



2004-2005 Annual Report

Autism Society Canada (ASC)

is a national incorporated non-profit charitable organization. It was founded in 1976 by a group of parents committed to advocacy, public education, information and referral, and support for its regional societies.

ASC is a federation of Canada-wide provincial and territorial autism societies or their equivalent. By linking its member societies across the country, ASC represents the largest collective voice of the autism community in Canada. The provincial and territorial autism societies and their member groups in each region provide direct support to people with ASDs and their families.

ASC's Goals

- Increase awareness and understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorders and the participation of individuals with ASDs as members of their community.
- Promote federal policies, programs, and legislation that respond to the needs of the Autism community.
- Promote evidence-based services/treatment, best practices and standards.
- Promote intervention research that will provide individuals with ASDs and their families with practical support.

Programs & Services

- Public awareness, education and referral.
- Promotion of increased participation of individuals with ASDs.

- Promotion of federal policies, programs, and legislation that respond to the needs of the Autism community, including a national autism strategy.
- Promotion of evidence-based services/treatment, best practices and standards.
- Promotion of increased tax credits for disability.
- Liaising with partner organizations on behalf of persons affected by ASDs.

Our Vision

That people with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) achieve their individual potential and that they and their families have universal access to the resources they require.

President's Report

This has been a year of important growth and development at Autism Society Canada. During 2004-2005 ASC made excellent progress in increasing its capacity in four main areas: governance, policy and program development, community outreach and administration and management. In turn, our ability to promote awareness and to champion the national priorities facing the ASD community has been greatly enhanced. Our organization has been able to weather a number of external pressures while undergoing significant internal change and growth.

I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution made by ASC's

out-going president, Lisa Simmermon. Lisa has played a key role in helping Autism Society Canada take its place as a national health charity.

This year saw numerous meetings, briefings and collaborations with our federal government partners and with our community network:

White Paper Distribution

ASC did a wide distribution of our *White Paper* entitled: **Canadian Autism Research Agenda and Canadian Autism Strategy**. Our *White Paper* identified key areas for research and a strategy to address the present autism situation in Canada. All federal members of Parliament received the White Paper and many have expressed interest in knowing more about autism and more about what needs to be done to ensure that people affected by ASDs have access to the care and supports they need.

Government Relations

As a follow up to the release of the *White Paper* ASC organized an information session for MPs and Senators on November 23, 2004. Member of Parliament (MP) Steven Fletcher kindly agreed to act as our sponsor. Information on the availability of publicly funded autism treatment and services in Canada was also distributed. This session proved to be an effective strategy for building awareness of ASD issues among policy makers and for situating ASC as a primary resource on these concerns.

Community Networking and Development

Through our membership in CAMIMH (Canadian Alliance of Mental Illness

and Mental Health), and our participation as a supporter of CCFSP (Canadian Coalition for Family Supportive Policy), ASC continues to communicate with policy makers on issues of importance to the autism community. Both CAMIMH and CCFSP promote actions that contribute to the development of a supportive environment for people affected by ASD.



Strategic Planning

The 2004-2005 year wrapped up on a high note. The Board of Directors of Autism Society Canada held a strategic planning workshop in Ottawa on March 13-14, 2005. This session helped ASC to develop a refreshed understanding of its core purpose and to identify a set of priorities to provide strategic direction for ASC over the next 3 years. At this meeting ASC revised and refined its Vision, Mission Statement and Goals.

Legal Actions

ASC was granted Intervener Status at the Supreme Court of Canada in the Auton case and on June 9th, 2004 we presented our factum and argument (through our lawyers) to the Court. As a national umbrella organization, ASC brought a national perspective on the situation of availability and access to scientifically validated treatment across Canada and on the need for non-discriminatory criteria to determine provision of services to children and adults with ASD. In response to the courts' decision, ASC posted a press release expressing our continued support of actions to ensure universally accessible treatment opportunities for people of all ages with ASD. As of 2005, about 1,600 Canadian families are still engaged in various autism-related legal actions.

