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Back to school season is here and for BC kids with learning differences, this can mean returning to a classroom not tailored to their needs. The past two and a half years have intensified things: school closures, changes to curriculum, and at-home learning for larger portions of the school year have left many children we support scrambling to create a routine and learning-structure that works for them. We know the pandemic has had a major impact on the families we fund, reflected in the incredible twenty-five percent increase in grant applications we received this year. Requests went up for counselling to help children with disabilities cope, as well as for speech, occupational, and other therapy programs to help kids continue to build essential life skills. The biggest increase was in grants for tutoring and education, which more than doubled from pre-pandemic numbers.

Meet Darien



Darien, a twelve-year-old boy who lives with his mother Katherine, was the recipient of a tuition grant for a specialized education program. Darien has several learning differences that make it challenging for him to read, write and spell. School has historically been a very traumatic place for him as he struggled not only with keeping up with the curriculum, but also with extreme bullying by his peers. Katherine talks about how painful it was to watch her son struggle “his lack of confidence in the classroom really opened him up to be bullied. He was depressed, never wanted to go to school, and was too scared to sleep in his own bed.” For Darien, the opportunity to attend a school that can meet his needs goes far beyond learning the fundamentals; it also gives him confidence and self-worth as he builds important life-skills and relationships. Without assistance, Katherine would not be able to afford the type of education he is now able to receive. The costs of meeting Darien’s needs are overwhelming.

“I don’t live for myself - I can’t afford a bad day, says Katherine, “I need to work to make sure I can pay these bills and getting help from the Kids’ Fund has made me feel like someone cares, like I’m not alone.”

Katherine’s situation is not a unique; over 120 of the children we funded in 2021 came from single parent or single guardian households. As one of the largest individual funders for children with special needs in BC, we are a lifeline to parents who cannot afford a ‘bad day,’ and provide much needed support for their children. In the case of Darien, specialized care and one on one time with an instructor has made an enormous difference, and he is thriving. He is excelling at math and has gone from a kindergarten reading level to grade three. He is also making friends, excited to go to school, and is finally able to sleep on his own. Darien’s future is looking brighter.

Giving is easy. An ongoing monthly gift of \$20 ensures that we are able to respond to the dramatic increase of requests. Please consider becoming a monthly donor or make your annual gift today. As a thank you, make your gift by November 28th, 2022 and be entered to win a suite of new appliances donated by Trail Appliances.

Thank you for your generosity! So many BC children, like Darien need our assistance and this would not be possible without the incredible support of our loyal donor community.

With gratitude,

Sara Dubois-Phillips
Executive Director, CKNW Kids’ Fund

Wally Oppal
Board Chair, CKNW Kids’ Fund