



COMMUNITY LIVING 
Ajax-Pickering and Whitby
Inspiring Possibilities

2025-2026 Annual Report

• TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Director & President Message	3
Executive Director & President Message (continued)	4
Strategic Plan Accomplishments	5
Financial Report	6
Financial Report (continued)	7
Accommodation Supports - Group Living	8
Accommodation Supports - Group Living (continued)	9
Host Family Program	10
Supported Independent Living	11
Forestview Treatment Home	12
Intensive Supports	13
By the Numbers: 2025–2026	14
Program Updates & Milestones - Children's Services	15
Volunteer Services	16
Volunteer Services (continued)	17
Employment Solutions and WeCandle	18
WeCandle (continued)	19
Transitional Aged Youth	20
Community Connections	21
Community Connections (continued)	22
Advocacy Alliance	23
Family As Partners Group	24
Passport Program	25
Respite Now	26
Urgent Response Annual Report	27
Staff Recognition (40-30 years)	28
Staff Recognition (20-5 years)	29
Annual Holiday Party Invitation	30

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & PRESIDENT MESSAGE

There are years when an organization makes steady progress, and then there are years that redefine what is possible. For Community Living Ajax-Pickering and Whitby, 2025–2026 was one of those years.

As we look back over the past twelve months, we are reminded not only of what was accomplished, but of how much our organization continues to evolve. Every new initiative, partnership, job secured, volunteer recruited, friendship formed, and step toward greater independence reflects the collective commitment, compassion, and dedication of our staff, volunteers, families, and community partners. Together, these accomplishments are creating more opportunities for people to build the lives they choose.

For nearly 70 years, CLAPW has grown and adapted to meet the changing needs of our community while remaining grounded in one simple belief: every person deserves the opportunity to live a full and meaningful life. This past year is another example of that commitment in action. As we look toward celebrating our 70th anniversary next year, we are proud of how far we have come and excited about where we are headed.

Our Strategic Plan has continued to guide our work, but it has also challenged us to think differently, build new partnerships, and look for opportunities to do more. As a result, this has been a year of significant growth. While our organization has grown, our focus has remained the same: providing high-quality, person-centred supports that help people achieve their goals, build connections, and participate fully in their communities.

The development of the Watersdown Youth Home, our first licensed children's residential program, was undoubtedly the biggest milestone of the year. This new service allows us to support children and youth with complex needs closer to home, while helping families access the services they need within their own communities. It represents more than a new program; it marks an exciting new chapter in CLAPW's history.

Growth was evident throughout every area of the organization. Community Participation evolved into Community Connections, reflecting our continued commitment to person-directed supports and helping people become active members of their communities. New *NextGen* recreation and transition programs created additional opportunities for youth as they prepare for adult life, while our Advocacy Alliance continued to demonstrate that people with developmental disabilities are among our community's strongest leaders and advocates. The Urgent Response program transitioned from Durham Mental Health Service entirely to CLAPW, adding two Crisis Care Coordinators to our team.

The social enterprise, *WeCandle*, continued to exceed expectations. What began as an innovative employment initiative has grown into an award-winning business. Every candle sold represents something far greater than the candle itself. It represents someone learning new skills, earning a paycheck, building confidence, and discovering what meaningful employment can look like.

Equally inspiring has been the generosity of our community. Volunteers shared their time and talents, students brought enthusiasm and fresh ideas while preparing for careers in human services, businesses opened their doors to inclusive employment, and community partners collaborated with us to build stronger supports for the people we serve.

None of this happens by accident. It happens because of people. To our employees, thank you. Your compassion, professionalism, and willingness to embrace new ideas continue to move this organization forward. Every day, you build meaningful relationships, support people through life's challenges and successes, and demonstrate the power of person-directed support.

To our volunteers, thank you for sharing your time so generously. The friendships you build and the experiences you create enrich lives in ways that cannot be measured.

To our donors, funders, corporate sponsors, and community partners, thank you for believing in the work we do and investing in our future. Your support allows us to innovate, respond to emerging needs, and create opportunities that would not otherwise be possible. We are especially grateful to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canada Summer Jobs, the Town of Ajax, the Town of Whitby, the Durham Community Foundation, Ontario Power Generation, our local school boards, businesses, service clubs, and the many organizations that continue to collaborate with us.

We would also like to thank our Board of Directors for their thoughtful governance and unwavering commitment to our mission. The Board and leadership team share a commitment to ensuring CLAPW remains strong, sustainable, and ready to meet the changing needs of our community. The Board's strategic leadership has helped position CLAPW for continued growth while ensuring we remain focused on the people we support.

Most importantly, we thank the individuals and families who place their trust in us every day. You continue to inspire us to improve, to innovate, and to advocate for communities where everyone belongs.

