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We’re celebrating 72 partnerships in 2022 — including 35 new partners who joined with us last year!
We are thankful for the 510 donors who helped us to make 2SLGBTQIA+ youth feel validated, involved, and empowered to lead healthier lives!
Partnerships help make growth happen. We take pride in our many partners and allies that sparked the huge expansion and improvement of our programs and services in 2022. It’s because of them that we were able to help even more 2SLGBTQIA+ youth who came to Friends of Ruby for support.

Whether it was an individual, corporate, or foundation donor, a government or community partner, or a volunteer giving their time, these partnerships were critical in fueling our development to meet the ever-increasing demands from the youth we serve.

Thanks to the support of these partnerships, we can provide 2SLGBTQIA+ youth someone to talk to who reminds them they’re not alone. Youth develop the self-confidence to accept who they are, find a safe place to call home, or a family and community to call their own.

We have seen the 2SLGBTQIA+ youth in our community grow in pride, and that growth is something everyone can be proud of.

It’s amazing… what people coming together can do. EJ (she/her), former Friends of Ruby participant
MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

As the world started to come out of the isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it was humbling to see how the community came together to partner with us in support of the 2SLGBTQIA+ youth we serve. These youth continually inspire me with their resiliency and courage.

I want to thank our Board of Directors who worked tirelessly to connect Friends of Ruby to 35 new partnerships across various sectors, businesses, and organizations last year. Their efforts helped increase the support we’ve received from community partners, foundations, and corporations. By leveraging these 72 new and existing partnerships, we were able to provide more necessary services and respond to the growing needs of the youth we serve. We also had more individual donors generously donate to help us move our mission forward. We are building on all this success by forging stronger government partnerships in the next year. Their funding and support is critical to us in meeting the increasing demands for services from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

In the end, this growth means more youth could access the services and supports Friends of Ruby provides. I’m proud of the impact our team continues to make in the lives of the youth in our community.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you!

Ed Clark (he/him)
Board Chair
MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It’s incredible to see how many people came together in 2022 to support the 2SLGBTQIA+ youth we serve. I’m proud of our staff and leadership team who stretch themselves to provide mental health support and improve the well-being of youth in our community.

Other agencies and community groups have recognized us for the unique segment of the population we serve. They now refer 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to us so youth can get the support they need from specialists who understand their challenges.

The increasing demand for our services, especially from youth in our community who identify as transgender, Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour, made it necessary to build new partnerships with other organizations last year.

Last year, we formed strategic partnerships in the sector in order to share resources, reduce administrative costs, and build leadership capacity. Our team also worked with existing transitional housing facilities to address the waitlist of youth needing housing.

Although we can’t highlight each partner here, you’ll see throughout this annual report how every partner, donor, staff member, and volunteer makes a difference in the lives of the 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. We wouldn’t be able to grow our capacity and reach without their unwavering support.

With gratitude,

Carol Osler (she/her)
Executive Director
I’m finally where I want to be.

EJ

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

With the support of our partners, the lives of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth are improving every day. EJ (she/her) shares how the life-changes established at Friends of Ruby have been lasting since she moved out of the Friends of Ruby Home in 2021.

EJ came to Friends of Ruby in 2021 full of ambition and eager for a fresh start after four years of incarceration.

“At a very young age, I picked up a drug addiction,” EJ candidly shares. Prior to going to prison, her family relationships had fallen apart, and she ended up living on the streets.

“I was unable at that time, due to mental health reasons, to basically get it all together, or maintain a job or even a stable home.”

EJ found a safe place to call home in our Friends of Ruby Home. She also reached out for counselling and case worker services to help her build the life she always wanted. “That’s probably been one of the biggest changes for me,” she admits. “Before, I never asked for help. I didn’t know how. Today, when I need help, I ask for it because I don’t ever want to go back to where I was.”

EJ had dreams of having her own place, which was something her case worker also helped make a reality. Together, they found sustainable housing for EJ and helped her make the move to her own apartment. “I’ve just always longed for that foundation, my own foundation,” she says. “I finally made it, like I have something on my own again.”

EJ rolled up her sleeves and was ready to do whatever it took to get a good job that matched her talent and natural abilities. She joined a pre-apprenticeship trades training program that helped her learn construction skills and work on a job site. Her grit and determination paid off.

Today, EJ has a full-time job framing houses. Working in construction is a source of excitement and joy for her. She’s ready to learn more skills and is open to the next opportunity that advances her career. “I’m celebrating that accomplishment,” EJ says humbly. “I wanted to be in this line of work for quite some time and it’s taken a lot of hard work to get there. I’m finally where I want to be.”

