

The AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) delivers responsive, effective, and valued community-based HIV support services and education, prevention, outreach and fundraising programs that promote the health, well-being, worth and rights of individuals and communities living with, affected by and at risk for HIV/AIDS, and increase awareness of HIV/AIDS.

The AIDS Committee of Toronto is a leader in developing and delivering programs and services that contribute to achieving a world without HIV/AIDS.

values

Voices and Experiences of People Living with HIV/AIDS

- We are committed to the involvement of people living with HIV/AIDS at all levels of the organization.

Origins in and Commitment to Gay and Lesbian Communities and People Living with HIV/AIDS

- We honour the origins of the AIDS Committee of Toronto which are rooted in voluntarism and activism by communities of people living with HIV/AIDS, gay men and lesbians.
- We remain committed to working with and serving the needs of these communities.

Diversity and Inclusion

- We value the diversity, distinct needs and contributions of our program and service users, volunteers, staff and supporters.
- Our diversity includes, but is not limited to, individuals and communities from a variety of ages, cultures, (dis)abilities, genders, HIV status, languages, races, religions, sexual identities and socioeconomic status.
- We recognize the presence and impact of all forms of discrimination and marginalization on individuals and communities living with and at risk of HIV/AIDS, and are committed to eliminating them.

Client-Centred Services

- We value confidential, responsive, caring, respectful and non-judgmental services that promote the health of people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS.
- We work with individuals and communities to enable them to take an active role in planning and directing their care.
- We support targeted strategies to meet particular needs of people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS.

Informed Choices

- We support the overwhelming evidence that HIV causes AIDS.
- We value the rights of individuals to make informed choices that include, but are not limited to, sex, sexuality, reproduction, health care, substance use and treatment.
- We commit to harm and risk reduction as empirically validated approaches to providing information and education in the effort to reduce people's risk of HIV infection.

Excellence in Service

- We value and support the role and commitment of staff and volunteers in achieving excellence in service.
- We value community engagement and the use of research and evaluation to ensure that programs and services remain responsive to evolving needs.

Collaboration

- We are committed to working collaboratively with others to mutually strengthen our efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS locally, provincially, nationally and internationally.

Advocacy

- We work to effect changes at individual, community, service and policy levels to improve the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS and address the factors that put people at risk for HIV.

Accountability

- We value the trust program and service users, volunteers, staff, funders and supporters have in us and we are committed to being transparent and accountable to them for the use of our resources.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

I am pleased to report on behalf of the Board of Directors that ACT was able to meet the challenges of 2008-2009 and accomplish the goals set out in the current strategic plan, which expires in 2010.

Key strategic directions included: investing in leadership and collaboration, strengthening our education programs and support services, advocating for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, and diversifying our financial resources. This strategic plan prepared us well for the recession, which increased demand for our services by hitting hardest on those who depend on us the most.

Despite these preparations, the global economic crisis did have an impact on our fundraising revenue, which is reflected in our budget for the 2009-10 fiscal year. Although we were able to end this fiscal year with a financial surplus, this was largely due to unplanned bequests from those who chose to leave a legacy to ACT in their will. Were it not for these bequests, we would not have had a surplus.

As we move forward, it is important to strengthen our ability to secure funds to provide the programs and services our community relies on.

Perhaps our most exciting accomplishment this year was welcoming Hazelle Palmer to ACT as Executive Director. She comes to us from Planned Parenthood Toronto, a sexual and reproductive health centre, where she also served as Executive Director.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the staff, volunteers, supporters and service users of ACT for making our work possible.

Karim Karsan
Chair of the Board of Directors



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you to all the members and supporters of the AIDS Committee of Toronto who have welcomed me with open arms to the ACT family. I am thrilled to serve as your new Executive Director, and I look forward to working with all of you.

This is an exciting time for me to join the agency, as it comes at the end of the current strategic plan. Not only is this an opportunity to reflect on how we have achieved our strategic directions over the past few years, but it also gives us the opportunity to ask what you want to see from ACT in the future.