As we look ahead, we know there is still much to do. The need for quality supports continues to grow, and so does our determination to meet that need. We are excited about what lies ahead and confident that, together with our staff, volunteers, families, partners, and supporters, we will continue finding new ways to strengthen our communities and create opportunities that empower people to live the lives they choose.

Thank you for your continued support of Community Living Ajax-Pickering and Whitby. We are grateful to be part of such a caring and supportive community, and we look forward to what we will accomplish together in the years ahead.



Lisa McNee Baker

Executive Director



Robert Palmer

President, Board of Directors

STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Throughout 2025–2026, CLAPW continued to drive forward key initiatives mapped out in our Strategic Plan. The dedication across our teams resulted in significant achievements spanning our four strategic pillars.

PILLAR 1 Evolve Our Approach

- **Modernization:** Researched and established a comprehensive online registration and payment system for fee-for-service programming, launching June 2026.
- **Flexible Programming:** Expanded *PA Days*, *March Break*, *NextGen Fusion*, and *Spirit of Summer* to create dynamic, revenue-generating support options.
- **Support Planning:** Developed new training resources ensuring robust, person-directed Individual Support Plans.

PILLAR 2 Champion Our People

- **Core Competencies:** Embedded comprehensive competency frameworks into recruitment, behavioural interviews, and performance management.
- **Employee Engagement:** Maintained regular pulse surveys, Town Hall forums, and enhanced formal staff recognition.
- **EDIB Initiatives:** Strengthened our commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging with active committees and flexible statutory holiday structures.

PILLAR 3 Develop Our Resources

- **Quality Assurance:** Service Excellence Committee conducted mock inspections, maintaining rigorous Ministry of Children Community and Social Services (MCCSS) compliance standards.
- **Housing Strategy:** Secured funding for a dedicated Housing Navigation Lead (starting August 2026) to assist the Urgent Response Team in combating the housing crisis.
- **Governance:** Enacted a comprehensive Board development plan to sustain strategic leadership.

PILLAR 4 Engage Our Community

- **Employment Alliances:** Built relationships with 103 local employers.
- **Advocacy & Leadership:** The Advocates Alliance enhanced their public voice through educational events and community outreach.
- **Sector Influence:** CLAPW leadership advocated actively with elected officials regarding housing, workforce challenges, and developmental service futures.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Community Living Ajax-Pickering and Whitby Statement of Financial Position

March 31 2026 2025

Assets

Current Assets

Cash	\$ 1,198,851	\$ 1,022,790
Short-term investment (note 3)	271,280	262,312
Accounts receivable	389,890	379,409
Prepaid expenses and deposits	426	131,051
	<u>1,860,447</u>	<u>1,795,562</u>

Capital Assets (note 2)

<u>2,413,232</u>	<u>2,219,416</u>
<u>\$ 4,273,679</u>	<u>\$ 4,014,978</u>

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 649,498	\$ 738,715
Deferred contributions related to operational programs	227,663	133,935
	<u>877,161</u>	<u>872,650</u>

Deferred Contributions Related to Capital Assets (note 4)

<u>993,955</u>	<u>917,591</u>
<u>1,871,116</u>	<u>1,790,241</u>

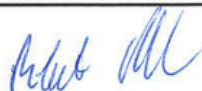
Net Assets

Invested in capital assets	1,419,277	1,301,825
Operating	983,286	922,912
	<u>2,402,563</u>	<u>2,224,737</u>
	<u>\$ 4,273,679</u>	<u>\$ 4,014,978</u>

On behalf of the Board:



Director



Director

Community Living Ajax-Pickering and Whitby Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31	2026	2025
Revenues		
Ministry - Provincial subsidy (note 6)	\$ 10,788,139	\$ 10,512,049
Passport funding	1,418,672	986,056
Other revenue	1,028,921	655,580
Rental recovery	505,796	480,121
Amortization of deferred capital contributions (notes 4)	67,856	77,417
Donations	38,899	32,236
Interest income	37,638	70,150
Memberships	300	520
	<u>13,886,221</u>	<u>12,814,129</u>
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	9,475,093	8,610,040
Passport expenses	1,414,055	986,056
Individualized funding	1,106,903	995,075
Repairs and maintenance	433,084	515,747
Other client expenses	252,013	253,514
Miscellaneous	131,775	119,747
Amortization of capital assets	121,536	110,844
General administration expense	104,048	151,151
Insurance	103,886	100,887
Utilities	98,314	98,149
Other purchased services	98,049	223,831
Staff training	94,103	109,449
Vehicle operation and travel	81,471	100,934
Fees	63,010	64,095
Telephone	59,211	51,117
Staff travel	55,047	48,661
Summer respite expense	16,797	6,838
Bad debts	-	1,970
	<u>13,708,395</u>	<u>12,548,105</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	<u>\$ 177,826</u>	<u>\$ 266,024</u>

ACCOMODATION SUPPORTS

Group Living

The past year was filled with opportunities for people supported through CLAPW's Group Living program to get out into their communities, spend time with family and friends, try new experiences, and continue enjoying the activities they love most. Whether it was a weekly outing or a once-in-a-lifetime vacation, the focus remained on supporting each person to live a full and meaningful life based on their own interests and choices.

