

Annual Report

2023-24



DSL

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
OF LEEDS AND GRENVILLE

Enhancing Abilities, Promoting Independence,
Advocating for Inclusive Communities **Since 1983**



MISSION STATEMENT

Developmental Services of Leeds and Grenville is committed to providing a variety of clinical and support services which will enable persons with developmental/intellectual disabilities to develop their potential within their communities.



DSL**G**

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
OF LEEDS AND GRENVILLE

Annual Report Stats

April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

Services and Supports (in excess of 460 Individuals)

Adult and Community Services

- Advocacy
- Case Management
- Community Participation Support
- Foundations

Children's Services

- Advocacy
- Case Management
- Children's Service Planning Co-ordination
- Children's Summer Groups

Passport Program

- Individualized Funding

Housing and Program Initiatives

- Family Home
- Enhanced SIL (teaching/training)

Residential Services and Supports

- Dual Diagnosis Transitional Rehabilitation Housing Program (DD TRHP)
- Community Referrals

Specialized Services

- Behavioural Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychiatric Clinic
- Psychological Assessments/Consultations
- Social Work/Therapy

Summer Students

- 4 Summer Students (Children's social/recreational groups)

Student Placements

- Bachelor of Behavioural Psychology
- Mental Wellness & Addictions Worker
- Addictions & Community Services Worker

Distress Centre Lanark, Leeds & Grenville

- Responded to over 9995 calls

Annual Report of the Chair

Annual General Meeting • September 16, 2024

Developmental Services of Leeds and Grenville's presence in our community is reflected by services which extend throughout our county. Our mandate is to support the needs of clients and families with services that are individually focused while remaining in the community. DSLG's support can begin in infancy and extend throughout an individuals' life. These services include psychological services, programming services, respite care, crises services, transition programs, and summer camps. As much as possible, community programs are utilized so that individuals develop community connections where they live. The staff of the organization are highly skilled, professional and dedicated in their work. There is careful consideration given to the relevance of individual goals in discussions with family members and with individual clients of DSLG.

Congratulations to DSLG for attaining their tenth year of accreditation for the organization. Thanks to all staff for ensuring that the vision for those services is met at the highest possible level. The Board fully appreciates the organization and effort this requires from every employee.

Throughout this past year, negotiations were taking place with our OPSEU membership and their union and management of DSLG. The contract was successfully agreed to and ratified in late spring. As a Board of Directors, we were delighted that an agreement was reached. We want to thank everyone involved. Contract negotiations are an integral part of workplaces and ensures that each side have their voices heard. Thank you to everyone for maintaining civility throughout and arriving at mutuality through a contract. Thanks to Tom Turner for keeping us fully informed and his work with the financial aspects, and then working with the negotiation committee to arrive at agreement.

During this past year, the Board of DSLG has been having conversations regarding the affordable housing crises in our community and its impact on the individuals we support. Conversations have been held with community members to explore the possibilities that may exist to ease these needs of our clients while supporting a void that is reaching an emergency for many.

Thank you to Program Managers for attending a Board meeting throughout the year, bringing us up to date on the past and future goals of each program. You are our link to maintaining our knowledge of the diverse programming needs of individuals and families.



Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Little,
Board Chair

Executive Director's Report

Annual General Meeting • September 16, 2024

"Your goals are the road maps that guide you and show you what is possible for your life." - Les Brown

The agency continued to deal with the aftermath of COVID-19, with staffing and program implications. Staff hiring and retention continue to be an issue, however staff worked hard at getting caseloads and program stability back to previous levels. We did get notice over this period from the Ministry that the pandemic was officially over, and we were able to eliminate several guidelines and restrictions we had to deal with.

