



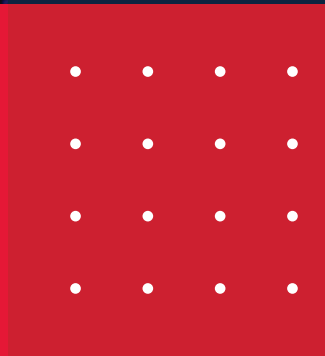
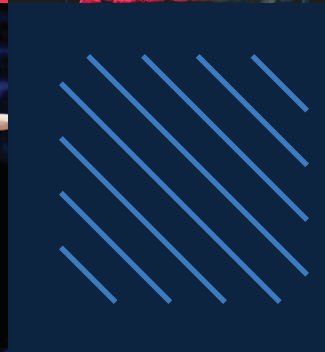
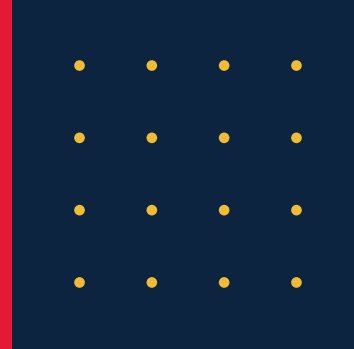
Easter Seals Newfoundland & Labrador

Gratitude Report 2024



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Our vision is for a community where all people with disabilities live full, healthy, and active lives. Our mission is to **engage, inspire, and maximize opportunities** for people with disabilities of all ages by providing meaningful programs and services.

Approximately 100,000 people of all ages in our province live with disabilities such as physical, sensory, cognitive or other disabilities which present barriers to full participation in society. It is our objective to tear down these barriers and build an inclusive Newfoundland and Labrador.





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Hi! My name is Andrew Woodrow.

My name is Andrew Woodrow, and I am the 2024 Easter Seals Ambassador for Newfoundland and Labrador.

They say time flies when you're having fun, and it has. It is hard to believe that the year has passed and, as I come to the end of my term as Easter Seals Ambassador, I am so honored to have had this opportunity. Being the ambassador is not only a lot of fun but has helped me grow as a person.

My favorite part of being the Easter Seals Ambassador was working with the media to spread awareness of Easter Seals and the exceptional programs that help so many people with disabilities. It has helped me become a more confident public speaker. This has helped me be successful with presentations in school, in debate club, and everyday life.

I've been involved with Easter Seals since I was 13 years old and the opportunities that I have been able to avail of are immeasurable. I've been involved with Wheelchair Basketball, Swimming, Overnight Camps, Camp Days, Family Days, and Socials, to name a few. Through Easter Seals, I was introduced to boccia - a paralympic sport that is like lawn bowling or curling that is played indoors. I love the game and have been able to travel to Quebec and Ontario to compete nationally. This year at the 2024 Canadian National Boccia Championships I won the prestigious Gilles Henry Spirit of the Game Award. I am also now a member of the 2025 Boccia Canada National Espoir Team and will be representing Canada in Brazil this March in the 2025 World Youth Boccia Championship. This is all thanks to the staff, volunteers, and participants at Easter Seals, who allowed me to learn how to play boccia and provided me with equipment and a fully accessible facility where I can practice.

Easter Seals is like that - the moment you walk in, your disability is left outside the door because the building, amphitheater, and park are fully accessible. The entire facility allows me to be independent and able to participate in anything I want to do. My Easter Seals friends and I get to live our best lives because we have a safe, inclusive place where we are free to enjoy life barrier-free - all made possible because of your generosity!

I have seen firsthand how much work the volunteers and staff put into these programs. The impact they have had on my life has inspired me to give back, and now I regularly volunteer, too. I have volunteered at Summer Day Camp, attended Youth Overnight Camp, and Junior Boccia every week. It makes me feel great that I get to help out with this amazing organization that means so much to me.

I'd like to thank the donors, staff, volunteers, participants, sponsors, government, and the community, for helping Easter Seals NL to succeed so that my Easter Seals friends and I can thrive. Your continued support allows people with disabilities to enjoy life to the fullest, regardless of their abilities.

Last but not least, I want to say a big thank you to Fraser Edison for funding the Fraser Edison Easter Seals Ambassador Trust (FEESAT). I am proud to say that I have been accepted into the Faculty of Engineering at Memorial University of Newfoundland for Fall 2025. This scholarship will help me achieve my goal of becoming a civil engineer so that one day I can create more inclusive spaces that will help even more people with physical disabilities live their best lives in the communities where they live. I am appreciative and grateful for your support.

Together, everyone who contributes to Easter Seals NL makes it possible for me to have experiences that would not be possible without your support. You have helped me take the 'dis' out of my disability, and I am truly grateful!

Sincerely,
Andrew Woodrow





To our community of supporters



What an incredible year it has been for Easter Seals Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2024, we were proud to welcome many new faces to our organization, through volunteers, staff, and participants. We successfully hosted another successful Luxury Cabin Lottery and welcomed back our most dynamic fundraising event, Snowarama, with proceeds directly supporting our vital programs and services. We also forged new partnerships with non profit organizations and businesses across the Island, strengthening our community and broadening our reach to people of all ages living with disabilities.