Throughout the year, individuals participated in a wide variety of activities including swimming, yoga, art, music, bowling, pickleball, shopping, theatre productions, concerts, sporting events, community festivals, church services, fitness programs, community dances, and local recreation opportunities. Many also enjoyed visits to parks, museums, zoos, aquariums, restaurants, and seasonal celebrations, while others simply appreciated spending time with friends over coffee or enjoying a favourite meal.

Travel continued to be a highlight for many. Individuals explored destinations across Ontario and beyond, with trips ranging from weekend getaways to vacations in Niagara Falls, Ottawa, the Caribbean, Mexico, and the United States. These experiences created lasting memories while building confidence, independence, and opportunities to experience new places and cultures.

The year also reflected the importance of everyday routines that help people remain active and connected. Individuals attended medical appointments, pursued healthy lifestyles through regular exercise and walking programs, maintained hobbies, volunteered, developed life skills, and continued building relationships within their communities. Long-standing friendships were celebrated, new connections were made, and people were supported to stay engaged in the places and activities that matter most to them.



Behind each of these experiences is a dedicated team of staff who work every day to ensure people have the opportunity to make their own choices, pursue their goals, and participate as valued members of their communities. Their commitment, creativity, and encouragement help turn ordinary moments into meaningful ones and continue to enrich the lives of the people we support.

From everyday outings to extraordinary adventures, this year was another reminder that meaningful community participation isn't defined by where people go—it's about having the freedom, support, and opportunity to live the life they choose.

Submitted By Accommodation Supports Managers: Ruth Alambo | Peju Thanni | Wendy Holiday | Nicole Mavin



Host Family Program

The Host Family Program continued to experience significant growth and success during the year, providing individuals with developmental disabilities the opportunity to live in welcoming family homes where they receive personalized support, create meaningful relationships, and enjoy opportunities to build full and inclusive lives within their communities.

PROGRAM GROWTH

The program expanded from **7 individuals with 7 Host Families** to **8 individuals with 7 Host Families**, reflecting growing trust in this model of community-based support.

Individual Milestones & Achievements

- Travelling independently by plane to Chattanooga to visit a lifelong friend
- Successfully obtaining a G2 driver's licence while continuing to enjoy regular visits with a young son
- Celebrating two years of employment with a local restaurant
- Graduating from high school and securing part-time employment following a successful co-op placement
- Remaining actively engaged in community recreation including regular swimming while planning another annual VIA Rail adventure across Canada
- Being accepted into Durham College's Child and Youth Care program
- Enjoying a three-week vacation to Jamaica and sharing the experience with family and friends
- Continuing to participate in community programs, spending time with family, and expressing pride and happiness with everyday life



These accomplishments reflect the power of individualized support, stable relationships, and the opportunities that come from living in an environment where people are encouraged to pursue their goals and interests.

The Host Family Manager continued to work closely with individuals and Host Families to provide ongoing guidance, planning, and support, ensuring that each person has the opportunity to make meaningful choices, develop new skills, and experience a rich and fulfilling life within their community.

Submitted By: Wendy Holliday, Manager

Supported Independent Living

The past year has been both busy and rewarding for the Supported Independent Living (SIL) Program. Our dedicated team of five full-time and two part-time staff currently supports 33 individuals, providing personalized services that promote independence and enhance quality of life.

Support extends beyond daily living tasks such as meal preparation, transportation to medical appointments, and developing independent living skills. Staff also play an important advocacy role by helping individuals navigate personal challenges, access funding and community resources, and secure housing supports when needed.

In addition to individualized support, the SIL Program remains committed to fostering a strong sense of community, inclusion, and belonging. Throughout the year, participants enjoyed a variety of recreational and social outings, including concerts, sporting events, boat cruises, art classes, and the annual SIL Christmas luncheon.

These activities provide opportunities to build friendships, develop social skills, explore new experiences, and increase confidence in community settings. They also encourage participants to stay active and engaged while creating lasting memories and meaningful connections. These shared experiences continue to be a highlight of the program and play an important role in supporting overall well-being and quality of life.



LETS GO BLUE JAYS!

Submitted By: Jennifer Smith, Manager

Forestview Treatment Home

This has been a year of meaningful progress and positive change at Forestview. We were pleased to welcome a new resident into one of our treatment beds, supporting them through a smooth and successful transition into their new home.