Five years ago, ACT asked its members, service users and the broader community how they thought the agency should move forward. Five strategic directions were developed, and this year's annual report presents the ways we have delivered on each of these priorities.

But we can't stop there. HIV infections continue to increase in this city – almost two every day. There are more HIV-positive people living in Toronto than ever before. We need to constantly increase our efforts to meet this challenge.

Over the next few months, I invite you to have a say in the development of our next strategic plan. We want to hear your ideas about the direction of ACT and how we can serve you better.

With your continued input and support, ACT can continue to be a leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Hazelle Palmer
Executive Director



INVESTING IN LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

ACT Management Team and Executive Assistant



Our focus on competency-based leadership is out of recognition that ACT staff, volunteers and board members require skills, knowledge and vision to further our work among people living with, affected by, and at risk of HIV/AIDS.

During the past few years, we have worked hard to ensure that our staff and volunteers are able to provide culturally competent programs and services. Through orientations and training, the enhancement of our Volunteer Core Skills Training program, and in-service

training sessions for staff and volunteers, we have invested in the people who contribute their time to ACT in order to improve the programs and services we provide.

ACT continues to build and enhance relationships with other agencies and community organizations, such as the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA), the Toronto HIV/AIDS Network, Sherbourne Health Centre, the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, Mid-Toronto Community Services, Voices

of Positive Women and the Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy, among many others.

Collaborations have resulted in new initiatives such as an HIV/AIDS Community Calendar, Towel Talk bathhouse counselling, a community naturopathic clinic, the pioneering Dementia Day Program, our retreat for women living with HIV/AIDS, and ASO411 – an online portal for finding HIV/AIDS-related services across Canada.

Volunteer In-Service Trainings

Methods and strategies for prevention and support are constantly evolving, along with the issues facing people living with HIV/AIDS. Professional development of staff and volunteers is needed in order to stay up to date on current trends and emerging topics in the field.



To address this need, ACT has developed in-service trainings for volunteers and staff of the agency and other community organizations. Speakers from ACT and other community partners are invited to teach participants about everything from immigrant and refugee issues to working with changes, loss and transition.

The series of workshops is part of our commitment to capacity building for our staff, volunteers, and community partners. For more information on upcoming trainings, contact Sergio Martinez, Manager of Program Volunteer Resources at smartinez@actoronto.org or 416-340-8484 ext. 224.

AT A GLANCE

- Best Activist Organisation, NOW Readers' Poll 2008
- Honoured Group, Toronto Pride Parade 2009
- Founding member of the African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario
- Founding member of the Ontario Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance

REACHING PEOPLE AT RISK OF HIV INFECTION



Education, Outreach and Prevention staff of ACT

ACT has continued to play a leadership role in HIV prevention and sexual health promotion, especially among gay and bisexual men.

We have collaborated with other AIDS organizations through the Men2Men Network to coordinate outreach and education in a variety of gay community venues. ACT has been active in the formation of the provincial Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance, contributed to the development of province-wide

social marketing campaigns, along with resources on HIV disclosure and sexual health for HIV-positive ('poz') gay men.

As a research collaborator with the University of Windsor, Ryerson University, the Ontario AIDS Bureau and members of the provincial Poz Prevention Working Group, we are involved in a study that seeks to develop an innovative, group-based sexual health promotion initiative for HIV-positive gay men.

As a member of the African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario, ACT played a pivotal role in the MaBwana research study of black gay and bisexual men in Toronto.

We continue to work collaboratively with VIVER (the Portuguese-speaking HIV/AIDS Coalition) to address the HIV prevention and education needs of these communities.

Gay Men's Outreach

This year marks the 15th anniversary of ACT's Gay Men's Outreach program. Although ACT has been doing work in Toronto's gay community since its inception in 1983, the agency's expansion and provision of a wide range of services in the 90s necessitated a dedicated program tailored to the unique needs of this community.

Staff and volunteers of the program distribute safer sex materials and provide risk reduction information in gay community venues from bars and clubs to bathhouses and even online.