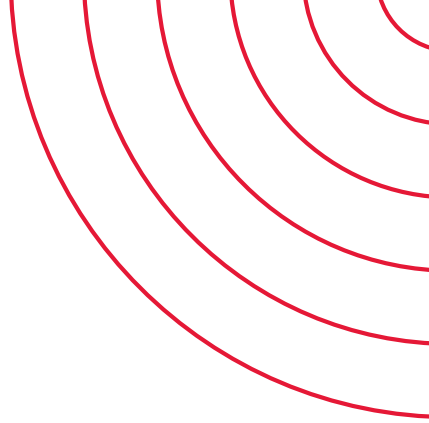
As we continue to make meaningful strides in our mission to engage, inspire, and maximize opportunities for people with disabilities in the province, **I want to extend my deepest gratitude** to everyone who supported our work in 2024. Whether through financial donations or in-kind contributions, we could not do this important work without you.

Through our 4th annual Gratitude Report, we celebrate the generosity of our donors, sponsors, and community champions. Your belief in the value of our mission, and your unwavering support, enables us to continue driving change to decrease barriers. Your commitment to inclusion and accessibility is making a lasting difference.

Thank you once again for your continued support. We hope you enjoy reading our 2024 Gratitude Report.

Sincerely,

Mark Bradbury, MBA, CPA, FCMA
Chief Executive Officer

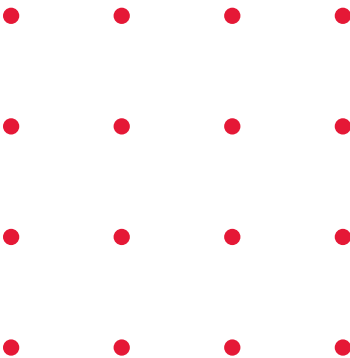


It has been another exciting and inspiring year for ESNL and as we reflect on all of the successes, smiles and inspiring stories from 2024, it is with immense gratitude that I take this opportunity on behalf of the Board of Directors to thank you—our dedicated community of donors, supporters, volunteers, and partners in this year’s Gratitude Report. Whether through your generous financial contributions, the time and energy you’ve devoted as volunteers, or your participation in one of our many successful events, each of you plays an integral role in the success of our programs and services.

Once again this year, we have seen firsthand the impact of your support which has contributed to more individuals than ever before accessing vital resources, services, and opportunities. From recreation programs to workforce development training and so much more, your contributions have allowed us to make a real difference in the lives of so many.

We are truly grateful for the generosity of this remarkable community, and together with your continued support, ESNL’s meaningful programs and services can continue to expand throughout our province, maximizing opportunities for persons with disabilities of all ages to live full, active and healthy lives. I encourage you to take some time to read the inspiring stories in this year’s report, learn more about our wonderful programs, and hear first-hand from our participants – the smiling faces on the following pages say it all!

With thanks,
Kelley Santos
 Board Chair





A Heartfelt Thank You

As we reflect on the incredible year that was 2024, our hearts are full of gratitude for the wonderful support we've received. On behalf of the entire Easter Seals Newfoundland and Labrador family—our dedicated staff, passionate Board of Directors, and caring volunteers—we want to extend our deepest thanks to our generous donors, loyal supporters, and cherished community partners. Whether your contribution was big or small, your kindness has made a meaningful difference in the lives of people with disabilities all across our province.

The stories shared in this report are a beautiful reminder of the profound impact of your support. They capture moments of joy, growth, and triumph that would not have been possible without your unwavering belief in our mission. You've helped create a ripple effect of positive change, and for that, we are truly grateful.

We are also deeply touched by the families and participants who have so lovingly shared their journeys, triumphs, and lessons with us. Your courage and resilience inspire us every day.

Thank you, for being such an essential part of our mission. Your support makes all the difference, and we are so grateful to walk this journey with you.

We hope you enjoy our 2024 Gratitude Report, and once again, thank you for helping us create a warmer, more inclusive future for everyone.



ENGAGE



Meet Rhea

Rhea, age 14 from Mount Pearl, doesn't let her visual impairment stop her. From Bocchia to Rock Climbing to Swimming to Dansability, Rhea does it all and we have Easter Seals NL to thank for that. Not only are the programs amazing but so are the incredible staff and volunteers. They are all so supportive and kind. Rhea also loves the Socials, Youth Camp, Christmas Party and of course, Celebrate the Season with Shanneyganock is always at the top of Rhea's bucket list. In 2018, Rhea's ophthalmologist told us, shortly after genetic testing provided a diagnosis of Noonan Syndrome (a unique genetic condition), that her vision was deteriorating rapidly with no explanation. There is no known direct link between the vision loss and her genetic condition, but both present challenges for Rhea. Each diagnosis created immense fear for her future.

Finding out about Easter Seals, through the CNIB, gave us a sense of relief. Knowing that Rhea would still have access to incredible opportunities was a blessing in a time of turmoil. Easter Seals encourages each participant to strive to achieve whatever they want while highlighting individual strengths. Easter Seals has been a big part of Rhea being able to try new activities, gaining new skills, increasing her confidence & encouraging her independence. Rhea has made so many wonderful friends through Easter Seals and we are so grateful to be a part of the Easter Seals community!



Meet Kaiden

Kaiden is an energetic, social and outgoing 14 year old from Bay Bulls. From the moment Kaiden made his way into this world he showed the world he was a fighter. The Janeway was his second home for his first years. With many appointments and stays; from NICU, illnesses and multiple surgeries. Kaiden was born with a cleft pallet and crainiosynotosis which came with an NG tube and a whole team of Doctors. Both his Cleft Pallet and Craniosynostosis were able to be successfully repaired. As major issues were slowly resolved it was more apparent that Kaiden had hearing and vision difficulties. Kaiden was found to be legally blind and have profound hearing loss.