KEY MILESTONE

Completion of a major renovation that transformed our former boardroom into a fully soundproof apartment. This new space provides a comfortable, individualized living environment that better meets the unique needs of one of our residents while enhancing their privacy, independence, and quality of life.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication, compassion, and teamwork of our exceptional staff. Their commitment to providing high-quality, person-centred supports is evident every day through the care, professionalism, and respect they bring to their work. We also extend our thanks to the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS) for their ongoing support of this service.

Together, these achievements reflect Forestview's ongoing commitment to creating a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.



Submitted By: Jennine Jarvis, Manager

INTENSIVE SUPPORTS

The Intensive Supports Program provides individualized one-to-one support for people with complex needs, ensuring that each person receives services tailored to their unique goals, strengths, and circumstances. Throughout the year, the program supported five individuals across four locations, delivering person-directed care that promotes independence, choice, and community inclusion.



Staff work alongside each individual to build life skills, pursue personal goals, participate in meaningful activities, and develop connections within their communities. Every support plan is designed to reflect the person's interests and aspirations while responding to their evolving needs.

The past year has brought many successes, as individuals achieved important milestones and continued to build confidence and independence. At the same time, the program has navigated complex medical and support challenges. Throughout these experiences, staff have demonstrated exceptional compassion, patience, and professionalism, remaining steadfast in their commitment to providing high-quality, person-directed support.

Collaboration has continued to be a cornerstone of the program's success. Staff work closely with physicians, behaviour therapists, clinical specialists, families, guardians, and other community partners to ensure coordinated, responsive care that supports each individual to live as safely, independently, and meaningfully as possible.

The dedication of the Intensive Supports team continues to make a lasting difference in the lives of the people they support, helping each individual achieve greater stability, confidence, and quality of life.

PROGRAM SCOPE

Supporting **5 individuals** across **4 locations** with individualized one-to-one person-centred care throughout the year.

Submitted By: Managers

Jennifer Smith | Wendy Holliday | Jennine Jarvis



BY THE NUMBERS: 2025-2026

Measuring our community impact, program expansion, and the dedicated network of individuals who make our mission a reality.

103

BUSINESS
PRESENTATIONS

44

ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

50

STUDENT
PLACEMENTS

2,300+

WECANDLE PAID
WORK HOURS

38

FAMILY GROUP
MEMBERS

381

SUPPORTED
INDIVIDUALS

174

NUMBER OF
STAFF

19

SPIRIT OF SUMMER
YOUTH AT 2 LOCATIONS

143

PEOPLE SUPPORTED
THROUGH URGENT
RESPONSE

PROGRAM UPDATES & MILESTONES

Children's Services

The 2025–2026 fiscal year marked a historic milestone for Community Living Ajax Pickering and Whitby with the development of our first licensed children's residential program. Following discussions with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), the organization submitted a proposal to establish a new youth group home to address the growing need for specialized residential services for children and youth with complex support needs. We were pleased that the proposal was approved, allowing this important initiative to move forward.

Located in Whitby, the **Watersdown Youth Home** has been thoughtfully designed to provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for youth between the ages of 12 and 18. The home will accommodate four permanent residents, along with one dedicated respite and emergency placement, helping to ensure that youth and families have access to timely and responsive supports when they are needed most.

Considerable work was undertaken at the beginning of the year to prepare the home for operation. Extensive renovations were completed to create a comfortable, accessible, and therapeutic living environment. Policies, procedures, and program standards were developed to meet the requirements of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, while recruitment, staff training, community engagement, and operational planning ensured the organization is well positioned to deliver high-quality, person-centred supports.

The Watersdown Youth Home represents much more than the opening of a new residence. It reflects CLAPW's ongoing commitment to responding to emerging community needs and supporting children and youth with developmental disabilities and complex needs closer to home.

Submitted By: Allesha Ajodha, Manager



Volunteer Services

The 2025–2026 fiscal year was a year of continued growth, strong community engagement, and meaningful volunteer involvement. Volunteers and student placements made significant contributions across the organization, enriching the lives of the people we support while strengthening our connection with the broader community.

With 2026 designated as International Volunteer Year (IVY), we are especially proud to recognize the individuals who generously shared their time, talents, and compassion throughout the year. Their willingness to support others reflects the values of inclusion, belonging, and community that are central to our mission.

A total of 34 active volunteers participated in our Volunteer Services Program during the year. Volunteers complemented the work of our Direct Support Professionals by helping individuals become more engaged in their communities and by fostering meaningful relationships through shared experiences. Their presence provided additional opportunities for community participation while supporting our Strategic Plan to increase natural supports and strengthen community connections.

Volunteers contributed in many ways, including:

- Providing social interaction and companionship.
- Supporting intentional recreation and leisure activities.
- Assisting individuals to participate in community events and experiences.
- Helping to enhance quality of life by building meaningful, lasting relationships.