On a positive note, the Agency celebrated our 40th Anniversary in July 2023, and we celebrated this with several events throughout the year, including a Celebration day with staff at the Brockville Golf and Curling Club. The day consisted of acknowledgement of the history and an overview of the agency. We also had a well-known international speaker, Janet Klees, who presented "Building Context for Relationships", for the morning keynote address. We enjoyed a buffet lunch and some networking, with two sessions in the afternoon consisting of Anne Maloney, Program Supervisor from MCCSS, presenting the principles of the new Ministry transformation paper- "Journey to Belonging." The latter part of the program was a presentation from Guillaume Trembley, Nurse Practitioner from the Royal Ottawa Hospital, on Wellness and Brain Health. The day was a successful celebration of 40 years and some meaningful discussion on the various training topics, as well as an opportunity for programs to get together once again.

Throughout the year, staff initiated and attended several community events (Brockville, Kemptonville, Gananoque, Prescott) and presented information on the agency, and our 40th Anniversary. The Prescott event was a free skating day for the community at the newly opened Prescott arena sponsored by DSLG. It was well attended by the community and DSLG staff.

The agency continued to discuss and plan for the Journey to Belonging principles, how to improve our services, and what changes we needed to make to meet these principles. The good news was, our agency was already doing many of the identified areas, such as more person centered and directed services, community inclusion and participation, and planning and dealing with the increase in individualized funding. Our programs and staff continued to provide quality services, while at times dealing with the complex and challenging issues and cases presented. We were also involved in a comprehensive Cost Analysis initiative regarding program costs with the

Ministry and KPMG Accounting. The Ministry also formed a committee looking at Clinical Services across the province and how better to coordinate these resources and provide better planning for complex cases. The committee looked at a provincial model to introduce a “spectrum of services” with various intensity levels, to hopefully be able to repatriate individuals from OPR’s (Outside Paid Residential settings) providing services to complex individuals. The Ministry also spoke about re-introducing the “Biopsychosocial Model” of planning for complex and challenging cases.

Many of our agency programs reviewed and revised several internal processes to update and improve services to our community. The Clinical/Specialized Team made several improvements to intake and the Behavioral referral process to become much more comprehensive and at the same time streamlined. The Children’s program revised the Children’s Applicant/Intake Process to clarify and update the information, regarding new referrals and planning, and completed another successful Children’s Summer program. The Community Participation Services (Community Connections and Foundations) worked towards amalgamating the two into the formal CPS Program, which is what the Ministry funds, and aligns with the Journey to Belonging focus. They also continued to review how best to provide more community and individualized services, without losing the opportunity to continue with small teaching and skill building groups.

The Passport Program continues to grow as this is the only Ministry program to receive ongoing funding. The Passport Program continued to receive several referrals from our regional DSO and Passport programs, as any individual deemed eligible qualifies for funding. However, like most agencies, we struggled with recruitment. Securing and retaining flexible staff scheduling for individuals in this program, and the implications of our newly signed contract, caused some implications that we continue to deal with. We continue to plan and work in this area, to build stability of staffing, and financial accountability.

The Adult Services (APSW) staff continued to carry a variety of cases, providing coordination, maintenance of cases, to very complex and challenging cases. With this came the housing crisis that complicated situations for a number of individuals we served. The team was also presented with a number of new referrals for complex and homeless individuals. Staff and Managers are regularly involved in a number of committees on homelessness with community partners. This was also a major issue with our Innovative Housing program as well. They provided our Enhanced SIL individuals (high levels of funding) and our community SIL individuals (lower support hours required) with daily living skills support and assistance in finding housing opportunities. The Host Family (Family Home Care) program was in need of an overhaul and emphasis due to the loss of homes through retirements. We are now in the process of re-building the program with an advertising blitz and recruitment push.

Our two residential programs have been busy with admissions and discharges to the community, and also providing some community respite and short-term assessments for various reasons such as medications reviews or adaptive living skills. Both programs are getting back on track in terms of admissions, now the pandemic is over and we were able to come to a Bargaining Unit agreement with OPSEU.

The Distress Center and Dedicated Service Planning programs, which are contracted programs funded externally, continue to provide the required service targets and required involvement with the funding agencies. These two programs provide beneficial and meaningful services to individuals and families in our community.