With all this Kaiden has and continues to overcome roadblocks and surpass many expectations with confidence and determination. This confidence comes from the many groups Kaiden has been involved with. Easter Seals being one of those groups that embraces all ages allowing each person to be themselves. The support from the programs/events, staff, peers and families has offered opportunities for Kaiden that may have been otherwise missed.

One of Kaiden's favourite events is Celebrate the Season, where he was given the opportunity to shine on stage. There are no words for the confidence Kaiden walked off that stage with, Easter Seals is more than just a building or group. Easter Seals is a family, each program/event goes beyond the activity, you not only see but feel the impact Easter Seals has on each individual as they try something new for the first time, reach a goal or just meet someone new. Kaiden loves Easter Seals and can't wait to hopefully try out more programs and events this year.

"Easter Seals is Awesome"

Kaiden Benoit

Meet **Ava**

Ava Walsh is 22 years old and has been a participant of Easter Seals NL for the past 10 years. Ava has Down Syndrome which has cognitive as well as physical implications on her health. Ava required open heart surgery due to a congenital heart defect and chemotherapy for a type of leukaemia associated with Down Syndrome. Ava has overcome these challenges and continues to thrive. She is very active in the community and truly enjoys her recreational experiences.

Ava first started out with Easter Seals by attending Summer Day Camp. This was invaluable as there was no other inclusive option for her age group in the summer. Day Camp allowed her to participate in meaningful activities during the summer months when other more traditional youth day camps weren't appropriate and staying home would have been lonely and boring. She went on to attend overnight camp which was the very first time she stayed on her own away from her family! This was a huge learning experience for her and a big confidence boost. Ava would not have had that opportunity were it not for Easter Seals.

Ava currently participates in individual music lessons with Easter Seals and is learning to play the drums. This was a goal she set for herself and she received a drum set for Christmas so that she can practice at home! She played the drums for a packed house at the Easter Seals Christmas Concert. She also just picked up Target Shooting with Easter Seals and has excelled in that sport. She looks forward to attending every week and is very proud to bring home her targets to show us her success.

Easter Seals has provided Ava with programs to support her abilities and interests at various stages of her development. These opportunities improve her quality of life and help her learn new skills and provide meaningful social relationships. We are very thankful for all the programs that Easter Seals provides.



Meet Max

Max is a very social and happy 9-year-old boy. Days before his 4th birthday he was officially diagnosed with Autism. While navigating the many early intervention services that would now open up to Max, we were introduced to Easter Seals NL.

From the moment of our very first meeting with Easter Seals we were met with open arms, and acceptance. Max began attending Let's Get Active, and almost immediately the pandemic lock down began. Easter Seals provided ways for our family to stay busy and active together, even when lock down meant we could not attend in person. Despite the challenges of those early pandemic years, Max has flourished, and looks forward to attending Let's Get Active on Saturday mornings.

As Max has grown, so too has his participation in activities offered by Easter Seals. He has been a regular participant in swimming lessons, and has attended two weeks of Summer Day Camp each summer since starting school. Summer Day Camp allows Max to experience typical Summer Day Camp activities, in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Max loves the on-site playground, and playing games in the gym. Trunk or Treat, and the Family Christmas Party are highlights of Max's year.

Max began Music Therapy a few years ago, with the goal of attending individual music lessons in the community. When he was ready to graduate to "real" music lessons, Easter Seals was our first choice. Max has been learning piano in Individual Creative Expressions Music, and had his first ever performance at the 2024 Creative Expressions Music and Dance Showcase. The opportunity to perform was very special to Max, boosting his self-esteem, and confidence. As parents we could not be more proud of all he has accomplished.

From those early days, when Max was non-verbal, to a now very chatty 9-year-old, Easter Seals has been there every step of the way, offering programs that have been a very important part of Max's

social, emotional, and physical development. The staff and volunteers have been amazing, and Easter Seals truly feels like family. We are so grateful to the donors who support Easter Seals, and the important work that they do in our community.



Meet **Angela**

“ Our daughter, **Angela**, joined Easter Seals NL upon moving from Ottawa in 2022. While Angela was born in Ottawa, she has been raised in a traditional Newfoundland home, surrounded by music and laughter.

Angela was greatly influenced by her two brothers growing up, both of whom loved and played music. They taught her to play drums, sing, and perform confidently while having fun playing RockBand, always including her.

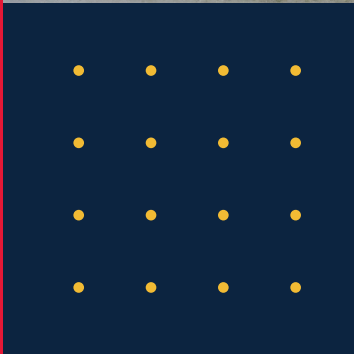
The trio (James, Jacob, and Angela), as Angela calls them, formed a band called “Knott so Bad.” The band played for several years at Angela’s elementary talent show, giving her an introduction to performing on stage. As Angela puts it, “I was born to perform.”

As parents, we want our children to be happy and successful, and to have the opportunity to shine. Easter Seals NL offered that opportunity, and for that, we are so thankful. We have a profound appreciation for all the life-changing work that Easter Seals NL provides to our community. Our experience was so inspiring that we hope others will have the same fulfilling experience.

When Angela heard she was chosen to perform with Shanneyganock in the annual Celebrate the Season fundraiser concert for Easter Seals, she was overjoyed. We were all so nervous at the outset, but as we witnessed how engaging and respectful Shanneyganock and the Easter Seals NL staff were to all the participants, our worries disappeared.