Outreach workers come from the community and represent the diversity of gay and bisexual men in Toronto. They are HIV-positive, HIV-negative, and speak a variety of languages.

With gay and bisexual men still making up the majority of new HIV infections in Toronto, this anniversary is not one to celebrate. But it is an opportunity to reflect on the leadership of Toronto's gay community in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

For more information about the program, contact Duncan MacLachlan, Gay Men's Outreach Coordinator, at dmaclachlan@actontario.org or 416-340-8484 ext. 254.



BY THE NUMBERS

- 359,587 free condoms were distributed at ACT and in the community.
- 286,872 water-based lube packages were given out by outreach volunteers.
- 64,194 pieces of information were distributed in community venues.
- 88,323 people were reached during 577 HIV/AIDS community outreach events.
- 6,502 people attended 211 HIV/AIDS-related workshops, presentations and training sessions.
- 2,238 in-depth "Info-to-go" packages on a wide range of HIV-related topics were taken from our Access Centre.

STRENGTHENING SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS AND THOSE AFFECTED BY HIV/AIDS

Employment Action and Support Services staff of ACT



ACT is committed to improving the quality of life of men, women and youth with HIV/AIDS and people who are affected by HIV/AIDS. We have worked hard to make access to our services easier, and we continue to adapt our services to meet the changing needs of those living with HIV/AIDS.

From our Case Management and Counselling programs that help those with HIV/AIDS to navigate the frightening world of an HIV-positive

diagnosis, to the practical concrete support offered by our food programs, furniture bank, drives and moves programs, income tax and insurance benefits clinics, our range of programs reflects the varied needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.

ACT continues to offer short-term and ongoing theme-specific support groups to meet the needs of those living with HIV/AIDS. These groups – in addition to our social support programming, women’s

coffee nights and community kitchens – help break down social isolation and improve the health of people living with HIV/AIDS.

We recognize the impact that an HIV diagnosis can have on an individual along with their friends, partners and family members. ACT counsellors continue to provide one-on-one counselling services not only to people living with HIV/AIDS, but to those who are affected by the disease.

Hot Lunch Program

ACT has two hot lunch programs to provide an opportunity for people with HIV/AIDS to meet once a week to see friends, eat a nutritional meal, and access health promotion information.

The Meet and Eat Friday lunch program was formed 12 years ago with a modest 15 attendees. Today the program serves about 50 people every week.

The Good Company Thursday lunch serves a smaller group of 15 people who are dealing with more significant challenges, from severe health problems to facing the end of life.

Both programs are made possible by a team of dedicated volunteers who prepare the room, set the tables, serve the food, and offer support to the service users.

For more information on the hot lunch programs, contact Robin Rhodes, HIV Health Promotion Coordinator at rrhodes@actoronto.org or 416-340-8484 ext. 219.



BY THE NUMBERS

- 30,794 people came into the ACT offices seeking services, information, resources or referrals.
- 2,968 books and 836 CDs/DVDs were distributed to 397 people with HIV/AIDS through the BookAIDS program.
- 2,149 hot lunches for people with HIV/AIDS were served through the “Meet and Eat” program.
- 1,676 counselling sessions and 1,772 case management sessions were offered.
- 1,241 registered clients accessed services.
- 607 people attended our Community Health Forums for people with HIV/AIDS.
- 434 people with HIV/AIDS were helped through our Income Tax Clinic.
- 271 people with HIV/AIDS were enrolled in the Employment Action program.

INFLUENCING THE ENVIRONMENT AFFECTING PEOPLE AT RISK AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS



ACT Library, Research, Program Development, Policy and Communications staff

ACT has increased its involvement in public policy discussions as they relate to both people living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) and communities at increased risk for HIV infection. We have played a more active role in government relations capacities, and joined with others to undertake public education related to the issues affecting people at risk of HIV/AIDS and PHAs. A new media training workshop has been developed so that staff, volunteers and service users can engage effectively with reporters.