EJ can be proud that she bravely laid the foundation in her life to have a home of her own and is now building a career that gives others a home of their own. In her sobriety, she rebuilt connections with her family, spending holidays and birthdays with them again. She’s also in a relationship with her partner of two years who gives her love, stability, and support. As a way of giving back to Friends of Ruby, EJ provides lawn care services at the transitional home where she once lived.

She’s grateful for the partners and donors who make Friends of Ruby’s work possible. “Their help helps. I’m a proven fact that it does;” she says. “Thank you so much for everything. It’s amazing what... people coming together can do.”

“[Friends of Ruby] is a safe space…. If you use it for what it’s there for, you will get what you want out of it. You will get success,” EJ says proudly. “Five years ago, I couldn’t even get up to an alarm clock…. I couldn’t put all the steps in motion to have a job and do all these things. I’ve come a long way in the past five years. Anything is possible with a little bit of motivation and support.”
Mental Health & Wellness Supports

The need for mental health and wellness support continued to escalate in 2022. Even though pandemic restrictions eased up, years of social isolation, lockdowns, and remote learning kept youth away from their friends and support groups, and negatively affected their well-being. Anxieties were especially amplified for youth living in unsupportive homes or communities without 2SLGBTQIA+ support.

When we started providing online counselling sessions because of pandemic limitations, the number of requests for counselling services increased as youth from across the province contacted us for support. We are happy that so many youth are reaching out and choosing to prioritize self-care and their well-being.

We offer three different counselling sessions:

- A regular program of 20 one-on-one sessions with a counsellor.
- A pilot program of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) providing six one-on-one sessions with a counsellor.
- Group counselling sessions that help youth develop life skills to address their challenges.

35% more youth received counselling

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Partnership highlights

**RBC Future Launch** allowed us to address the backlog of youth waiting for mental health support by running our SFBT pilot project (which ends November 2023).

**St. Michael’s Hospital**, through the Local Health Integration Network, is a vital partner that funds our mental health services. Their support allowed us to train staff, do community outreach, provide TTC tokens for youth accessing services, and more.

**Ontario Trillium Foundation and Canadian Women’s Foundation** helped us create and distribute resource guides to support youth waiting for counselling. The Self-Advocacy 101 guide (friendsofruby.ca/resources/self-advocacy-101), which is also available online for youth living across Ontario, shows queer and trans youth how to advocate for themselves, their rights, and their needs.
It’s been incredible to see folks find their place by using the tools we provide to support trauma recovery and growth. Dan (he/him), Friends of Ruby Clinical Counsellor

SFBT is a short-term, goal-focused approach that creates change by looking at solutions rather than focusing on the problem.
It’s really rewarding to see people want to get help...

PROUDLY CHANGING PERSPECTIVES

Winnie (they/them) first connected with a Friends of Ruby clinical counsellor through the Drop-In program. They share how the counselling services helped them develop healthy strategies to process their emotions, build relationships, and strengthen their sense of self.

“Friends of Ruby provided a welcoming space and made me feel worthy of getting help,” Winnie shares.

In 2022, they attended therapy sessions with counsellors from Friends of Ruby. “They were absolutely wonderful,” Winnie says. “They were also non-binary, so that really helped me connect with them and have that gender conversation with somebody who’s had a similar experience as mine.

“I have definitely become more comfortable in my gender and sexuality because of Friends of Ruby. I’ve strengthened relationships around me and made a great friend group.

“In counselling, we talk a bit about interpersonal relationships. The advice I’ve gotten from counsellors has been really helpful to me because I’ve had a lot of social anxiety,” Winnie shares. They learned how to not give in to their negative internal dialogue that stopped them from talking to new people, and to be flexible with how conversations unfold. Their counsellor helped them see that it would be OK to feel embarrassed or unsure in a conversation because the person would either become a friend or they’d never see them again. “That really stuck in my mind and has helped with not always having that conversation in my head.”

The counsellor provided Winnie with Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), a psychotherapeutic approach that helped them learn healthy techniques to process their emotions and interact with others. Winnie said they still use the techniques, like mindfulness, each day.

Today, the 24-year-old is proud of the positive changes they have made. They continue to receive counselling support from Friends of Ruby and use the tools counselling gave them to overcome social anxieties and better understand their identity. Winnie always wanted a job where they could help others, especially people dealing with substance abuse. They now work as a harm reduction worker at a community services organization and support women and transwomen who struggle with opioid abuse, many of whom have children. They bravely go into dangerous spaces to ensure users have harm reduction kits or to provide first-responder support. Despite the tough situations they find people in, they always still see hope.

“It’s been one of the best jobs I’ve ever had, even though it’s sometimes been a hard, grueling job,” Winnie says. “You see a lot of the ugly parts of life. It’s really rewarding to see people want to get help or want to get better.”