In January 2024 we started negotiations with our OPSEU partners, with several meetings over a number of months. This was a long and difficult process in comparison to other rounds of bargaining, however with the assistance of a Ministry of Labour Conciliator we reached a deal in early June. The Management Team did an excellent job working with the Union, with the limited resources and funding from MCCSS. We were able to get a three (3) year agreement with our partners to provide some financial and program stability. We will continue to work in a positive partnership with our OPSEU Local.

We were involved with a Quality Assurance Measure review (MCCSS) this past year and were able to receive a Compliance Letter with some revisions in the documentation area. We are now in the process of preparing for a FOCUS review in the Fall. Several staff and management committees have looked at several domains and continue to work on expectations of this process.

All in all, it has been a busy and challenging year. However, Management, staff and the Board were able to focus on the purpose of our work and agency, and push through any challenge in a supportive, positive manner. Thank you to everyone for the quality service you provide to the individuals we serve.



Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Turner,
Executive Director

Journey to Belonging

Developmental Services of Leeds and Grenville is committed to implementing the MCCSS Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion framework.

We continue to focus on the Reform Plan Key Commitments as highlighted:



Putting People First

As an organization we believe in the motto “Nothing About Us Without Us” coined by the late Richard Ruston, former President of People First of Ontario. In our services we recognize people’s needs change over the course of their lives, and we have shifted to person directed plans that are anchored on each person’s gifts, talents, uniqueness, heritage, natural supports and overall way of life. The plan is to provide opportunities to the good things in life and provide culturally relevant supports.

Improve Service Experience

Building on person-centered service experience, we have adopted best practices by improving assessment based on individual support needs, implementing meaningful supports in a timely manner, and providing technology that can enhance service delivery.





Improve Quality and Accountability

- In the past year, we have been reviewing programs to determine effective delivery of quality services and evidence-based outcomes. We will continue to make the necessary changes to ensure improvement in quality and accountability. This includes sharing successes with others.
- In addition, we are providing our staff with ongoing professional development, training opportunities and relevant resources to enhance their skills. We continue to recruit diverse talent, strengthen retention and provide purposeful core competencies.
- We have a greater presence in our community, including being members of collaborative committees that make a difference.
- We continue to strive to attain FOCUS accreditation.

Although we have accomplished so much in the past year, we will continue to preserve the integrity of our work, maintain our mission and vision and most importantly be steadfast in creating inclusive communities where everyone can belong.

Respectfully submitted,
Reina McDowell,
Director, Client Services



Specialized Services

The past year was a busy and productive stretch for Specialized Services. Our Psychology Team maintained a steady flow of psychological-educational and eligibility assessments under the direction of Dr. Alison Inglis. Behind the scenes, our psychometrists engaged in several professional development opportunities to ensure their services remain grounded in current research and best practices, and Dr. Inglis provided consultative supports to a wide array of DSLG services and staff.

Under the coordination of Heather Laushway BSW, RSW, our psychiatric clinics remained important and well-used services. The thoughtful care and expertise of Dr. Cherie Jones-Hiscock and Dr. Adil Al-Mousawi ensured that clients, families, and support teams from across Leeds and Grenville had access to timely and responsive medical services for their mental health and well-being.

In August, we welcomed Courtney de Kroon back to her Occupational Therapist (OT) role. She continues to provide assessment, consultation, and advocacy services for her clients, while also managing DSLG's Snoezelen Room.

Demand for Social Work services remained high throughout 2024. In addition to providing counselling and therapy services, our Social Workers engaged in a number of professional development opportunities. These included workshops on Trauma-Informed practice, certification in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), and training related to mental health supports for individuals who are dually diagnosed.

Finally, the past 12-months brought several changes for the Behaviour Services team. Following Dr. Molino's retirement, the team revised its service plans and intake procedures. In July, the team incorporated new provincial legislation and standards of practice as Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) became a Regulated Health Profession in Ontario. Amid all of the changes, our Supervised Behaviour Therapists collaborated with clients, caregivers, and community partners to ensure individualized, responsive, and function-based behaviour supports were available.