In partnership with the Ontario AIDS Network (OAN), ACT lobbied to increase provincial government funding for AIDS service organizations, while successfully staving off attempts to reduce funding for HIV prevention and harm reduction programming at the local level.

ACT has played a lead role in the formation of provincial strategies that address HIV/AIDS in African and Caribbean communities and gay communities, and has been collaborating

with its partners for a provincial HIV response focused on at-risk women,

Our influence is not only local and provincial, but also national and international. Our leading role in community-based research and our development of innovative programs is illustrated through the various committees, conferences, presentations and think-tanks that we are invited to attend and speak to.

Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure

This past year has seen a dramatic increase in the number of criminal prosecutions related to HIV non-disclosure. While ACT was one of the first AIDS service organizations to adopt a position against the criminalization of non-disclosure in 1996, recent developments have mobilized many in the HIV/AIDS movement on this issue.

ACT is a member of the Ontario Working Group on Criminal Law and HIV Exposure, which is lobbying the provincial government for the development of prosecutorial guidelines to ensure that these cases are dealt with fairly and do not contribute to HIV stigma.

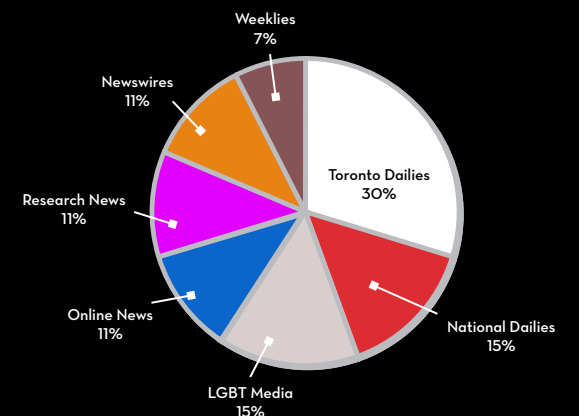
We have also conducted community education on the issue, holding workshops and public events to encourage discussion about alternatives to criminalizing non-disclosure.

The next year will be a critical time for research and advocacy related to this issue, and we encourage community members to add their voice to the debate.



BY THE NUMBERS

- 311,022 visits were made to the ACT website (representing 1,236,733 website hits);
- Compared to the previous fiscal year, there was a 24% increase in coverage of ACT in the media.
- Distribution of ACT media representation:



STRENGTHENING AND DIVERSIFYING FINANCIAL RESOURCES



Development and Operations staff of ACT

ACT raised approximately \$2.5 million from the community in the last fiscal year. Of that number, more than two thirds were raised through our three special events – Fashion Cares, the Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life, and SNAP!

Amidst an economic downturn and uncertain government funding, we have placed greater emphasis on diversifying the agency's revenue streams and reducing our reliance on event fundraising.

Over the past year, we augmented our philanthropic fundraising, most of which is currently derived from bequests and individual donations – particularly through regular monthly gifts from over 1,500 Partners in ACTion and leadership gifts of \$1,200 or more annually from our Leaders in ACTion. We used numerous channels to recruit new individual supporters, such as telemarketing, street fundraising and third-party events.

In sync with our agency rebranding, we have also commenced development of a comprehensive case for support for use in our approaches to individuals, corporations, and foundations. By refocusing our messages and raising awareness of ACT's holistic mix of programs, we are paving the way for further fund diversification. At the same time, we have continued to nurture our current supporters and provide them with different opportunities to contribute to our work.

E-Philanthropy

Funds raised through e-philanthropy (or online giving) comprise a small but increasing portion of ACT's fundraising mix. Regular online donations to ACT have mushroomed and now approach 2% of ACT's fundraised revenue.

In an effort to diversify revenue sources, ACT has increased its online fundraising efforts. The basic principles of direct marketing apply to e-philanthropy: periodic e-bulletins and targeted electronic appeals supplement – but do not replace – traditional means of fundraising like direct mail and print advertising. In turn, traditional appeals encourage online donations for ongoing fundraising, as well as for special events such as the Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life.