Winnie says the counselling they received from Friends of Ruby was invaluable in their job as a harm reduction worker. “The connection between counselling and harm reduction is quite strong. I honestly don’t think I could do my job without counselling. It’s a really emotionally taxing job.

“Friends of Ruby really helped change [my] perspective, to see that everybody’s pain is valid, including mine. It really doesn’t matter what circumstance you’re in — you can still have therapy and you’re worthy of it. If you think you’re struggling, definitely get help.”
CASE MANAGEMENT

Many 2SLGBTQIA+ youth in our community don’t know where to start to get the support they need. That’s when a Friends of Ruby case worker can make an impact. A dedicated case worker works with each youth to create a plan based on the help they ask for. They then meet regularly until their goals are completed, or until they can achieve them on their own. This support is often life changing.

Last year, our three case workers held more than 1,700 sessions with youth from our community, helping them with a wide range of requests for support. This meant unemployed youth were able to get jobs after getting help with resumes, job searches, and skills training. Transgender and non-binary youth received legal support to change their gender marker in government identification. Youth in search of a home received help finding affordable housing so they can live in a safe and secure space.

partnership highlights

COVENANT HOUSE’S Family and Natural Supports program helps youth at Friends of Ruby mediate conflicts and reconcile or strengthen relationships with their biological or chosen family. This is especially necessary for youth who are at risk of, or who are currently experiencing, homelessness. The goal is for all youth to have long-term relationships that provide both emotional and practical support, in addition to an ongoing sense of belonging.

BLAKE’S LAW FIRM AND PRO BONO STUDENTS CANADA (University of Toronto chapter) provides youth with free legal support, such as assistance completing the right forms for name changes, gender marker changes, and related identification issues. With this support, trans youth can live authentically with an ID that matches who they really are — increasing their sense of safety and allowing them to more easily travel, access healthcare, and gain employment.

88% more case management sessions provided

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Meet the “tax angel”

Charles (he/him) volunteers his time with Friends of Ruby to help with something most people hate doing: taxes. For the past three years, he has freely given his time to help more than 50 youth do their taxes, causing our staff to give him the name “tax angel from above.” This case management support service has a substantial impact on youth, since incomplete taxes are often a barrier to accessing housing or income support.

“My role is to facilitate the youth to obtain all the Canadian Revenue Agency credits available to them. So many youth slip through the cracks because they don’t know what they are entitled to, or realize why they should file their tax returns,” Charles says.

I do this work because if I don’t, who will?

Charles, Friends of Ruby volunteer

231 youth helped

AREAS OF SUPPORT REQUESTED BY YOUTH IN 2022

- HOUSING 11%
- FOOD & BASIC NEEDS 6%
- SOCIAL CONNECTIONS 15%
- SEXUALITY & GENDER IDENTITY 14%
- INCOME SUPPORT 10%
- EDUCATION 9%
- EMPLOYMENT 5%
- LEGAL 4%
- IMMIGRATION 0.1%
- LIFE SKILLS 14%
- HEALTHCARE 12%
DROP-IN SERVICES
A place where everyone belongs

The Friends of Ruby Drop-In Centre is an affirming space where you can feel your most authentic self.... You’re not on your own — there’s going be someone who’s going to be able to relate to you.

Yuri (she/they), Friends of Ruby Intake Worker

Word is spreading throughout the community that our Drop-In Centre is a place where 2SLGBTQIA+ youth can come as they are, and find a community of their own. Many of the youth we serve have been rejected by their families or don’t have supportive adults in their life who accept them. Our Drop-In Centre is a safe space where youth can be themselves, find peers they can relate to, and build networks of support that become their chosen family. That's why more youth are coming than in previous years.

Through our weekly programs, youth develop self-confidence and a sense of belonging, can express their creativity through art and poetry, or simply have fun playing video or board games with peers. Last year, we facilitated 316 programs that helped youth develop new skills, affirm their identity, and know they are accepted.

28% more youth used our Drop-In services than in 2021
BIPOC Days
To create a welcoming space for people who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour, we host BIPOC Day every Wednesday at the Drop-In Centre. We provide talks, dinners, movies, and games nights so that youth in this specific community can meet their peers and have an opportunity to discuss the topics and issues that matter to them.

Creative Arts and Expression Programs
The Drop-In Centre has various art therapy and artistic programs so youth can find a creative way to express themselves, especially in a group setting. Whether it's through painting, drawing, or poetry, the youth we serve feel safe and welcome to express their thoughts and feelings, and to be heard.

