



A B O U T F A C E®

ANNUAL
REPORT
2021



// See
**beyond
our faces,**
and see
everything
we are. //

Message from our Board Chair & Executive Director

Amid a year that continued to test all Canadians, AboutFace forged ahead with initiatives to advance support, equity, and inclusion for the facial difference community.

The pandemic provided immeasurable challenges but also an opportunity: thanks to a Resilient Communities Fund grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, we were able to undergo an extensive internal and external review process that resulted in a **bold new strategic plan** and refreshed mission, vision, and values. The new plan and mission better reflect the evolving societal landscape and the need to address facial differences as a gap in diversity and human rights policies.

Despite COVID, **we reached more than 1,500 people in 2021 – a six-fold increase since 2017!** Our program offerings also increased and included the launch of virtual offerings: Teens Connect and adult and parent Peer2Peer support programming. The success of online Trailblazers programs, coupled with consistent feedback from families, signalled that our move towards hybrid programming in partnership with other service providers will reach more children and youth and lead to better psychosocial and mental health outcomes.

Education and awareness took a big step forward with the addition of several new resource publications and the launch of the one-of-a-kind **Frankie and Pearl school program**. We issued a clear call to action in our **Beyond My Face campaign**, our most ambitious and successful to date, and lit up landmarks across Canada for **Craniofacial Acceptance Month**.

Our donors and funders enabled our continued resilience – quite simply, we grew in 2021 because our donors, staff, board, volunteers, and community of members and allies worked with us, invested in us, and believed in us. We are so grateful to all of you.

Together, in the year ahead and beyond, we will be drivers in the vital movement for equality for people with facial differences.



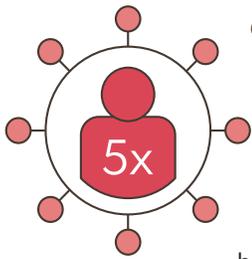
Danielle Griffin
Executive Director



Kariym Joachim
Board President
& Chairperson

Strategic Direction 2022-2024: Ensuring a Strong Future

Increase Reach

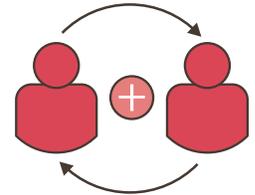


Create and execute programming to reach **5x** more people with facial differences across Canada, and other direct contacts impacted by facial differences, including family members and healthcare, dental care, and social service workers supporting the community directly.

- Continue consistent communications to grow our connections with community members and families.
- Build our referral network.
- Build and support volunteer engagement nationally.

Create More Direct Interactions

Develop programming that focuses on providing equitable opportunities to the facial difference community.

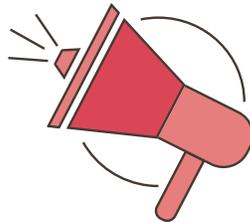


- Create and launch mental health programming.
- Build community networks and support systems through events.
- Advance employers' understanding of facial differences and educate employees with facial differences of their rights.
- Foster inclusive spaces through education and training of healthcare providers, teachers, social service workers, patients, and families.

Expand Advocacy

Advance awareness and advocacy work to improve and change public perception of people with facial differences, and remove barriers for people with facial differences.

- Continue general advocacy campaigns focused on rights of individuals with facial differences and building acceptance.
- Initiate targeted institutional advocacy.
- Expand advocacy work that addresses gaps in access to healthcare services, including mental health, dental, and orthodontic services.



Enhance Operational Resilience



Continue to strengthen the organization.

- Increase fundraising diversity and reach.
- Maintain at least four months of operating expenses.
- Continue to move from an operational board to a governance board.

VISION

The elimination of the stigma and discrimination encountered by individuals with a facial difference.

MISSION

To cultivate equity and opportunity for individuals with a facial difference through supportive programming, advocacy, and education.



VALUES

Acceptance | Through promoting and supporting the societal acceptance of facial differences, AboutFace advances inclusion, equity, and diversity initiatives that build safe and inclusive spaces for people with a facial difference.



Community | Community is at the core of our work. Through community-building and networking, AboutFace helps individuals with a facial difference and their families build connections, establish support systems, and foster understanding.



Empowerment. | AboutFace focuses on supporting the facial difference community in Canada by providing resources, programs and services, and awareness campaigns that empower.