Angela felt so proud of her performance. Shanneyganock and the Easter Seals NL staff made her feel like a true star, which, of course, she is! We look forward to next year and encourage all members to participate in this great event.





INSPIRE



From Nervous to Nestled In: Our Family's First Camp Adventure



My family and I had the opportunity to join Easter Seals NL this summer and attend our first family camp. Both of my children are autistic and have limited verbal communication. I was initially apprehensive about attending, as they had no prior camping or sleep-away experience.

Thankfully, we decided to go, and it turned out to be an incredible experience! We immediately felt welcomed by the staff and other families. We were amazed by the amount of planning and attention to detail that went into organizing and facilitating the camp. Everyone we encountered was wonderful and accommodating, and there was no pressure for the children to participate in anything beyond what they felt comfortable doing.

Throughout the year, we have continued to engage with various events organized by Easter Seals NL, including the Summer Concert Series and the Family Easter Fun Day. All of these activities are extremely well organized and accessible for all ages and abilities. We feel comfortable participating, knowing that our children will be welcomed and included regardless of their disabilities.

We also regularly visit the Easter Seals NL Park and Playground. It's a lovely area for children of all ages to play in both summer and winter, and we appreciate its central location in the city, which makes it easily accessible for our family. We are grateful to have been connected with Easter Seals NL and have no doubt that it will continue to be an invaluable resource for us!

Written by: Naz Ogunyemi



In 2024...

119 participants and their families attended Easter Seals NL Camps.

In 2024...

76

new participants
registered with
Easter Seals NL

1261

registrations were
completed for
recreation programs
and social events

36

special events,
workshops and
socials were held

Building on a Growing Love for Music

Creative Expressions Music at Easter Seals has seen exciting developments in 2024. The program now offers expanded opportunities for musical creativity and expression to participants of all ages, abilities, and interests.

Initially, music sessions were offered as individual or group sessions. However, as the program grew, it became clear that we needed to expand our group music offerings. Joanna, a participant in Creative Expressions Music, shared, "Group music is important because I get to sing with my friends, and it makes me feel happy." Engaging in group singing has a transformative effect, fostering both musical skills and friendships. In the summer of 2024, we responded to this need by expanding our Group Music Program, and introducing four new offerings.

Music & Me

Music & Me is a group music session designed to create a fun, vibrant, and engaging environment. Participants, accompanied by their guardians and support workers, sing along to their favorite songs while exploring the many exciting aspects of musical expression.

Musically Motivated Youth Group

This new youth group provides an immersive environment where participants can explore a variety of musical instruments. Over multiple sessions, participants learn to play instruments in a supportive and encouraging setting, fostering collaboration and creativity.

Music & Movement Youth Group

Designed for participants who love to express themselves through movement, this energetic program allows participants to sing along, explore music, and move freely while playing their favorite instruments.



Easter Seals Choir

The possibilities and opportunities that music brings are endless. The summer of 2024 also marked the launch of the Easter Seals Choir. The power of group singing is contagious, and the choir provides participants with the opportunity to develop vocal skills, musical phrasing, and breath control. This addition has been a great success, offering exciting performance opportunities.

In December, the Easter Seals Choir performed at Celebrate the Season, our Music and Dance Showcase, as well as at the Avalon Mall, where they were invited to sing Christmas carols. Melissa, a choir participant, shared, “Singing in the choir feels good, is more personalized, and helps me learn more music.”

Music is universal and should be enjoyed by everyone. Ava, another participant in Creative Expressions Music, expressed that she loves “having fun in music” and always “enjoys herself.” We are thrilled about the continued growth of this wonderful program and look forward to even more musical moments in the future.

Written by: Elizabeth McNeil, Recreation Program Lead and Music Instructor



Music for Everyone



Lyla Burry is a 7-year-old girl who has Incontinentia Pigmenti, Cerebral Palsy, a visual impairment in one eye, mobility restrictions on one side, and is non-verbal. She became a member of Easter Seals Newfoundland and Labrador and registered for music lessons in September 2024.

Since then, I have watched Lyla overcome her disabilities through her music lessons—how incredible is that?

Lyla absolutely loves Miss Elizabeth, and it is a beautiful experience to watch them together in their music sessions. I don't know who enjoys it more—Lyla or Miss Elizabeth!

Attending the Music and Dance Showcase was an eye-opening experience for me. I was in awe of everything that goes on at Easter Seals NL, and it was a joy to witness the performances of both kids and adults at the concert. It was truly beautiful and heartwarming.

Miss Elizabeth told Lyla to practice over Christmas. When she wasn't too eager to play, I reminded her, "Remember what Miss Elizabeth told you," and, sure enough, she picked up her ukulele and started playing—how funny is that?

Everyone I have met at Easter Seals NL has been a positive experience. Thank you for everything you do. It has brought so much happiness to my family. It's the best dollar I have ever spent.

Written by: Arnold Burry

In 2024...

20
meaningful recreation programs offered to participants

47
hours of weekly programs were delivered

77
new volunteers assisted with programming





In 2011, **Claire** started Music Therapy at Easter Seals NL when she wasn't even two years old yet!

For our family, this was a new experience—meeting other families and children who were living similar lives, sharing experiences, and needing extra support while simply trying to find a place to belong and be included.

Fourteen years later, here we are. Claire now participates in seven programs weekly, including Boccia, Wall Climbing, Wheelchair Basketball, Target Shooting, Dansability, Creative Expression Music, and Sledge Hockey. These programs are designed with adaptive equipment to help her successfully take part and thrive—and is she ever thriving!