The Internet is having a significant impact on how non-profit organizations like ACT conduct themselves. It can lead to increased involvement, participation, and giving. Similarly, ACT's online presence and increasing use of social media applications such as Facebook and Twitter allow us to reach out to key markets using a variety of tactics, while enabling us to solicit supporters and prospects directly, more frequently, and at a lower administrative and acquisition cost.



BY THE NUMBERS

- Over the last four years, the annual total of donations made online has increased by almost 70%.
- During this same period, total online donations to the Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life have increased by almost 60%, and now comprise the majority of Walk fundraised revenue.



VOLUNTEER PROFILE

DAVID McCLURE

When he came to the ACT offices more than eight years ago, David McClure wasn't looking to volunteer.

"I was going through a very difficult time," he says of his experience. "The support that I got here at ACT was so incredible. It helped me in so many different ways, that when I started to feel better - both emotionally and physically - I wanted to give back."

If you have visited the Service Access Centre on the fourth floor of ACT, you have probably seen David giving back by answering phones and welcoming people into the office. He completes a shift at the reception desk every week to stay up to date on events and new programs being offered.

David is also involved behind the scenes in the delivery of a number of ACT services for people living with HIV/AIDS. These include the food programs, monthly community health forums, and the popular BookAIDS events.

"I've met so many wonderful people here during the course of the years that I've been volunteering," David says. "It's benefited me in a variety of ways that I can't begin to recount."

"I would recommend volunteering to anybody out there in the community that's looking for something to do, to feel involved."

DID YOU KNOW?
Over the last year, 32,899 hours were contributed to ACT by our talented volunteers. That's the equivalent of almost 17 full-time staff!



To volunteer, contact Sergio Martinez, Program Volunteer Resources Manager (smartinez@actontario.org)



SUPPORTER PROFILE

SCOTIABANK AIDS WALK FOR LIFE

ACT is proud to be a national partner in the annual Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life. ACT works with the Canadian AIDS Society and the British Columbia Persons With AIDS Society to coordinate walk events across the country every September.

In the past year, we were delighted to welcome Scotiabank as the presenting sponsor of the national walk. With their help, we have been able to raise the profile for this important fundraising event.

"The Walk is an excellent opportunity to raise funds to support people living with HIV/AIDS in our community, while also raising awareness about the disease," says Hazelle Palmer, Executive Director of ACT. "It's also a time for us to come together and celebrate our accomplishments, remember those we have lost, and re-energize ourselves in the fight against HIV/AIDS."

Without the revenue generated by the Walk, ACT would simply not be able to provide the level of service that the community has come to rely on.

"With the impact of global economic conditions on charitable giving, we are grateful that hundreds of people continue to participate in the Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life, and even more contribute pledges and donations to support the cause," adds Palmer.

Funds from the Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life Toronto support the vital programs and services ACT provides for PHAs in our city. With more people than ever before living with HIV, and with two people newly infected every day in Toronto alone, that support is crucial - now more than ever.

our supporters

With the generosity and patronage of thousands of supporters in the community, ACT is able to provide compassionate, proactive services to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. We gratefully acknowledge our government funders, regional partners, and the many individuals, corporations, foundations, and groups that have supported ACT with philanthropic commitments, grants, or sponsorships during our 2008-09 fiscal year.



Government funders

Government of Canada:

Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Health Canada
Public Health Agency of Canada

Government of Ontario:

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care – AIDS Bureau
Ministry of Community and Social Services

City of Toronto

Regional partners

\$50,000 and above
Ontario HIV Treatment Network

\$15,000 to \$49,999

Mid-Toronto Community Services

Corporations

\$25,000 and above

M•A•C AIDS Fund

\$10,000 to \$24,999

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Up to \$25,000

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Kaatza Foundation
Les and Kae Martin Charitable Foundation
Philip Smith Foundation

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\$5,000 and above

BMO Employee Charitable Foundation
IBM Employees' Charitable Fund

\$1,000 to \$4,999

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Up to \$1,000

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United Way of Peel Region
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United Way of York Region

Woody's

Staff Association Charity
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Individuals

Thousands of individual supporters sustain our work, whether through one-time gifts or on a monthly basis through our Partners in ACTion monthly giving plan. We particularly thank our Leaders in ACTion, individuals who give \$1,200 or more annually, who lead the way in our fight against HIV/AIDS.