Our Impact

AboutFace's evolutionary changes in 2021 brought our new strategic direction to life, charted our path forward, and strengthened our reach, presence, and impact. Among the highlights, we:

- **Reached new demographics**, building on community growth by connecting with children's hospitals, social workers, teachers, speech-language pathologists, and other healthcare practitioners across Canada. This included the launch of a regional Trailblazers pilot program, partnering with IWK Health Centre in Halifax to provide special programming for families who attend the clinics at the hospital.
- **Held webinars and panel discussions** focused on treating patients with a facial difference, trauma-informed care, and advocacy in the facial difference community. This work included lectures and discussions with the Canadian Society for Disability and Oral Health, George Brown College, University of Toronto, and McGill University's Student Craniofacial Interest Group.
- **Held virtual Trailblazers' sessions** throughout the year – from a Winter Carnival to March Break Camps, summer camps, and more. Our survey results showed that 100% of kids that attended our summer camp online felt more confident after the sessions!
- **Reached millions of people** through our Beyond My Face campaign and various media opportunities to discuss facial differences, address systemic barriers for the community, and advocate for acceptance and inclusion. We were featured on NPR, CTV Winnipeg, various CBC shows, and in regional online and print features.
- **Held two special "In Conversation" events** with Dr. Robert Strang, the Chief Medical Officer of Health for Nova Scotia, who was born with a cleft lip and gum, and Adam Bighill of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, who was born with a cleft lip and palate. These sessions can be viewed on our [YouTube page](#).
- **Trained eight peers** to provide support through our Peer2Peer program, from locations across Canada.
- **Enhanced the resources and publications page** on our website with new features like *Bullying – A Guide for Children with a Facial Difference*, *Dentistry and Trauma-Informed Care*, and *A Parent's Guide to Building Self-Esteem*. Resources and publications are available in English and French on our [website](#).

// I participated in every week of the virtual camps and loved them! //

Alec, Trailblazers participant

Program Highlight: Frankie and Pearl

We are so proud of “A Lesson from Frankie and Pearl”, our unique school program, that launched in 2021 to help foster inclusive and equitable classrooms.

From our years of working with children with facial differences, we know there is a need for education, awareness, and acceptance of facial differences in our schools. In collaboration with the facial difference community, teachers, and social workers, this program was created in both English and French to encourage schools and teachers to include facial differences as part of conversations and lessons about diversity and inclusion. The amazing cartoon at the heart of the Frankie and Pearl program is available on our [YouTube page](#).



“ As a facially different person, I find it so important that we see ourselves reflected accurately in media and entertainment. The most wonderful thing about Frankie and Pearl is its message that we are all just who we are. This means every one of us can see ourselves reflected in this animation. I am so grateful to take part in such a unique and revolutionary program that will impact youth in such a positive way. ”

Ani Spooner, video narrator

Our Volunteers

We are very grateful to our incredible team of volunteers. They are critical to the mission and success of AboutFace, championing acceptance and inclusion of the facial difference community.

AboutFace annually awards volunteers for their leadership and commitment. A sincere thanks to our 2021 recipients:

5 Years Recognition

Geena Promnitz,
Tiffany Lewis

10 Years Recognition

Amanda Adams

20 Years Recognition

Colleen Wheatley

Spirit Award

Christine De la Cruz

Community Ally Award

Raylene Delorey,
Kendra-Ann Nugent

Elisabeth Baugh Award

Tyler Neal

Post-Secondary Scholarships

AboutFace Post-Secondary Scholarships are unique in Canada, providing financial assistance to students with a facial difference.

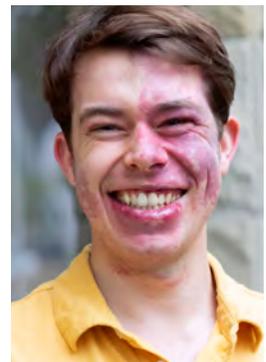
Congratulations to the 2021 scholarship recipients: **Meg Kuchma** is pursuing a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology and is planning to become a psychotherapist, with a specialty in working with the facial difference community. **Karlie Simon** is attending the Pre-Health Sciences Program towards her pursuit of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. **Liam Gale** has a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and is now studying Education on his path to a career in teaching or school psychology.