The impact of our volunteers extends far beyond the hours they contribute. Through their kindness, consistency, and willingness to be involved, they help create inclusive communities where people feel valued, connected, and supported.

STUDENT FIELD PLACEMENTS

Student learning remained a significant component of the Volunteer Services Program. During the year, 50 student field placements were successfully hosted across the organization.

Students represented a variety of post-secondary and secondary programs, including Developmental Services Worker (DSW), Social Service Worker (SSW), office administration, and other human service disciplines. Working alongside experienced staff, students gained valuable hands-on experience supporting people with developmental disabilities while developing the practical skills needed for their future careers.

Our Direct Support Professionals, supervisors, and managers provided mentorship, coaching, and day-to-day supervision, creating meaningful learning opportunities while ensuring high-quality supports for the individuals we serve. Several students demonstrated exceptional professionalism, compassion, and aptitude during their placements, resulting in successful employment opportunities with CLAPW following graduation.

One of the highlights of the year continued to be *Community on Campus*, an innovative partnership with Durham College that provides transitional-aged youth with the opportunity to experience college life alongside student mentors. Three field placement students participated in this initiative, supporting youth as they engaged in campus activities, developed independence, and explored post-secondary experiences in a welcoming and inclusive environment. The program continues to provide valuable learning experiences for both the students and the youth who participate. Individuals interested in learning more about the program can contact communityoncampus@clapw.org.

Interest in completing placements with CLAPW remained exceptionally strong throughout the year. Due to the high number of applications received, we were unfortunately unable to accommodate every request. While disappointing, this level of interest reflects the growing reputation of our organization as a respected learning environment and highlights increased community awareness of the important work being carried out across our services.

RECOGNITION AND LOOKING AHEAD

As we prepare to celebrate International Volunteer Year (2026), we look forward to recognizing the extraordinary contributions of our volunteers by sharing their stories and celebrating the impact they make on the lives of the people we support and within our community.

Building on this year's successes, priorities for 2026–2027 include:

- Continuing to expand student learning opportunities, including strengthening our partnership with the Durham District School Board through Co-operative Education placements.
- Strengthening volunteer recruitment and retention strategies.
- Increasing community awareness of volunteer opportunities at CLAPW.
- Continuing to build partnerships with educational institutions and community organizations.

The 2025–2026 year has been one of growth, collaboration, and meaningful participation. We extend our sincere appreciation to every volunteer and student who dedicated their time, energy, and enthusiasm to our organization. We also recognize the commitment of our staff, whose mentorship and guidance make these experiences successful. Finally, we would like to thank the individuals we support for the patience, kindness, and acceptance they show in welcoming new volunteers and students into their lives. Their openness creates the supportive environment that makes these meaningful connections possible.

Submitted By: Sharon Burgess, Volunteer Services

Employment Solutions

Employment Solutions continued to build strong relationships with employers, community partners, and job seekers throughout the year, creating meaningful pathways to employment and community inclusion.

Staff connected with 103 businesses and delivered 103 employer presentations, increasing awareness of supported employment services and strengthening partnerships within the community. Several individuals secured employment during the year, while others participated in interviews and employment opportunities with employers including Walmart Ajax and Vandermeer Nursery & Garden Centre.

The program continued its partnership with the Durham Catholic District School Board through Project SEARCH, providing participants with valuable workplace experience and skill development. Staff also supported Developmental Services Worker and Social Service Worker student placements, helping to build capacity within the sector.

Throughout the year, Employment Solutions maintained a strong presence at job fairs, employment conferences, markets, and networking events, while also providing monthly social opportunities, rights education, and employment-focused learning for participants. Ongoing professional development and collaboration with organizations such as the Whitby Chamber of Commerce and the Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN) helped strengthen community partnerships and keep staff informed of emerging trends.

Through continued employer engagement, community partnerships, and innovative programming, Employment Solutions remains committed to helping people with developmental disabilities build skills, secure meaningful employment, and fully participate in their communities.

Submitted By: Eric Smigielski, Employment Specialist

WeCandle

From April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026, *WeCandle*, funded in part by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, experienced a year of significant growth and impact. Ten artisans were employed during the year, collectively earning more than 2,300 paid work hours while developing skills in production, sales, customer service, inventory management, and community outreach.

Production continued to grow, with approximately 210 candle pours completed and strong sales both in person and through the launch of *WeCandle's* online store, allowing products to reach customers across Canada and the United States. The team participated in numerous community events, established retail partnerships, created custom corporate gifts, and experienced a record-breaking \$10,000 sales week.



WeCandle's innovative inclusive employment model received widespread recognition, including a nomination for the *2025 Non-Profit of the Year* by the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade and the Town of Ajax's *2025 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award*. The studio also welcomed visitors from across Ontario and internationally who came to learn about inclusive employment practices, while team members shared their experiences through presentations and workshops.