338 BIPOC youth accessed our services last year through 5,008 service interactions

Partnership Highlights

Canvas Arts Action Programs
delivers a weekly online poetry writing workshop called Back Talk, which gives youth a creative outlet to express themselves. The Back Talk Collective, generally a women and non-binary arts collective, customized this workshop for queer and questioning youth. Participating youth have the opportunity to be published and perform across the Greater Toronto Area.

Peterson Foundation
(Family Foundation) supports the mental health needs of the youth we serve by supporting specific counselling and therapeutic groups. Their funding allows us to have art and music therapy so youth can find ways to continue their healing in creative ways.
Tangible support for everyday needs

The Drop-In Centre is a place where youth can also get help with essential services and access everyday necessities like groceries, meals, clothing, personal hygiene supplies, and laundry machines.

Healthcare Support

Many 2SLGBTQIA+ youth don’t feel understood or safe going to their regular doctor, so we bring basic healthcare to them. Once a month, the Sherbourne Health Bus comes to the Drop-In Centre to provide the youth with medical support. A registered nurse is available so they can safely ask about medical questions or concerns they may have, get referrals to specialists, or get tested for sexually transmitted infections.

We distributed 652 harm reduction kits to youth in 2022. These free supplies assist youth with safer drug use, kits for safer smoking and injections, and Naloxone.

Education and Employment Support

Often, the youth we serve don’t receive the support and guidance they need from adults at home, and they are more likely to be harassed at school or at work. This affects their chances of getting a good job or thriving in their education. To help 2SLGBTQIA+ youth progress in their studies, become self-sufficient, and find livelihood opportunities, the Drop-In Centre offered various employment and skills-development support.

The youth can learn from mentors in the community who are successful in their careers and hear how being queer impacted their career choices. They can also collaborate with other peers to work on assignments they may be struggling with, or get help from our staff with resume writing, mock interviews, and tips for dressing in a work environment. These individualized services help the youth know that an adult is ready to support them in achieving their employment and education goals.

SCOTIABANK, through their ScotiaRise program, is making a big impact to improve the lives of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth by funding our education and employment programs. Last year was our pilot year and 29 youth participated in the program. This work is vital in addressing the unique challenges faced by the youth we serve, and giving them the support they need to return or complete their schooling, or achieve their career goals.

UNITED WAY GREATER TORONTO became a new, but vital, funding partner with Friends of Ruby for last year. Together, we’re addressing the challenges youth face when living in poverty and making it easier for them to access essential services and referrals. This includes providing them with a safe space to meet friends and build a network of support, as well as getting essential items including groceries, TTC tokens, gender-affirming clothing, access to computers for school, and laundry facilities. They also support our case management team in addressing the increasing number of youth reaching out for help.

partnership highlights

We distributed 652 harm reduction kits to youth in 2022. These free supplies assist youth with safer drug use, kits for safer smoking and injections, and Naloxone.
The Drop-in Centre ran 316 programs for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth last year, growing the demand for our everyday services — from healthcare and food, to employment and education support.
Responding to rising food costs

The Friends of Ruby Food Access Program is incredibly important for me as a neurodivergent, disabled queer person on the Ontario Disability Support Program. My mental and physical health needs and limited income make it very difficult to access the nutrition I need. Being able to get groceries that include foods like fruit, veggies, meats, bread, and dairy means that I have access to healthy foods that I would have a lot of difficulties accessing otherwise. O.R. (they/he/she), Grocery Day participant

Food prices began to soar in 2022, stretching the already thin budgets of many youth in our community. As a result, we saw an increased demand for basic food supplies and cooked meals at the centre. To help the youth we serve address food insecurity, we provide bags of groceries and hot meals (with gluten-free and vegan options) for youth in the community and those living in our Friends of Ruby Home. Every Friday is Grocery Day at the Drop-In Centre, and it is always the busiest day of the week! This support allows youth in our community to access healthy meals on a regular basis. Our volunteers come from the community and share their time, talents, and experiences with the youth. And they are critical partners who help ensure Grocery Day runs smoothly. Their support ensures that much-needed food is given out to as many youth as possible.

5,872 bags of groceries were hand-delivered to youth — nearly 4X more than before!

4,052 prepared meals provided

I didn’t have a space like this growing up.
**FILLING BAGS OF HOPE**

Every other Friday afternoon you can find Caroline (she/her) bagging groceries. She’s a partner at an executive leadership search firm, but volunteers her time with us on Grocery Day to help us distribute groceries and meals to the youth in our community.

“It clearly speaks to a need that people have for affordable groceries, and an ability to have enough food in the freezer for the rest of the week,” Caroline says.

Youth check off what groceries and already-prepared meals they want from the week’s list of available items. It can be anything from fresh produce, pantry staples, or frozen food. Caroline and others then receive the orders and fulfil them. She says she fills 25–30 orders each visit.