Meg Kuchma
Yorkville
University



Karlie Simon
St. Clair
College



Liam Gale
University
of Alberta

// There is a real need for therapists who understand and specialize in facial differences who can bring awareness and training to counsellors and medical professionals. The AboutFace scholarship is monumental because it brings me closer to my goal of helping others in their healing process. //

Meg Kuchma

Our Donors

AboutFace was able to reach new heights of success and impact in 2021 due to the generosity of our donors and supporters. Thank you for your commitment and support of our work!

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DONOR HIGHLIGHT

Over the last several years, the Move It Challenge, a virtual fundraising event led by dentists Tana Derrett and Stephanie van den Bosch, has raised vital funds for AboutFace's work. Last year the event raised **more than \$38,000!** We are grateful to the participants and teams who made Move It such a success.

// Everyone should feel accepted for who they are and supported by their community no matter their differences. As dentists, the face is where we work to promote health and wellbeing so I thought this would be a great partnership! //

Dr. Tana Derrett, DDS

Governance

Our Board of Directors is comprised of volunteers from across Canada who help advance AboutFace's mission through their guidance and support.

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to our past board directors who retired in 2021: Jennifer Little, Dan McMullen, Bobbi-Jean White, and Ilke van Hazel.

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Clinical Researcher, SickKids Hospital

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ANI SPOONER

Facial Difference Advocate

DR. MICHAEL TAYLOR

Orthodontist

ASHLEY WILKE

Director of Human Resources, Saskatchewan
Government and General Employees' Union (SGEU)

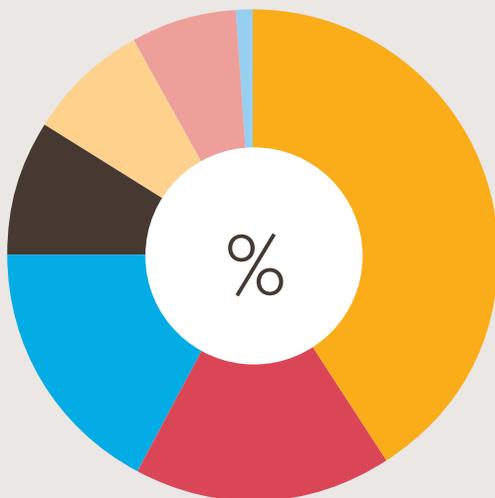
Financials

As AboutFace continued to navigate the pandemic, we focused on building strong programs and services, with our new vision and refreshed mission driving our work forward.

In 2021, funds were generated through the wonderful generosity of foundations, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, corporate and individual donors, Ontario's Break Open Ticket Program, special events, the Canada Summer Job Program from Employment and Social Development Canada, and the support of the federal government COVID-19 subsidies.

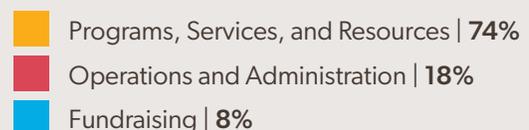
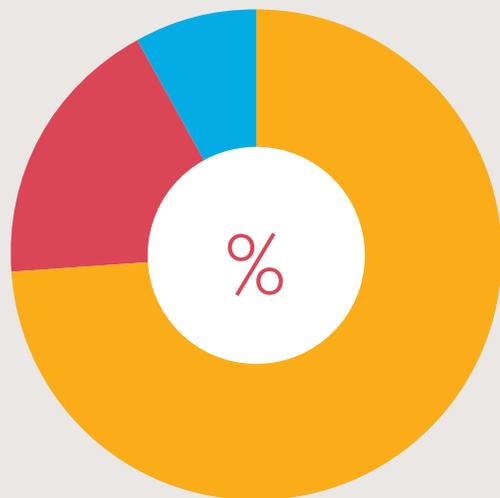
REVENUE

AboutFace's revenue for 2021: \$513,442



EXPENSES

AboutFace's expenses for 2021: \$480,627



For every dollar raised, 74 cents directly supported programs, services, and resources.



Visit [beyond
myface.com](https://www.beyondmyface.com)
and sign the
Beyond My
Face pledge.

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NIAGARA FALLS



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Lighting Up
in Support of
Craniofacial
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SCIENCE WORLD



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