Leaders in ACTion

Platinum Supporters (\$10,000 and above)

Anonymous

Gold Supporters (\$5,000 to \$9,999)

Larry B. Grove

Silver Supporters (\$2,500 to \$4,999)

Clive Desmond
Jonas Giesen
Paul Hains
Don Pfiel
Anonymous

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Anonymous (3)

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Joanne Weaver
Dr. Lee Weissling
Jessica Whitbread
Sandra Whitbread
Chuck Wong

Edward Wood
Stefanie Wright
Maritza Yumbra
Tanja Zoric
Anonymous (10)

Legacy of Hope

A planned gift, such as a bequest in a will or gift of life insurance, is the ultimate expression of support in our fight against HIV/AIDS. The Legacy of Hope Fund was created in 1999 and is housed with the Toronto Community Foundation. Upon completion of fiscal year 2008-09, the fund stood at over \$670,000.

We thank the many individuals who have made a planned commitment to ACT, and gratefully acknowledge the legacies left by the following individuals in the last fiscal year:

Estate of Beatrice Eleanor Butcher
Estate of Ewart Austin
Stanley Conway
Estate of David Joel Perley
Estate of Peter Russell Quaid
Estate of Clifton Roberts,
in memory of David Burgess
Estate of Roger Spalding,
in memory of David Sanders

SIGNATURE EVENTS

Fashion Cares 2008

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AIDS Walk for Life Toronto 2008

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Founding Media Sponsor

Xtra!

Transportation Sponsor

Discount Car and Truck Rentals

Public Relations Sponsor

Paradigm Public Relations

IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

Many members of the community provide invaluable in-kind support, thereby allowing us to reduce administrative costs and allocate more funds to our services and programs. The following have made receiptable in-kind gifts to ACT in the last fiscal year:

- Adwear
- Chan-Hyo Bae
- Glen Baxter
- Damion Berger
- Cecilia Berkovic
- Russell Brohier
- David Burdeny
- Morgan Burkhard
- Edward Burtynsky
- Becky Comber
- Scott Conarroe
- Ryan Corbet
- Charlie Crane
- Robyn Cumming
- Danny Custodio
- Shauna Davis
- Elaine Duigenan
- Andy Dunlop
- James Durant
- Jenna Edwards
- Juliane Eirich
- Geoffrey Fehr
- Brian Finke
- Tony Fohse
- Global Edge Investments
- Janis Goodman
- Zuili Guillaume
- Toni Hafkenschied
- Lili Holzer-Gilier
- Joshua Jansen-Nagle
- Jean Macdonald Beauty Works
- John Armstrong and Paul Collins
- Richard Johnson
- Leo Kamen
- Mark Kasumovic