“It’s frantic, it’s hectic, it’s fast. We’re moving through all these orders. And when you’re finished, you’re like, ‘Ah, we did it!’ There’s a satisfaction to it.”

Caroline volunteers because it’s an enriching experience for her. “I want to feel connected to the queer community. It is important to give back to the community, especially with queer youth. The breadth and diversity of experiences are so interesting and so rich.

“I want to be for kids what I didn’t see or have growing up. I didn’t have any queer elders because it was still pretty taboo or quiet,” she says. “That’s why I think something like Friends of Ruby is so important. I didn’t have a space like this growing up. It might have had a positive impact if I did.

“I think Friends of Ruby is clearly meaningful and impactful for the youth that it serves. People find a home in this space. Now, more than ever, these kinds of community spaces are so important.”
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

When 2SLGBTQIA+ youth feel threatened or unsupported at home by family, their options are often living on the streets or in other unsafe environments. Friends of Ruby offers a safer, welcoming alternative. Our Friends of Ruby Home has 31 suites for youth, providing them with a private living space for a year and an environment where they know they are accepted. Five suites are reserved for emergencies, where youth can stay for only three months.

But Friends of Ruby Home is more than just a safe, physical space to sleep. Youth also get help from a team of residential workers as well as a dedicated case worker to fill in the gap that youth may be missing from being without family. They assist them with practical needs, provide support to achieve their goals, and help them develop a plan so that when they move out after a year they have the skills and knowledge to successfully live independently. The programs at our Home are integrated with our Drop-In Centre and case worker services. This makes it easier for youth to easily access counselling, case workers, get employment or education support, or be recommended for housing.

CITY OF TORONTO’S Shelter, Support and Housing Administration division is our only core government funding partner, supporting the operation of Friends of Ruby Home so 2SLGBQTIA+ youth have a place to call home as they work towards independent living.

AXA XL funded the costs of creating a Youth Council at the Friends of Ruby Home and one at the Drop-In Centre. This gave youth a direct line of communication with Friends of Ruby leadership to address their concerns and collaboratively solve problems between youth and staff. In 2022, the council at the Friends of Ruby Home successfully advocated changing a games room space into a more beneficial indoor exercise area.

THE HOME DEPOT has been a stalwart and strategic partner of Friends of Ruby from the very beginning, supporting the construction, operations and maintenance of Friends of Ruby Home. Like a trusted friend, no matter how big or small our ask was, The Home Depot was always there for us. Last year, their support provided core funding for all of the services we offer at the Friends of Ruby Home and even gardening resources so youth could grow their own food on our rooftop garden.

We are honoured and proud to collaborate with Friends of Ruby. Our partnership has grown over the years, and we are so grateful for that. They do a remarkable job understanding and supporting the needs of the 2SLGBQTIA+ youth with housing disadvantages in the community.

Silvia Trevino-Marcos (she/her), Community Investment Team at The Home Depot Canada Foundation
In 2022, life at the Friends of Ruby Home opened up more as pandemic restrictions were lifted. The dining table was expanded and protective barriers were taken down, making the meal times more communal and social for the residents. More programs and activities also resumed, like kitchen classes that teach youth how to utilize farm-to-table whole foods on a budget and prepare healthy meals.

In addition to providing a safe and welcoming place to live in, the Friends of Ruby Home also provides services and programs that help youth develop leadership and life skills that will help them thrive when they move into a home on their own.

Through the TD Ready Commitment, our corporate citizenship platform, TD aspires to help create the conditions people need to succeed and fully participate in a changing world. For 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, we know that change begins with feeling included, having a safe place to call home, and acquiring the life skills to achieve independent living. That’s why we’re incredibly proud to support community organizations, like Friends of Ruby, that are focused on helping shape an environment of acceptance where 2SLGBTQIA+ youth can access housing and the support they need to thrive. Together, we are helping open doors for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth at a time in their lives when it may feel like there’s nowhere else to turn.

Alicia Rose (she/her), AVP, Social Impact, Sustainability & Corporate Citizenship, TD Bank Group

10,862 nights of sleep — a 33% increase — were provided to 44 youth

**10 youth**

transitioned
to independent living

**MOVE OUT FUND** is a key resource when it’s time for residents of the Friends of Ruby Home to move out into their own housing. Our partnerships with Ontario Realtors Care, Forum Equity Partners, and Private Giving Foundation Funding created a fund to help cover additional expenses the youth may have during the transition. Youth moving out can access up to $1,000 to help with their moving expenses, like utility or furniture costs.

