from the justice system, make positive changes, exit gang involvement, and embrace pro-social behavior to avoid further entanglement with the criminal justice system through a holistic approach. The LEAVE Project aims to foster relationships that assist oppressed youth in overcoming adversity.

**L.E.A.V.E. Program
2024/2025
Youth Served 8**



LEAVE



CSWB LEAVE GRANT RECIPIENT



DR. H
CSWB INTERVIEW



LH COMMUNITY EVENT



BOD, BROADER ADMIN, OFFICE TEAMS



ATTENDANCE CENTRE
COMMUNITY BASED STAFF



NORTH STAR AWARD
RECIPIENT 2023



NORTH STAR AWARD
RECIPIENT 2024



C4S STEP CHALLENGE



C4S EASTER EVENT



DR. MICHELLE MAKING WAVES



SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT



WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL EVENT



YOUTH RECOGNITION AWARD NIGHT 2024



C4S HALLOWEEN GOODIES



ATTENDANCE CENTRE COMMUNITY BASED STAFF



NEW SPORTS COURT

Youth Quotes

MAC 2023- 2025

“The women at MAC saved my life”-JB

“Everyone at MAC is supportive and helpful, they make me feel comfortable enough to focus on school and show me different pathways. Teachers and staff took the time to work with me one to one.”-BD

“If I had to sum up what my experience at MAC taught me, I would use the quote [Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence], they encouraged me to never give up on my goals or myself”-DC

“Thank you for allowing me to vent, when there is no one else around to listen to what we're going through”- Parent of K.K

“Thank you for being there for me during this really hard time, I wouldn't have been able to do this by myself”- T.V

“MAC gave me the tools I need to learn how to control my anger and my outbursts, to think before I act. SNAP is a helpful program.” – P.A-B.

McKinnon House

“I like how program makes it feel human...less like custody and I enjoy hanging out with peers, watching shows and baking”

“I love backyard court, rec room, going to YWCA and YMCA, staff understood me if I had frustrations with something, but also showed me if I was wrong”

“I like how we had structure but we still have options to make ourselves”

“My overall experience here has showed me my opportunities in life and that there's more to life than the streets”

“This was one of the best programs I've been in...”



acrc



Matthew Sanders
Professional
Corporation



NORTH OSHAWA
LIONS CLUB



Ontario Association of
CHILD AND YOUTH CARE
Association Ontarienne des Techniques
D'ÉDUCATION SPÉCIALISÉE



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