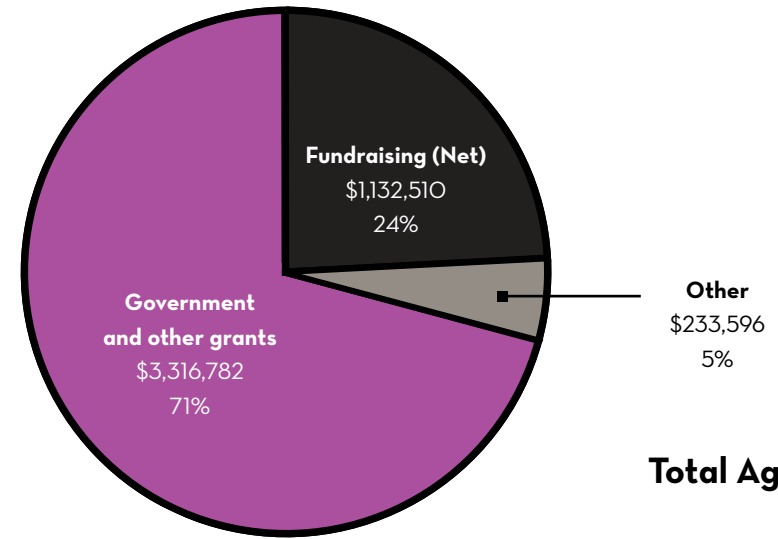
- Thomas Kellner
- Kevin Kelly
- Eric Klemm
- Knife Zone / Digital Canoe Inc.
- Alec Knowles
- Brendon G. Ko
- Michael Krauss
- Yuriko Kubota
- Lise Latreille
- Evan Lee
- Sol Legault
- Brent Lewin
- Eamon Mac Mahon
- Adam Makarenko
- Sarah Mangialardo
- Hugh Martin
- Meryl McMaster
- Josh Mordon
- Philip R. Munro
- Beverly Owens
- Rowan Pantel
- Rachel Papo
- Marcus Schubert
- Bill Schwabb
- Talia Shipman
- Jamie Starosilec
- Amy Stein
- Stemz
- Penelope Stewart
- David Trautrimas
- Daniel Vaitovic
- Kevin Viner
- Meredith White

We apologize for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies. Please contact us at 416-340-8484 ext. 279 for any corrections, additions, or inquiries.

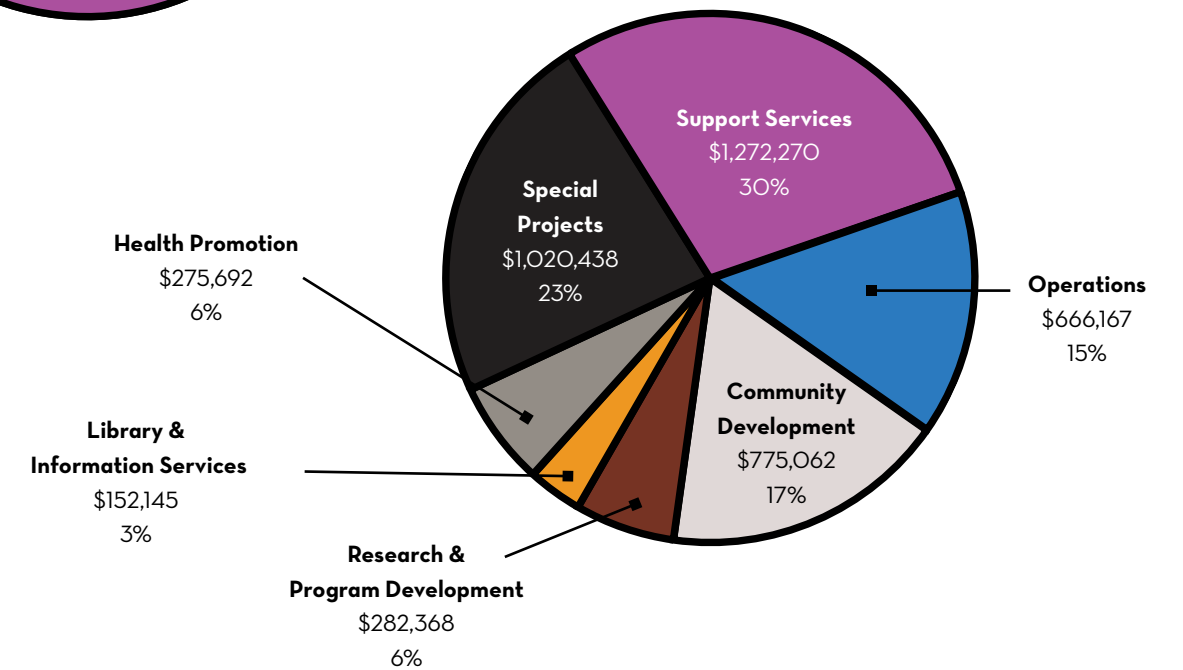


FINANCIALS

Total Agency Revenue 2008/09: \$4,682,888



Total Agency Expenditures: \$4,444,142





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AIDS Committee of Toronto

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