We watched our little girl go from a verbally limited toddler to a confident 15-year-old young lady who has found her voice and her confidence! Most recently, she performed in front of an audience at the 2024 Fall Dansability & Music and Dance Showcase and on stage at *Celebrate the Season!*

Claire lives with Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy, Autism, PTSD, and is also medically complex. Despite all of that, she loves to stay busy, laugh, and have fun. Having a place where she feels included, where her needs are met, where she can see her friends, and where she can take part in activities that would otherwise not be available to her means everything. She is so proud and happy to be part of this community.

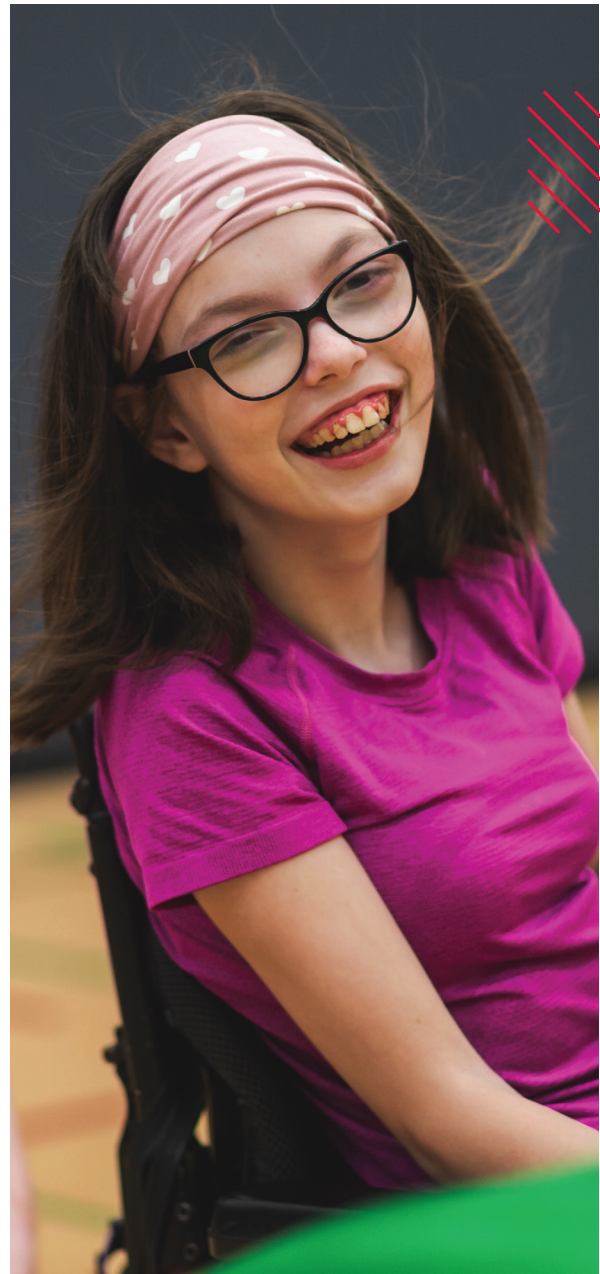
As a family, we look forward to summer family camps, fun family days, and any opportunity to connect with people who have become a valuable part of our lives.

When you ask Claire what she loves about Easter Seals NL, she'll say, *"You know, our building with my friends."*

Aside from the hospital, where we spend a lot of time, Easter Seals NL is the focal point of our lives—especially Claire's.

We are grateful for the opportunities and programs available through Easter Seals NL. We are thankful for the connections we have made and continue to make. Most importantly, we have watched our daughter grow into a strong, independent young woman, finding a place in a community where she truly belongs."

Written by: Jeanine & Barry McDonald



Making a Splash



“Swimming is one of Valerie’s favorite activities. It’s always the first thing she mentions when we plan her week, and she is always excited to go. Once she is in the water, Valerie enjoys the weightlessness, allowing her to move freely and easily. Swimming provides a whole-body workout that is especially beneficial for her as a wheelchair user. With assistance, she can stand in the water and strengthen her arms and legs, which she is unable to do otherwise.

Working with an Easter Seals NL volunteer one-on-one ensures Valerie’s safety in the water and allows for a personalized approach that focuses on her specific needs and goals. From learning to put her head underwater to floating and general water safety, the volunteer is there to make the experience fun and enjoyable.

Valerie loves connecting with the volunteers, getting to know them, and building trusting relationships, which enables us, as parents, to comfortably watch from the sidelines. The swimming program through Easter Seals NL makes it easy for our family to get Valerie the exercise she needs while also teaching her important water skills. This program has made a significant difference in Valerie’s life. We are grateful for the opportunity and appreciate all the effort that goes into organizing the sessions and recruiting volunteers.

A big thank you to Easter Seals NL and especially to all the volunteers who dedicate their Monday evenings to this program!

Written by: Katrin Zipperlen



From Ice Skates to Sledge Slates: How a Life on Ice Took a Cool New Turn!



I have been a figure skater my entire life and a figure skating coach for the past 17 years. Since I do not have immediate family living close by, a significant part of my social support comes from the figure skating community and the relationships I have built within that circle since moving to St. John's in 2002.

In May 2021, I was diagnosed with a Grade 2 Spinal Ependymoma, a tumor located within my spinal cord. My mobility rapidly declined, and following surgery, I found myself paralyzed. This experience turned my world upside down, and one of my biggest concerns was how I would continue to make a meaningful contribution to the skating world.