**TD BANK** is one of our closest and most critical partners, agreeing to another three-year partnership. Their collaborative partnership offers residents of the Friends of Ruby Home with financial education. Once a month, staff from TD Bank volunteered at the Friends of Ruby Home and facilitated workshops on topics like budgeting, credit management, savings, investments, taxes, and Tax-Free Savings Accounts. They also fundraise and create opportunities for us to raise awareness of our work.
MAKING YOU FEEL AT HOME

Moving into a new home isn’t always easy.

For some of the new residents at the Friends of Ruby Home, the adjustment is even harder because they come from an unsupportive home or were living on the streets. This is something Cedar (they/them) is acutely aware of as one of eight residential housing workers, and does their best to make it a smooth transition.

“Some people who grew up on the street will struggle a little bit more because it’s obviously very intense,” Cedar explains. “You have to be really aware of what’s going on around you and you’re constantly living in a fight or flight [response]…. Learning how to adjust to a safe space and come out of the trauma response is also something that sometimes is hard for the youth.”

To help the youth, the residential housing workers provide emotional support or connect them to the resources they need.

“When they first move in, we encourage them to connect with counsellors at the Drop-In or if they have their own doctor, going that route if they choose,” Cedar says.

Working at Friends of Ruby is a dream job for Cedar, who consciously works to make life better for youth. Cedar grew up in very religious foster homes that were not accepting of their queer and non-binary identity. “I grew up in foster care. I want to be the change that I would have wanted back when I was a kid.”

It’s that empathy that helps them better connect with the youth. They come with the knowledge and experience of what it takes to create a welcoming space at the Home for youth of various identities. Cedar remembers one youth they were having challenges with when he first moved in.

“He didn’t like me at first because I’m very strict with the rules. He’d be very quick to yell at me and then walk away,” they say. “Then he explained his childhood and why he reacts the way he does. We’ve had conversations around how to ground yourself when you’re feeling those things, which was incredible considering our relationship did not start off super well… Seeing what he’s done in the year that he’s been here is incredible.”

The residential housing workers also run programs to help youth to build new skills and grow socially. Activities like karaoke nights, art or exercise programs, or a cooking class all help the residents to interact with others and step out of their comfort zone.

“All of the youth have progressed, even if it’s like one step forward,” Cedar says. “One step can get you really far in life.”
ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS & FUNDRAISING

Improving our operations

As our programming work resumed to normal operations after pandemic restrictions lifted, we had to be agile and innovative to respond to the unprecedented demand from 2SLGBTQIA+ youth for our services.

Across Canada, inflation and poverty rates started increasing, and the full impact of the pandemic on people’s mental health is only beginning to be understood. We have felt this impact within the youth community that we serve, with waitlists across intake, case management, and counseling growing by 160% in just 11 months.

With at least 26% of all youth homelessness in Toronto from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community*, the growing need for housing was another area we had to respond quickly to. Last year, 500 youth applied and 130 were eligible for just one available suite. Many youth looking for housing are from the BIPOC community, who are even further disproportionately affected by housing insecurity.

We knew we couldn’t tackle these issues alone. So we forged key partnerships to share resources that would not only increase the breadth and delivery of our programming, but also improve our efficiency and how we operate as an organization.

Thanks to our new consortium, we cut our Food Access Program costs by 20-25% by using Street Haven’s commercial kitchen to prepare the diverse meals that we distribute to youth. By eliminating the cost for a commercial vendor, we used that budget to support another non-profit organization’s work. These examples of strategic changes enabled us to help 25% more youth get the support they needed last year.

* Street Needs Assessment Report, 2021

partnership highlights

BALSAM FOUNDATION is a partner dedicated to the capacity improvements of the organization, helping to modernize our human resources process and support. Having better staffing capacity allowed us to be more effective in supporting the youth in our community. Their support helped us improve all aspects of our business and better connect with community partners to improve outcomes for the youth we serve.

RAPID ALIGNMENT LEADERSHIP helped our leadership team to clarify and align with the purpose, vision, and goals of our organization. This partnership’s work also helped the executive director and other directors to build stronger leadership and collaboration skills with each other, improving the working environment and processes for staff.

FIFE HOUSE, DIXON, AND STREET HAVEN and Friends of Ruby formed an innovative partnership. Working as a consortium has allowed us to share resources and reduce the costs of back-office operations, such as procurement, security, IT and learning opportunities.
Fundraising and marketing growth

Our two major campaigns in 2022 raised 65% more than in 2021, and grew our donor base by 207 new donors.

We also increased our presence on social media, reaching 138,724 Instagram and Facebook users with content about our efforts to support 2SLGBTQIA+ youth.

The Pride Campaign in June successfully raised our brand awareness, and we live-streamed our march during the Pride Parade to make the event accessible to more people. In the end, we surpassed our fundraising goal.

Our End of Year Campaign reached out to donors across several platforms, raising 1.5 times our goal and $154,000 more than in 2021. Donors said they were more motivated to give and even increased the amount of their donation thanks to $140,000 in matching gifts.