Beyond business success, *WeCandle* continued to create meaningful life-changing opportunities. During the year, artisans achieved important personal milestones, including securing supportive housing, obtaining seasonal employment, assuming community leadership roles, and building greater confidence and independence through meaningful paid work.

"WeCandle's innovative inclusive employment model received widespread recognition, including a nomination for the 2025 Non-Profit of the Year by the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade and the Town of Ajax's 2025 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award."

Submitted By: Siobhan Pearce, Employment Specialist

Transitional Aged Youth

The 2025–2026 fiscal year marked significant growth in Transitional Aged Youth services with the introduction of the NextGen program stream, expanding recreation, social, and transition planning opportunities for youth and young adults.



These initiatives supported participants in building independence, developing relationships, and preparing for adulthood through inclusive, community-based experiences and were highlighted in the agency strategic plan.

NextGen Fusion launched in October 2025 and quickly demonstrated strong demand for evening recreation opportunities. Fifty-one participants attended the weekly program between October and March, generating approximately \$2,400 in participant fees.

Spirit of Summer, funded in part by Canada Summer Jobs, continued to provide meaningful community-based summer experiences focused on recreation, social development, and inclusion. Nineteen participants attended the eight-week program, which generated \$16,245 in revenue. We extend our thanks to both the Town of Ajax and Town of Whitby, for free program space for this initiative.

The newly introduced *NextGen School Breaks* program provided recreation and skill-building opportunities during school closures, including March Break and four PA Day programs. Together, these initiatives generated \$2,200 in revenue and laid the foundation for future growth as awareness continues to increase among families and local schools.

Integrated Transitional Planning also expanded throughout the year. Partnerships were established with four schools, alongside continued collaboration with the Durham District School Board's *Project SEARCH* program. Staff worked closely with students, families, schools, and community partners to develop individualized transition plans focused on employment, community participation, education, and adult developmental services.

As we look ahead, the program will continue to strengthen partnerships, expand participation opportunities, and enhance transition planning supports to help more young people successfully navigate the transition to adult life.



Submitted By: Jesse Harkness, Transitional Aged Youth Navigation Specialist

Community Connections

The 2025–2026 fiscal year was one of growth and transformation as the Community Participation Program officially became *Community Connections*, reflecting a renewed focus on inclusion, community engagement, and person-directed supports. Throughout the year, the program continued to expand opportunities that promote independence, skill development, and meaningful participation in community life.

New Initiatives

Several new initiatives were introduced, including flexible early arrival and late pick-up options, along with *Ability in Action*, a personalized one-to-one support program designed to help participants achieve individual goals and build greater independence. The program launched with three participants and has demonstrated strong potential for future growth.

Community Connections also played a key role in the development of *WeCandle*, a social enterprise created in partnership with Community Living Ajax Pickering and Whitby and Participation House. The official launch in June 2025 marked an important milestone in creating meaningful employment opportunities for people supported. *Community Connections* also received a positive Ministry of Children Community and Social Services (MCCSS) compliance review, recognizing its alignment with the principles of [Journey to Belonging](#).

Community Partnerships

Volunteerism and community engagement remained central to program delivery. Participants contributed their time and talents through placements with organizations including Feed the Need Durham, Simcoe Hall Settlement House, Meals on Wheels, the Pickering Animal Shelter, Lynde House, and the Oshawa Zoo, while also participating in community initiatives such as McHappy Day, the Tim Hortons Smile Cookie Campaign, Salvation Army Christmas Kettles, and the Town of Ajax Community Clean-Up.



Recreation & Inclusion

Recreation continued to be an important part of the program, with participants enjoying a wide variety of community experiences including trips to the Toronto Zoo, Ripley's Aquarium, Niagara Falls, sporting events, camping, dances, and seasonal celebrations. Ongoing activities such as lawn bowling, curling, and cultural celebrations further promoted social inclusion, wellness, and community connection.

Despite challenges related to construction and flooding at the Dowty Road location, staff demonstrated exceptional flexibility and commitment, ensuring uninterrupted supports for participants. Preparations also began for the implementation of the new Xplor Recreation registration system, which will improve accessibility and enhance the registration experience for participants and families.

Looking ahead, Community Connections will continue to expand individualized supports, strengthen community partnerships, enhance volunteer opportunities, and create meaningful experiences that foster independence, belonging, and full participation in community life.

Submitted By: Shannon Goddard, Team Lead



ADVOCACY ALLIANCE



The Advocacy Alliance continued to be a strong voice for self-advocacy, leadership, and community inclusion throughout the 2025–2026 fiscal year. Members met regularly to discuss advocacy priorities, plan initiatives, and strengthen their leadership skills while promoting the rights and inclusion of people with developmental disabilities.