After extensive rehabilitation and ongoing physiotherapy, I began to regain my strength and was eager to return to the rink. Several people suggested that I try sledge skating. At first, I was unsure how to pursue this and hesitant to invest in my own sled without knowing if I would enjoy it. By coincidence, Dayna, an employee of Easter Seals who I had previously coached as a figure skater, was on a virtual seminar with me where the topic of accessing sleds came up. She informed me that Easter Seals NL had an Equipment Loan Program, allowing me to borrow a sled. Knowing this, I felt a renewed sense of hope about returning to the ice. Soon after, a member of Skate NL, our provincial skating organization, reached out to Dayna and the staff on my behalf, and I was promptly fitted for a sled. I began to adjust to it through my local skating club's programming and was able to return to coaching this season, all thanks to Easter Seals NL's Equipment Loan Program. Access to this equipment has truly been life-changing, and the benefits to my physical and mental health are immeasurable.

June 2024 marked my 40th birthday, and my husband, best friends, and family threw me a skating party—something I had wanted my entire

life. When I turned 36, I was uncertain if I would reach this milestone birthday, so being able to celebrate my stable health, the amazing community around me, and my passion for ice skating all at once was extremely emotional.

I want to express my gratitude to Easter Seals for making my life more rewarding than I ever thought possible as someone who is newly experiencing a disability. Access to the sledge through Easter Seals NL's Equipment Loan Program has provided me with the opportunity and purpose I needed while facing life's biggest challenges.

Written by: Lindsay Janes



In 2024...

72 equipment rentals happened through both our Equipment Loan Program and Linda's Equipment Crossing Program.

A Slam Dunk: Inclusion Dances Its Way to Center Court!



The Newfoundland Rogues approached Easter Seals NL with an exciting concept for a third-party event: **Inclusion Night**, where no one is left on the bench. After Samantha and Laura from the Easter Seals NL Fund Development and Communications Team brainstormed with Gabriela Medellin-Kenny, one of the Newfoundland Rogues owners, it became clear that this was the perfect opportunity to showcase the incredible talent of the Dansability group. The chance to let them shine on the court—where they truly belong—was too good to pass up.

During halftime, the **Dansability** group from Easter Seals NL took center court. Volunteers ensured the dancers felt comfortable and ready to perform. The music began, and the dancers—stepping or rolling to the beat—performed with joy and energy, led by **Leah Beaumaster, Board Director and Dansability Lead**.

“My name is Leah Beaumaster, and I am the lead for the Dansability program and a member of the Board of Directors with ESNL. I have had the privilege of teaching Easter Seals participants dance and watching them grow significantly in their confidence and performance skills. Our Dansability class was invited by the Rogues Basketball team to perform at Inclusion Night.

The participants were so excited for the opportunity to perform their dance moves in front of a larger audience and to sit courtside to watch the basketball game! There were some nerves initially among the participants when they saw the big stage, but their confidence shone through once they got out on the court. I could not have been prouder watching their personalities on full display while performing their routine with confidence. They were expressive, dancing their hearts out, and had so much fun.

From watching their initial rehearsals in the gym to then seeing them on the court was truly incredible. ESNL provides a safe place that fosters confidence and growth, and I am proud to witness this in every participant.”

Written by: Leah Beaumaster, Board Director and Dansability Lead

The performance concluded with cheers from parents, caregivers, loved ones, and Easter Seals NL staff. The dancers received thunderous applause, celebrating their incredible achievement.

“For the past couple of years, our son, Michael, and his Dansability group have participated in Inclusion Night with the Rogues Basketball team. They performed at halftime to an enthusiastic crowd!

Michael loves to perform! He amazes us with his memory of all the routines. He doesn't miss a beat! The confidence that he has gained from performing with his Dansability group makes us so proud. The smile on his face tells it all!

*They danced to Katy Perry's song Firework...
'Cause there's a spark in you,
You just gotta ignite the light
And let it shine”*

Written by: Susan & Kevin Lamond





MAXIMIZE

OPPORTUNITIES



In 2024...

63

people with disabilities across the province secured employment through our wage subsidy program

22

communities across the province have had employers who hired people with disabilities through the Opportunities Fund Program

10

years, Easter Seals NL has been acting as the Community Coordinator for the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities Program.

Plant Seeds Today for Tomorrow's Success

“

Living in Roddickton on the Great Northern Peninsula, I have seen quite several Indigenous youths come to our community through the foster system and the struggles that some of them have faced. Add a disability, and the barriers some of these youths face only increase. As an employer and an educator, I believe that if you can help provide an opportunity for someone to learn, grow, and better themselves, you should do so.

Brooklyn Kajuatsiak is a young man who finished high school with a school-leaving certificate. That means he did not have the skills to acquire credits like most students. To be employed, he would need a higher level of supervision and guidance and a job that fits his abilities. I knew I would need outside support to give Brooklyn a chance to succeed in employment. Enter Easter Seals NL and its Opportunities Fund Program.

To be honest, I wasn't aware of Easter Seals NL or their employment services. My wife purchased a ticket on the Luxury Cabin Lottery, so I thought I would contact them to see if they could help. I spoke to Easter Seals NL staff Paula Hayes and Rachel Warren who deliver Easter Seals NL's Opportunities Fund Program. Their support has allowed Brooklyn to gain meaningful employment and skills that will benefit him throughout his life.