We recognize and are thankful for the many businesses and community groups that partnered with us in 2022 and fundraised to support the work we do.

$506,137 raised through our fundraising campaigns

PRIDE CAMPAIGN

$85,108 IN 2021

$130,925 IN 2022

END OF YEAR CAMPAIGN

$220,845 IN 2021

$375,212 IN 2022

partnership highlights

KITKAT (Yorkdale Mall) created a Friends of Ruby signature series KitKat chocolate bar to raise awareness of our work. In the first year of this two-year partnership, they raised more than $12,000 from proceeds.

ST. CLEMENT’S SCHOOL’s students chose Friends of Ruby as their charity to support throughout 2022. They held various fundraisers for Friends of Ruby and created handwritten holiday cards for the youth in our community. Our staff also visited the school in North York to provide students and teachers with educational resources, and to raise awareness and support for our community.
We experienced a financial deficit in 2022, largely due to increases in salaries and wages and occupancy cost. Our leadership and fundraising teams have strategies in place to address the shortfall and are going above and beyond to raise more funds in 2023.

### STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated funds</td>
<td>$3,180,891</td>
<td>$2,902,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted donations</td>
<td>862,464</td>
<td>801,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amortization of deferred capital contributions</td>
<td>356,405</td>
<td>354,073</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subsidies</td>
<td>137,463</td>
<td>1,205,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>130,053</td>
<td>70,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$4,667,276</td>
<td>$5,334,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct service delivery costs</td>
<td>$3,151,470</td>
<td>$2,470,886</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupancy</td>
<td>681,326</td>
<td>484,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>177,310</td>
<td>130,917</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amortization of capital assets and website</td>
<td>684,423</td>
<td>675,878</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program fees</td>
<td>427,955</td>
<td>239,253</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional fees</td>
<td>134,434</td>
<td>189,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$5,256,918</td>
<td>$4,190,284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We experienced a financial deficit in 2022, largely due to increases in salaries and wages and occupancy cost. Our leadership and fundraising teams have strategies in place to address the shortfall and are going above and beyond to raise more funds in 2023.
Division of 2022 Revenues

DESIGNATED FUNDS 68%
UNRESTRICTED DONATIONS 18%
AMORTIZATION OF DEFERRED CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS 8%
SUBSIDIES 3%
OTHER 3%

Division of 2022 Expenses

DIRECT SERVICE DELIVERY COSTS 60%
OCCUPANCY 13%
ADMINISTRATION 3%
AMORTIZATION OF CAPITAL ASSETS AND WEBSITE 13%
PROGRAM FEES 8%
PROFESSIONAL FEES 3%
In December 2020, we welcomed our first 2SLGBTQIA+ youth residents into the brand-new Friends of Ruby Home, thanks to the foundational support of EGALE Canada and the many corporate, foundation, government, and individual donors who supported the Capital Campaign. We are forever grateful for their support.

While the Capital Campaign concluded in 2020, Friends of Ruby continues to be humbled by the continued, exceptional financial support from the community. In 2022, we are proud to recognize the following donors across two categories for their impactful support to Friends of Ruby:

- Donors who have given cumulative gifts of $10,000 or more since the completion of the Capital Campaign
- Donors who have given over three years or more since Friends of Ruby’s inception in 2019 (excluding Capital Campaign contributions)

Cumulative Gifts of $10,000+

Anton and Illana Rabie Charitable Fund at the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto
Bill and Bronwen Thomas
Bill and Teri Currie
Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP
Bob Dorrance & Gail Drummond
Brian J. Gibson
Community Food Centres Canada (grant funding)
Community Foundations of Canada
Ian McPhail
IKEA Etobicoke
Interconnect Solutions Canada
J.P. Bickell Foundation (grant funding)
Jays Care Foundation
Jen McCain
John Capozzolo and Paola Ceolin
John Thompson
Lisa and Marianne Smith *
M.E.H. Foundation *
Malcolm and Tara Lang *
Margaret Norrie McCain
Martha LA McCain *
Mike and Martha Pedersen *
Nordstrom
Ontario Highway 407 ETR
Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation
Patrick Priestner
Paul and Susan Douglas
Public Safety Canada (grant funding)
Russell Vert
Scott McCain *
Telus (grant funding)
The Azrieli Foundation
The Clark Family Foundation *
The Neighbourhood Organization
The Ontario Realtors Care Foundation (grant funding)
TSX Inc.
Virgin Plus
VOS Productions