A significant milestone this year was the transition of Rights Training to self-advocate facilitators, empowering members to educate others about individual rights and self-advocacy. The group also strengthened its partnerships through joint meetings with the A-Team a group connect to Community Living Durham North, where members collaborated on advocacy initiatives including discussions on the Sunflower Program and the introduction of the upcoming Knowledge Exchange series.

Community Living Month provided several opportunities for advocacy and public awareness. Members participated in a meet-up with the A-Team, attended events at the Ontario Legislature, and hosted the annual Community Living Month Dance, celebrating inclusion and raising awareness within the broader community. The group also presented to the Community Living Ajax-Pickering and Whitby (CLAPW) Board of Directors, highlighting the important work and impact of the Advocacy Alliance.

Community engagement remained a priority throughout the year. Members volunteered at the Town of Ajax Pumpkin Giveaway and hosted several well-attended community events, including the Halloween Dance, Holiday Market, and Valentine's Dance. These events created opportunities for community participation while showcasing the leadership and organizational skills of self-advocates.



Social activities also played an important role in fostering friendships and building connections. Members participated in a variety of outings throughout the year, including movie nights, Playdium, the Peterborough Music Festival, a holiday dinner, and bowling, providing opportunities for recreation, relationship building, and community participation.

Looking ahead, the Advocacy Alliance will continue to strengthen self-advocacy, expand leadership opportunities, build community partnerships, and ensure that the voices of people with developmental disabilities continue to be heard and valued throughout our communities.

Submitted By: Crystal Greig & Meagan Heyes

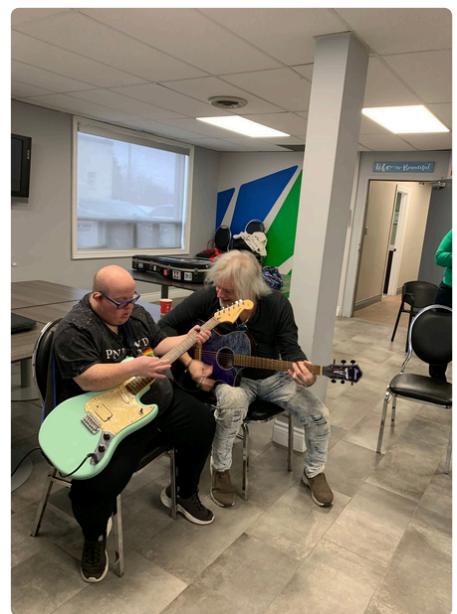
FAMILY AS PARTNERS GROUP

As we come to the end of a fiscal year, it's a good time to reflect on how our Families as Partners Group is doing. I am happy to report that we have expanded membership to 38 Families now. Those who attend our meetings find support and encouragement from its members. We started working on the Safe & Secure workbooks this past spring and hope to have them completed by the fall 2026. An important activity that each family should complete. We also had several great presenters during our 3rd year, and will continue to bring speakers who discuss subjects our families are interested in.

On February 21st we held our 3rd annual Free Family event which was well attended. Parent's and caregiver's experienced making candles with the guidance of *WeCandle* Employees and the Program Team Lead, which included taking a candle home. Our loved ones had a wonderful time playing musical instruments and singing along with musician Iain Anderson. We also had support staff available to provide any assistance needed. The day ended with pizza and refreshments. A great time was had by all!

I'm happy to be leading our Families as Partners Group going into our 4th year this September, and I hope we can continue to hear from families about their wants for their loved ones. I can be contacted by email, (sylvia.thornton@clapw.org) text or call my cell (416-543-8705).

Our meetings take place on the third Wednesday of every month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm. at Community Living Ajax-Pickering and Whitby head office at 36 Emperor Street in Ajax starting September 16th, 2026. Hope to see you there!



Submitted By: Sylvia Thornton, Board Member and Family Group Lead

PASSPORT PROGRAM

The Passport Program continued to grow throughout 2025/2026. During the year, we welcomed 25 new Passport participants, bringing the total number of individuals we were brokering passports for to 150 as of March 31, 2026. Our funding utilization rate reached 78.04%, slightly above the Central East regional average of 77.7%, reflecting our continued focus on helping people make the most of their Passport funding.

Passport funding has allowed individuals to make choices about the supports and experiences that matter most to them. Funding has been used to purchase technology, hobby and craft supplies, life skills training, social programs, and a variety of new experiences that have helped people build confidence, develop new skills, and become more independent. Individuals have also used their Passport funding to access support workers who assist them in participating in community activities, while many families have used the funding to access much-needed respite services.

KEY METRICS | 2025-2026 FISCAL YEAR

25

New Passport
Participants

150

Total Individuals Brokered
as of March 31, 2026

78.04%

Funding
Utilization Rate

Our partnership with RespiteNow has continued to benefit many individuals and families by helping them connect with qualified support workers. One participant recently shared that having support to navigate and utilize their Passport funding had "changed my life," adding that they did not know where they would be today without the assistance they received. Hearing stories like this reminds us why this work is so important.