In closing, I would like to thank ASCs' Board of Directors for their hard work this year on behalf of the autism community.

Peter Zwack, President

2005 Board of Directors

Peter Zwack, Director and President

Jo-Lynn Fenton, Director and First Vice-President

Sandra Weizman, Director and Second Vice-President

Nancy Adams, CA, Director and Treasurer

Mary Fox, Director and Secretary

Christine Dade, Director

Lynn Elkin, Director

Brigitte Harrisson, Director

Kristian Hooker, Director

Michael Lewis, Director

Elizabeth Oliver, Director

Luigi Rocca, Director

Lisa Simmermon, Director

Report of the Executive Director

This has been an exciting and busy year for ASC. In 2004 ASC finalized its office relocation to Ottawa. This move has increased our ability to collaborate with national peer organizations and to develop relationships with policy makers, government advisers and the media. Operational efficiency has increased greatly this year and our

effectiveness as a national organization is more and more evident.

ASC's bilingual capacity is widening. ASC has taken steps to increase our ability to provide information and support to individuals and organizations both orally and in written form in both official languages through recruitment of bilingual resources.

Awareness, Education and Referral

Providing information and general referrals to the public regarding all aspects of ASDs continued to be an integral part of our day-to-day work in 2004-2005. ASC is frequently the first point of contact for many affected families and this year we continued to provide pro-active family support and referral. ASC receives hundreds of requests for information through our website and our toll-free phone line. As a result, in part, of our increased activities, ASC has had a significant increase in the number of inquiries from international and Canadian individuals and organizations seeking either specific or general information pertaining to autism issues in Canada.

The need to update and modernize our website, which is ASC's store front was identified and the new content and design are nearing completion. Extensive Board review of the new site content has also provided an important forum to review ASC's policies.

A Media Resource

National, regional and local media frequently turn to ASC to obtain national autism information. Recent examples include CBC News, the Globe & Mail, CTV News and Parent's Magazine.

*Louise Fleming,
Executive Director*

Standing Committee Report: Membership

Working Toward Inclusivity

There have been several major developments in 2004-2005 related to



Autism Society Canada
Société canadienne de l'autisme

the structure of governance of Autism Society Canada (ASC) and its membership development. These changes have helped create a redefinition of ASC, one that is more inclusive and responsive to the valuable feedback of individuals with ASDs. ASC has taken concrete steps to increase the representation of persons with ASDs on its Board and in its day-to-day work. This will greatly assist ASC to achieve its stated mission: to work with our partners to address the national priorities facing the autism community.

At its Annual General Meeting held April 24-25, 2004 in Ottawa, the Board of Directors decided to appoint a person with an ASD to the Board. In addition, one of ASC's member organizations appointed a person with an ASD as its representative to the Board. Representation by people with ASDs on the Board has already benefited the organization significantly by broadening our perspective and increasing our awareness.

ASC Advisory Committee of People with ASDs

A major initiative of 2004-2005 has been the creation of an ASC Advisory Committee of people with ASDs. Provincial and territorial Autism Societies nominated members to this committee and at present there are seven members. With the assistance of Dr. Kevin Stoddart, who has been working with the committee since its inception, this committee will begin its work in earnest in 2005-2006.

Standing Committee Report: Scientific Issues and Public Awareness

Website Development

It is through the provision of information and referral via our website that ASC meets the first goal of our organization: to increase awareness and understanding of ASDs and participation of individuals with ASDs.

Over the last year, we have focused a large part of our resources to update, modernize and make accessible a new and very comprehensive website.

The new site will provide up-to-date information on ASDs and over 400 resource and referral links and will support persons with ASDs and families in making decisions related to the many facets of life for which they require information and referral. The site is intended to serve: persons with ASDs and other developmental disabilities, caregivers, parents, and other family members across Canada as well as healthcare professionals, researchers, clinicians, educators, policymakers and government officials.