Working alongside my Dad, Freeman Cull, Brooklyn gained experience in organic gardening and beekeeping! He developed skills to grow fruits and vegetables, make fertilizer out of kelp, maintain a garden, and assist a bee colony with 50,000 bees. Brooklyn's work ethic is outstanding. He tackles tasks with vigor, enthusiasm, and a smile. Brooklyn's chosen mom, his foster mom, Paula, witnessed Brooklyn's increased confidence, a love for going to work, and an excellent relationship between him and my Dad. With this new confidence, Brooklyn aspires to obtain his driver's license!



I just want to give a big bouquet to Easter Seals for their support of Brooklyn. He is a quality individual who just needed someone to advocate for him. I'm proud to have done so and incredibly appreciative of the support from Easter Seals' Opportunities Fund. Without them, none of this would have been possible.

Written by: Hollis Cull, Eagle Enterprises



Cashing in on New Knowledge

Building Financial Confidence

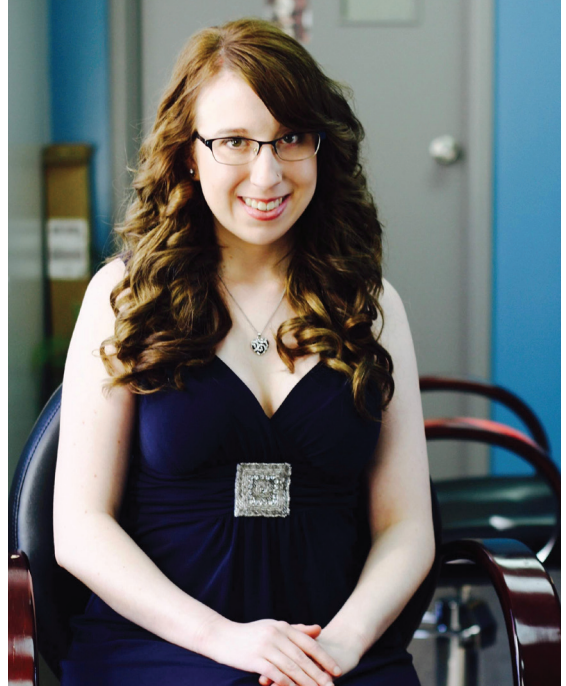
Our Secure Futures Program is designed to equip individuals with essential money management skills and set them up for long-term success. Anna has been a dedicated participant, attending several weeks of training. Her positive attitude and willingness to share her experiences have encouraged others to engage and learn more about their financial well-being.

"I enjoyed my time in the Easter Seals NL's Secure Futures Program. I made new friends and had a blast learning about money. Petra & Breanna are amazing, resourceful, and knowledgeable. I learned how to spend money wisely, keep track of my expenses, understand credit—its advantages, and disadvantages, and how to manage debt responsibly. Now that I have this knowledge, I feel more confident and independent with my finances."

Written by: Anna Hickey

It has been a pleasure having Anna in our program, and we are confident that she will put her newfound financial knowledge to great use in the future.

With support from TD Bank, Easter Seals NL can provide this unique program to participants like Anna. Thank you!



In 2024...

20

Participants spent **55 hours** in Financial literacy education

23

- caregivers participated in information sessions about disability-related financial planning
-
-
-

26

Individuals supported with one-on-one sessions

\$8000

in scholarships awarded to participants in post-secondary

Turning Passion Into a Career



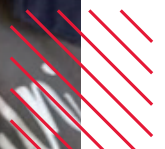
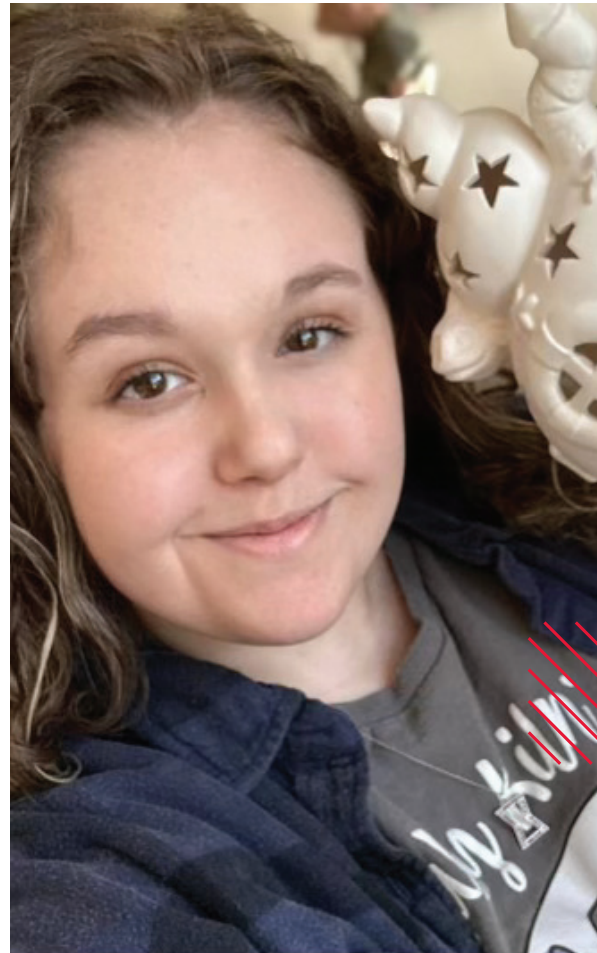
"We are thrilled to celebrate Caitlin Russell. Since joining the Clay Cafe team, Caitlin has excelled in her role, demonstrating remarkable growth and development. As a quick learner, she has swiftly grasped new tasks and responsibilities, showcasing her ability to adapt and thrive in a dynamic environment. Caitlin's attention to detail is unparalleled, ensuring that every aspect of her work meets our high standards. Her commitment to excellence has set a positive example for her colleagues and improved our operations. Caitlin brings positive vibes to the workplace, fostering a collaborative and enjoyable atmosphere for everyone."