Referrals and Intake Processes

In 2021, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) launched a 10-year strategic plan called Journey to Belonging (J2B). Central to the plan are the voices of Ontarians with developmental disabilities, and their message is clear: developmental services should be individualized, person-directed, responsive, evidence-based, and culturally sensitive.

With J2B in mind, we have made several changes to our intake and referral processes. Both the psychology and behaviour services teams have adopted structured intake scoring systems. These allow clinicians to efficiently and reliably identify the key stressors and needs for each individual that is referred for service. Intake scores help to ensure that referrals are prioritized according to level of urgency, ensuring equitable access to services.

To address goodness of fit and reduce waitlist times, the Social Work team has shifted to a monthly, roundtable review process for new referrals. This process matches clients with Social Workers who are best equipped to support them, and it ensures that waitlisted referrals are reviewed and updated on a consistent basis.

Finally, referrals for Occupational Therapy are prioritized according to level of risk and functional impairment. Individuals who are at risk of injury, those who are experiencing significant deterioration in their practical skills, and those whose health status is in decline receive priority. Other factors that influence triage include sensory and neurological needs, environmental demands, and mental health.

As we look ahead to 2025, we aim to continue our efforts to update, adapt, and streamline our specialized services to meet the needs of the children, youth, adults, and families that we serve in Leeds and Grenville.



Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Sherstone,
Manager, Specialized Services

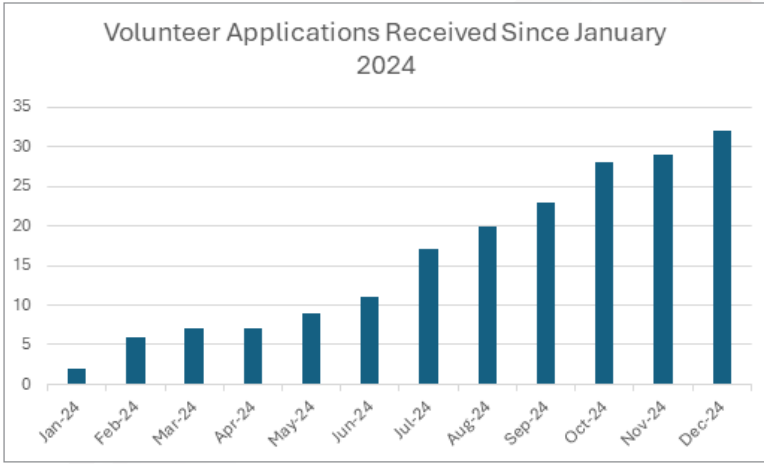
Distress Centre Lanark Lanark, Leeds, and Grenville

The Distress Centre of Lanark, Leeds, and Grenville for 30 years, has worked on behalf of, and with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Local Health Integration Network, and Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Addictions and Mental Health to build the capacity of the community offering a distress line service from 5pm to midnight, 365 days a year. The Distress Centre supports callers through an active listening model which helps identify emotions and aids callers in finding solutions and supports that will work for them. Over the past year, the Distress Centre has responded to 9995 calls from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024. Also noted during this time, is the increase in the needs and distress level of incoming calls. In addition to incoming calls, volunteers are currently supporting 50 warm line clients through the prevention-based referral service.