As the program continues to grow, plans are underway to hire a part-time Passport Assistant. This additional capacity will allow us to onboard approximately 50 more Passport participants while continuing to help individuals maximize the use of their available funding.

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

The Passport Program partnered with Respite Now to connect participants with qualified respite workers, expanding access to flexible, community-based respite services across Durham Region.

"The support I received to navigate and utilize my Passport funding changed my life. I was able to try new things, connect with my community, and feel truly supported."

- Passport Program Participant

Submitted By: Janice Rainey-Turpin, Passport Coordinator

Respite Now

Community Living Ajax Pickering and Whitby (CLAPW) has continued to strengthen access to respite services through meaningful partnerships with other community organizations. Respite Now is a free online platform that connects families and individuals with qualified support workers who provide various types of assistance including personal care, mobility support, and independent living skills development.



Strengthening Access to Respite Services Through Community Partnerships

The platform serves as a vital bridge between families seeking respite support and qualified workers in the community. By offering a centralized, easy-to-use system, RespiteNow empowers families to find the right match for their unique needs while giving support workers the opportunity to connect with those who can benefit from their skills and experience.

2025-2026 FISCAL YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

39

Active Support Worker
Profiles in Durham Region

228

Total Registered Support
Workers Across the Network

183

Active Individual Profiles
(75 New Families Registered)

Respite Now continues to play a critical role in promoting independence, choice, and community-based support for individuals and families across the region. The platform ensures that families have access to flexible, person-centred respite options that align with their values and preferences, while fostering a growing network of dedicated support professionals.

Submitted By: Kaitie Scheuer, Passports Assistant



Urgent Response Annual Report

This year marked an exciting new chapter for the Durham Region Urgent Response Team with the successful transition of the program from Durham Mental Health Services to Community Living Ajax, Pickering and Whitby (CLAPW). Throughout the year, the team received 143 Urgent Response/Crisis referrals from Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) and successfully resolved 95 crises through rapid response, intensive case management, advocacy, and collaborative planning. As referrals became increasingly complex, the team supported individuals facing developmental disabilities alongside mental health concerns, housing instability, justice involvement, caregiver burnout, and significant behavioural challenges.

A highlight of the year was the outstanding support received from community partners during the program transition. Their willingness to share their expertise through onboarding presentations strengthened relationships, expanded the team's knowledge of available resources, and reinforced the collaborative approach that is essential when supporting individuals with complex needs.

The year also included many meaningful success stories. One individual was reunited with his mother and half-brother after more than 20 years, rebuilding natural supports at a critical time as his father's health declined. Another successfully transitioned from a privately funded outside paid resource into a funded residential placement through extensive collaboration between the Urgent Response Team, community partners, and the receiving agency. The team also supported a young pregnant woman who was at risk of homelessness following an irreparable family breakdown. Working closely with Durham Region Adult Protective Services, the team helped her secure a rent-geared-to-income townhouse where she and her newborn son are now living safely and independently.

These outcomes reflect the Urgent Response Team's commitment to not only resolving immediate crises but also helping individuals build safer, more stable, and sustainable futures through partnership, advocacy, and person-centred support.

Submitted By: Julie Sidler, Urgent Response Manager

STAFF SERVICE AWARDS



Sharon Burgess



Diana Staneslow



Eric
Smigielski

Leigh
Wright-
Letheren



Shannon
Goddard



Jessica Bennett
Karen Blackburn
Marie Smail
Maureen Welds
Peju Thanni
Teri Curtis

Jacquelyn Devine
Jennifer Smith
Michael Brown
Nicole Mavin
Yvette Salmon



Bunmi Babalola

Abby Smith
Adesuwa Nyamali
Alexandrea Dickison
Alfred Nyamali
Cassandra Robertson
Cheryl Fenner
Holly Crouter

Kazeem Toriola
Meagan Heyes
Mridula Das
Nicole Landells
Saoni Burnett
Stephanie Hallman
Tulsidai Balkarran



ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 20TH, 2026
6:00PM - 12:00AM

 **AJAX CONVENTION CENTRE
550 BECK CRESCENT, AJAX, ON**



**TICKETS AVAILABLE BY EMAIL
AT: INFO@CLAPW.ORG**

OR IN PERSON AT 36 EMPEROR ST., AJAX

TICKETS ON SALE UNTIL NOV 13

NO EXTENSIONS ON TICKET SALES

\$55 PER PERSON

(PAYABLE BY CASH, CHEQUE, OR ETRANSFER
TO NICOLE.LANDELLS@CLAPW.ORG)

DINNER AT 6:45PM

- **RAFFLE TABLES WITH FESTIVE PRIZES**
- **HOLIDAY TUNES AND DANCING**