Written by: Jamie McCabe, Owner, and Caitlin's Cheerleader

Caitlin's journey is a true testament to the power of aligning passion with purpose. With guidance and support from Easter Seals NL's Horizons Work Experience Program, Caitlin found a job that matches her skills and brings her immense joy. Caitlin expressed, "Taking part in the Horizons Work Experience Program has been an excellent experience. Easter Seals NL staff, Petra and Breanna helped me find a job that I truly love. They believed in me, and I succeeded. I will celebrate two years soon, it has been the best."

We are so proud of Caitlin's incredible journey and thrilled to see her thriving in a role she loves. Her dedication, creativity, and enthusiasm showcase what can be achieved with the right support and opportunities. We can't wait to see what Caitlin accomplishes next!

We are grateful to Service Canada and RBC for supporting our Horizons Work Experience Program, their support has been instrumental in fostering personal growth and empowering individuals like Caitlin to find meaningful employment.



In 2024...

200

Hours spent in employment skills training

18

Participants gained the skills, confidence, and opportunity to be successful in the workplace

14

Employers become a partner of Easter Seals NL



All in for Inclusion



We put off our first Inclusion Week here at Sheshatshiu Innu School in the 2024 school year. We had several opportunities to raise awareness about disabilities and the importance of inclusion, including Easter Seals NL's 'I Can Too!' Disability Awareness Program that Rachel Warren 'I Can Too!' Disability Education Coordinator graciously did for us virtually. The response from teachers was overwhelmingly positive! They talked about how involved and engaged their students were in the presentation, even though it was done virtually. The presentations opened discussions about disabilities. Students asked more questions about how people with disabilities do things differently and wanted to learn how they could change how they do things to be more inclusive of other students with disabilities. Education and understanding were the goals that were certainly achieved through 'I Can Too!'.

We look forward to our next inclusion week when Rachel will present to more of our students.

Written by: Katlyn Winters, Pervasive Needs Instructor at Sheshatshiu Innu School, Labrador

Easter Seals NL's 'I Can Too!' Disability Awareness Program was a beneficial part of our Inclusion Week at Sheshatshiu Innu School! Approximately 20 of my Grade 5 students participated in the virtual presentation with, Rachel Warren. The presentation was fun and engaging; specifically, the dolls used in the presentation were very informative. Rachel had all of my students actively participating during the session.

Written by: Simone Bennett, Grade 5 Teacher at Sheshatshiu Innu School, Labrador



Scan to listen to 'I Can Too!' testimonials from NL Schools students!



In 2024...

187

presentations were delivered to schools and community groups across the province

4879

students learned more about disability and inclusion in a fun, interactive way

41

different schools received the presentations, and 10 different community groups and camps!

Give The Gift Of Inclusion



At Easter Seals Newfoundland and Labrador, our vision is a community where people of all ages with disabilities can lead full, healthy, and active lives. Our mission is to engage, inspire, and maximize opportunities through meaningful programs and services for people with disabilities — many of which are featured in this report.

Your donation to Easter Seals NL helps us make a lasting impact, supporting over 1,000 participants and growing as we expand our reach and capacity.

With your generosity, we can continue to break down barriers and build a more inclusive future for all.

Your support makes a difference right here in our province — thank you for helping us create an inclusive tomorrow!

To give, please visit our website at www.eastersealsnl.ca/donate or mail in the slip below to:
Fund Development Department
Easter Seals Newfoundland and Labrador
206 Mount Scio Road
St. John's, NL
A1B 4L5



ONE TIME DONATION

YES! I would like to support Easter Seals Newfoundland and Labrador's programs and services for people with disabilities by making a donation of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 **Other \$** _____

Donations of \$15 or more received by December 31, 2025 will be sent a 2025 tax receipt.

- I have enclosed my cheque payable to: Easter Seals Newfoundland and Labrador
 Please charge my donation to my credit card: VISA MASTERCARD

Name: _____

Address: _____

Credit Card #: _____

Name On Card: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____ Phone: _____

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TF: 1.888.601.6767 | info@eastersealsnl.ca
www.eastersealsnl.ca

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You can change or cancel your contribution at any time, simply by contacting us at 1.709.754.1399.



Luxury CabinLottery

The 2024 Luxury Cabin Lottery: A Remarkable Success

The 2024 Luxury Cabin Lottery was a tremendous success, and we are incredibly grateful to all the Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who purchased tickets in support of our programs and services for people with disabilities across the province!

Thanks to your generosity, this lottery is making a real difference, enabling us to continue breaking down barriers and offering vital programs in an accessible and inclusive building, park, and playground.

A special thank you to our sponsors and partners for your unwavering support:

Blue Water Marine, www.bluewatermarine.ca

CAA, www.caa.ca

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Outdoor Pros, www.outdoorpros.ca

Post Media, www.postmedia.com

Steele Honda, www.steelehonda.com

Stingray, www.stingray.com

Saltwire, www.saltwire.com/newfoundland-labrador

Our Cabin Lottery will be launching in **May 2025!** To stay up-to-date about announcements, please visit www.cabinlottery.ca and subscribe to our newsletter.



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709.754.1399

If you would like to tell your story about how Easter Seals NL has impacted you, please contact our Fund Development and Communications Manager, Samantha Parrell, at samantha@eastersealsnl.ca.

Follow us on social media @[EasterSealsNL](https://www.instagram.com/EasterSealsNL)