The donor wall at the Friends of Ruby Home acknowledges gifts of $10,000 or more to the Capital Campaign. If you participated in the Capital Campaign and have not yet seen the Friends of Ruby Home, please contact Donna Wawzonek, Manager of Transformational Partnerships, to arrange a tour to see what your donations built.
## Donors Who Gave Over 3+ Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aidan Tierney</td>
<td>Jenny M. Foster</td>
<td>Scott McCain *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra North</td>
<td>Jim Ruyter</td>
<td>Sharron Richards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Pontes</td>
<td>John Hinkley</td>
<td>Siobhan Murphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber Trollope</td>
<td>John Miller</td>
<td>Stephanie Chambers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Gillespie</td>
<td>John Moore</td>
<td>Stephen J. Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Shenkman</td>
<td>John Ryan</td>
<td>Steve Locke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angell Gallery</td>
<td>Jonathon Borland</td>
<td>Steven Spencer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anna Martin</td>
<td>Jordan Lewis</td>
<td>Susan Fleisher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony Alexander</td>
<td>Josh Granovsky</td>
<td>Tanya Janke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony Rizzo</td>
<td>Kevin Imrie</td>
<td>TD Securities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arundel Gibson</td>
<td>Kirk Bryant and Michael Trent</td>
<td>The Clark Family Foundation *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernard King</td>
<td>KPMG Canada</td>
<td>Theresa Walsh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brenda J Simpson</td>
<td>Lisa and Marianne Smith *</td>
<td>Trudi Collins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brent Needham</td>
<td>Lucean Mc Caughin</td>
<td>Victoria Kish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Komonko</td>
<td>M.E.H. Foundation *</td>
<td>Walter Wilson</td>
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<td>Brian Smith</td>
<td>Madeleine Pryce</td>
<td>Waqas Ahmed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cabbagetown Group Softball League</td>
<td>Malcolm and Tara Lang *</td>
<td>William Klein</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada Helps</td>
<td>Marc-Anthony Saumier</td>
<td>Zebedee Trazo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carly Beath</td>
<td>Marisa Simard</td>
<td>Zubas &amp; Associates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Hall</td>
<td>Mark D'Souza</td>
<td>* Recognizes exceptional donor support in both categories of major gift and multi-year giving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Rooney</td>
<td>Martha LA McCain *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassandra Arthur</td>
<td>Mary Beth Currie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catherine Coghlan</td>
<td>Melissa Lucas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catherine Meade</td>
<td>Merryl Bear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Caldarelli</td>
<td>Michael Blythe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danielle Vieira</td>
<td>Michael Hendrie</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Reycraft</td>
<td>Michael Murphy &amp; Robert Stephen</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Doug Arcand and Alnoor Karmali</td>
<td>Mike and Martha Pedersen *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enid Kinha</td>
<td>Nigel Hunt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erik Smith</td>
<td>Patrice Palmer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erin Smith</td>
<td>Paul Jonathan Saguil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fauzieh R Mohsenzadeh</td>
<td>Paulie McDermid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flora Tang</td>
<td>Peter Schneider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forouz Salari</td>
<td>Rebecca &amp; Nirosh Ramachandran</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank Chester &amp; Joel Rotstein</td>
<td>Robert Brien</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gordon Hamilton</td>
<td>Robert Durocher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Richardson</td>
<td>Robert Gibson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilana Ludwin</td>
<td>Ron Harris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jason Amell</td>
<td>Sara Ehhrhardt</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jason Sordi</td>
<td>Sarah Howland</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the donors listed here, we also want to thank all our donors who made big or small donations to Friends of Ruby in 2022. Your generosity enabled us to support more 2SLGBTQIA+ youth than ever before!
What’s Next in 2023?

In 2023, Friends of Ruby will continue to build on the foundation we set in 2022 and develop more partnerships to help meet the higher demand for support from our community. Our reach has grown beyond the Greater Toronto Area, and youth from across the province are now contacting us or being referred to us for help.

To be more effective and address our waitlists, we will focus on:

• exploring new partnerships and shared services models that will improve our capabilities and reach across the sector, especially with housing, mental health, and well-being support

• strengthening our team’s capacity through training and improving our evidence-based models

• working with the Ministry of Health and other government agencies to get increased funding for physical and mental health services for the youth we serve

• expanding our support for the diverse BIPOC youth in our community, in consultation with Black and Indigenous youth and experts
Despite the growing need for our programs and services, we are still full of hope.

As attitudes toward people in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community become more accepting and more people become allies, we are proud to see that a new generation of children advocate for and encourage the youth we serve.

Lauren, a Grade 11 student at The York School, organized the student body to write affirmation cards for the youth in our community. Their heartfelt messages of encouragement and acceptance give everyone in our community hope for the future.
Thank you to photographer Em Schuster (they/them) for contributing many of the photos used in this annual report.