Progress on the extensive research and Board review necessary to develop this national online resource and on the technical development of the site has been steady and ASC expects to officially launch the new site in July, 2005. The website development plan includes a full version of the site in French, to be made available in the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

In addition to work on the new website, the SIPA Committee also developed the Terms of Reference for ASC's new Advisory Committee this year, as well as ASC's first official Code of Conduct.



Looking Ahead

Fundraising

2005-2006 promises to be an ambitious year for Autism Society Canada as we continue to build on the successful projects initiated this past year. A newly

created Fundraising Committee was set up at the AGM in November, 2004. Raising funds to meet the demands being placed on the organization, to support ASC's growing programming and to meet our current commitments and priorities will be key in the years ahead.

Website in French

Development of our new website in French will ensure that French-language Canadians have the opportunity to access national information about autism in their mother tongue: at present, there are no pan-Canadian French-language websites available. ASC hopes to secure funding for translation services and web development of a dedicated French language ASC website.

Continued Development of Website Content

ASC's Advisory Committee of Adults with ASDs will play a key role in proposing and reviewing additional content for our site and in developing resources for consumers. This new information will assist people with ASDs in their efforts to find supports that they need to be fully included in Canadian society. Our intention is to expand the new site with respect to: equality and human rights issues; citizenship, employment; learning, disability supports, caregiving and inclusive communities for persons with ASDs. These new resources will provide accessible information and referral in many: transition planning; vocational opportunities; post-secondary education accommodations and supports; technical supports; living accommodations and financial services; issues of discrimination; understanding diagnosis; dealing with labels, social isolation; sexuality; mental health for adults with ASDs; young adult social issues; a resource section for children and youth with ASDs and their siblings; and downloadable resources for parents and other caregivers.



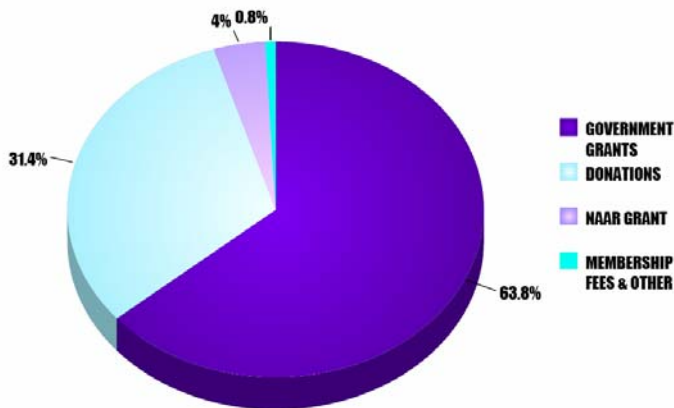
Treasurer's Report

Because of its small size and limited financial resources, ASC manages its finances carefully. All spending activities are planned and prioritized through the budget process and carefully monitored throughout the year. Such exercise of good financial stewardship is reflected in the audited financial statements, (available on request) which show positive cash positions at March 31st, 2004 and 2005.

*Nancy Adams, CA,
Treasurer*

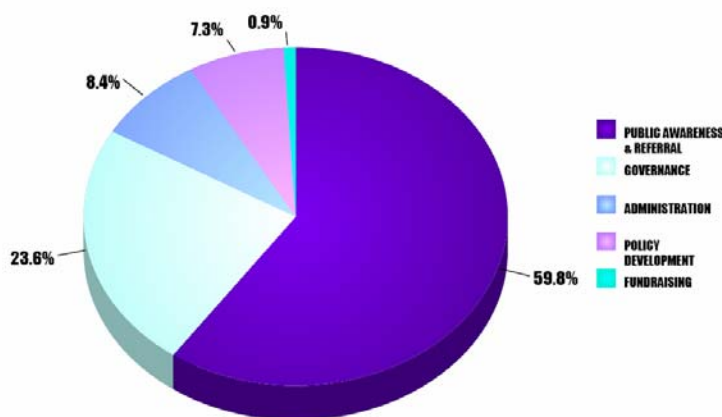
Financial Highlights Year ended March 31, 2005

Funds Available



Total: \$250,365

Expenditures



Total: \$248,305

Our Supporters

The work of ASC is made possible by grants from the Office for Disability Issues at Social Development Canada (SDC). Thanks also to National Alliance for Autism Research for their support in 2004-2005.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the following corporations and foundations for their contributions in support of Canadians with Autism Spectrum Disorders. ASC's activities would not be possible without their support.

Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP
Shoppers Drug Mart
The Frank Cowan Foundation
Gillette Canada
EECOL Electric (SASK.) Inc.
Extendicare, Inc.

The Cooperators Insurance/Financial Services
PPG Canada
REEL Impact Communications
National Life
Kodak Employee Chest, Toronto
INCO Ltd.
CHUM Charitable Foundation
Maritime Life
Shawcor Energy Services
SC Johnson & Son, Ltd.
Four Seasons Hotel Toronto
Rejean Guindon Construction Corp.

Many thanks also to our private donors for their generous donations and bequests during the 2004-2005 year.



ASC Member Societies

Autism Society of British Columbia

#301 3701 E. Hastings
Burnaby, British Columbia
V5C 2H6
T: (888) 437-0880 F: (604) 434-0801
E-mail: info@autismbc.ca
Website: www.autismbc.ca

Autism Society Alberta

Suite 101 - 11720 Kingsway Ave.
Edmonton, Alberta
T5G 0X5
T: (780) 453-3971 F: (780) 447-4948
E-mail: sherry.miller@shaw.ca
Website:
www.edmontonautismsociety.org

SASKFeat

Box 2545
Tisdale, Saskatchewan
S0E 1T0
T: (306) 862-4768 F: (306) 862-3899
E-mail: saskfeat@hotmail.com
Website: <http://www.saskfeat.com>

Autism Society Manitoba

825 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3A 1M5
T: (204) 783-9563
F: (204) 975-3027
E-mail: asm1@mts.net
Website:
<http://www.autismmanitoba.com>

Autism Society Ontario

1179A King Street West, Suite 004
Toronto, Ontario
M6K 3C5
T: (416) 246-9592 F: (416) 246-9417
E-mail: mail@autismsociety.on.ca
Website: www.autismsociety.on.ca

Fédération québécoise de l'autisme et des autres troubles envahissants du développement

65 rue de Castelnau Ouest, Local 104
Montréal, QC
H2R 2W3
T: (514) 270-7386 F: (514) 270-9261
E-mail: fqa@contact.net
Website: www.autisme.qc.ca

Autism Society of New Brunswick

P. O. Box 1493, Station A
Fredericton, New Brunswick
E3B 5G2
T: 1-866-773-1916
E-mail: autism_nb@yahoo.com
Website: www.autismnb.org/

Autism Society Nova Scotia

Vicki Harvey, Executive Director
1456 Brenton Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 2K7
T: (902) 429-5529 F: (902) 446-4997
E-mail: society@autismcentre.ns.ca
Website:
<http://www.autismsocietynovascotia.ca>

Autism Society P.E.I.

1078 Avondale Road
Avondale, Prince Edward Island
C0A 2E0
T: (902) 651-2661 F: (902) 962-3332
E-mail: Douse@pei.sympatico.ca
Website: www.peair.com/autism

Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador

44 Torbay Road, Nuport Building
St. John's, Newfoundland
A1A 2G4
T: (709) 722-2803 F: (709) 722-4926
E-mail: info@autismsociety.nf.net
Website: www.autism.nf.net

Autism Northwest Territories

4904 Matonabee St
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
X1A 1X8
T: (867) 920-4206
F: (867) 873-0235
E-mail: autism@hotmail.com

Yukon

No society at this time.

Nunavut

No society at this time.

For more information, please contact:

Louise Fleming, Executive Director
E-mail:
louise@autismsocietycanada.ca
info@autismsocietycanada.ca
Box 22017, 1670 Heron Rd.,
Ottawa ON
K1V 0C2
T 613-789-8943
F 613-789-6985
Website:
<http://www.autismsocietycanada.ca>



Autism Society Canada
Société canadienne de l'autisme