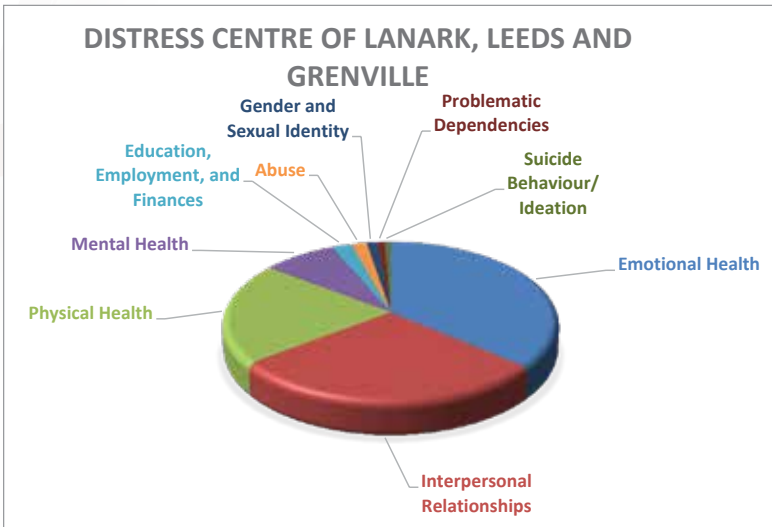
Since COVID-19 the needs of the community have increased and so has the needs of the program. As the calls have increased so has the intensity of those calls. The Distress Centre was fortunate to have received a Resilient Communities Fund grant through the Ontario Trillium Foundation which has allowed us to further develop the program and enhance the training volunteers receive to further support our community. The positive impact of this Ontario Trillium Foundation grant cannot be overstated:

- helped us to recover and build our resiliency from the impacts of COVID-19 by rebuilding our volunteer base and capacity through enhanced training and supports to ensure the sustainability of our programs.
- allowed us to make the necessary technical upgrades to our Distress Line Service. In March of 2020, the Distress Line was shut down for a period of two weeks as call room locations were not accessible and the infrastructure for remote work by our volunteers was not in place. We have been able to purchase additional phone lines to meet the increased needs and volume of calls from our community. Volunteers are also now able to complete their shift either remotely or from a designated call room location. This flexibility for shifts has had a positive impact on both attracting as well as retaining volunteers for our program.
- allowed the Distress Centre to hire a Community and Engagement Coordinator to develop and design a robust volunteer training program, ensure a strong volunteer infrastructure, build and maintain relationships with community partners, and increase our community engagement through public speaking and marketing to ensure our programs' sustainability.

The chart below shows the increase in volunteer applications since receiving the grant and bringing a community and Engagement Coordinator.



The chart below provides a detailed breakdown of the types of calls that Distress Centre Volunteers have assisted with over the past year with a total of 9995 calls.



Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kaufman,
Manager, Distress Centre

Financial Highlights for 2023/2024

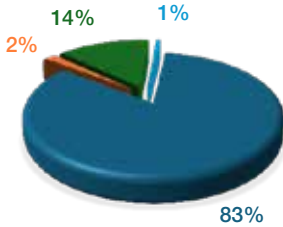
Developmental Services of Leeds and Grenville offers a diverse range of clinical and support services funded through multiple sources. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) is our primary funder. Additionally, we receive funding from Lanark Leeds and Grenville Addictions and Mental Health (LLGAMH), and Individualized Funding through Passport, Complex Special Needs (CSN) and Special Services at Home (SSAH). Finally, DSLG's Distress Centre received a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation – Resilient Communities Fund – which has allowed the program to build additional capacity and improve services to rebuild the volunteer base and ensure sustainability of the program.

Total consolidated revenue and gross expenditures increased by 11.0%. This increase was primarily due to increases in employee wages and benefits and client contract services. Through good planning and dedication to staff training and development, the organization continues to achieve high-quality clinical, client, and program services as well as well-maintained facilities and equipment.

The organization continues to invest in the development of the web-based Integrated Information Management System (IMS). The IMS system ensures that we meet accountability requirements of our funders and improve decision making that enhances day-to-day service delivery.

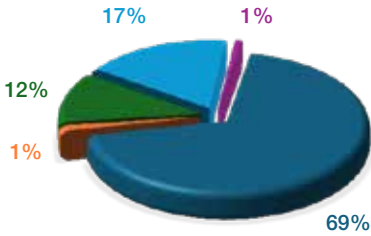
With the move towards digital based/paperless systems, the organization continues to be vigilant in improving cyber security to protect its clients, staff, and business from the risk of malicious cyber security threats such as identity theft, hacking, malware and ransomware. Various tools and protocols, including Virtual Private Network (VPN) and Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) along with employee education and training, have been implemented to mitigate these risks and safeguard confidential information. As the move towards digital-based systems continue to grow, DSLG is committed to ongoing investment in cybersecurity and IT to ensure accountability to our funders and to enhance the client and employee experience.

WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM



- Ministry of Community and Social Services
- Ministry of Health
- Other
- Ontario Trillium Grant

HOW THE MONEY WAS SPENT



- Wages and Benefits
- Travel and Training
- Purchased Services
- Supplies and Services
- Premises Rent



Respectfully submitted,

Brandon Noseworthy,
Manager of Finance

2024 Student Bursary Awards

Since 2007, DSLG has offered a student bursary to first year post-secondary students pursuing a career in a field related to developmental/intellectual disabilities. A one-time \$2,000 bursary is available to a student in each of three categories: university level, college level, and graduate (R.G. McMullen award). There were no applications for the graduate award (R.G. McMullen Award) this year.

The 2024 selection committee consisted of two Board members (Pam Little and Pierre Santoni), the Manager of Residential Services (Michael Dube); and the Executive Director (Tom Turner).

Awards were presented at DSLG on July 24th:

Destiny Davis registered in the Child and Youth Care Program at St. Lawrence College.

"I love working with kids. I want to work in a school because you get to meet many new children and get to watch them grow up and become wonderful kids. My goal is to help the kids become the best person they can be."

Destany Davis receiving her award, presented by Tom Turner, Executive Director.



Keiko Storr registered in the Nursing Program at Queen's University.

"I would really like to be part of helping those communities in need. As a nurse I will be there for patients' worst times and I would really like to be a positive part of their healing journey back to themselves. Overall, this award would mean a great deal to me and no matter what, I will always work hard in my studies and try to make a positive impact in this world."

Keiko Storr receiving her award, presented by Tom Turner, Executive Director.

Employee Milestones

Congratulations to staff who have reached a milestone in years of service:

20 Years	Steve Armstrong Lisa Zufelt
15 Years	Brayden Edgeley
10 Years	Carrie Rice Kaitlyn Chisamore Amanda Bernier Alexandera Bennett

DSLГ Board Member Receives Ontario Volunteer Service Award

Congratulations to Stewart Glashan!

Ontario Volunteer Service Awards, offered through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, are a way to thank volunteers for their continuous years of commitment and dedicated service to a group. DSLГ is proud to have had Board Members that have qualified for this award, having 20 (or more) consecutive years of service.

Stewart Glashan received an Ontario Volunteer Service Award at the Ontario Volunteer Service Award presentation held at the Brockville Country Club on April 30th 2024. Stewart joins a number of Board members who have previously received this honour: Wendy Earl, Dreas Arkeveld, Brian Alexander, Pam Little, Harry Kingscott and Alf Platts.



Retirements this year ...



Karyn Wilson

Community Participation Support Facilitator
Community Connections
Retired September 2024

Karyn's career at DSLG spanned 41 years. She accepted a position with DSLG when the agency opened in 1983 and had a rewarding career working with individuals receiving day supports. She saw many changes in the program over the years and was involved with relocation twice as services expanded to include a variety of activities such as creative arts. She played an important role in setting up the program at its current location ~ "Central Park Connections".

Karyn will be fondly remembered by many individuals who participated in Community Connections and by staff who knew her well. Friends and co-workers had the opportunity to thank her for her many years of service, extend congratulations, and wish her all the best during a "drop-in" at Community Connections on July 25th.

We Remember...



Bobby MacTavish

June 14, 1962 – January 8, 2024

Staff were saddened by the passing of Bobby, who received services for close to 40 years participating regularly in adult day supports and attending Community Connections activities. He will be remembered by staff and friends throughout DSLG who knew him well and he is truly missed!

“Congratulations to DSLG for attaining their tenth year of accreditation for the organization. Thanks to all staff for ensuring that the vision for services is met at the highest possible level. The Board fully appreciates the organization and effort this requires from every employee.”



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