



AUTISM
HOME
BASE

IMPACT

ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2025



A LIVED-EXPERIENCE
PERSPECTIVE



An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

JOSEPH LEBOVIC
AND WOLF LEBOVIC
CHARITABLE
FOUNDATIONS

EDMOND AND SYLVIA
VANHAVERBEKE
FOUNDATION



2025 Year in Review

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Wow, what a year! Inspired and emboldened by transformative gifts from Tribute Communities, the Wolf and Joseph Lebovic family foundations, and the Edmond and Sylvia Vanhaverbeke Foundation, as well as a 3-year project grant from Ontario Trillium Foundation, 2025 was a year of significant growth and forward thinking.

Historically, our reliance on donations and short term project grants has kept Autism Home Base (AHB) in perpetual 'start up' mode, unable to confidently forecast sustainability. We continue to work to diversify and stabilize revenue with predictable streams through multi-year pledges, and volunteer-driven initiatives such as monthly Bingos, as well as the Polar Swim and Family Walk/Run events. These, alongside our annual World Autism Day and Charity Golf Tournament fundraisers augment individual giving, corporate support and especially an annual grant we receive from lead partner and long-time supporter, the Unity for Autism foundation.

Although AHB has proven our efficacy through member testimonials, research reports and financial growth, we have not yet been successful in securing core operational funding from the provincial government. Such critical funding would ensure our stability by offsetting organizational capacity costs such as HR, fundraising, rent, insurance, bookkeeping and audit. This gap stymies our growth and effectiveness.

The Board's Futures Committee began to look for a property as a second site to our drop in and program site, that could better serve unique needs and goals of our members

Over the past 3 years we had received specific donor gifts that were designated for capital investment.

In August 2025, we purchased a raised bungalow at 23 Scugog St. in Bowmanville, walking distance from our Hub on Church St.

As an alternative to a mortgage, AHB issued a Community Bond to finance the purchase and renovation of the building. The bond sold out in ten days, demonstrating strong support for our mission, and trust in our governance and management.

We renovated to add teaching kitchens and laundry on the main floor, with a Board room and low-sensory meeting space in the lower level. Renovations began immediately with the new Studio set to open in early January 2026.

With an operating revenue of \$794,000 this year, up from \$620,000 in F2024, our record of growth continues. The Board of Directors recognizes the extraordinary fundraising efforts of staff as well as prudent spending management.

We remain a charity at our roots, squeezing every penny from donations. The significant increase in total assets due to the purchase of real estate strengthens our capacity and viability. We are grateful to the donors, sponsors, Community Bond investors and the 90 volunteers who fuel our service delivery.

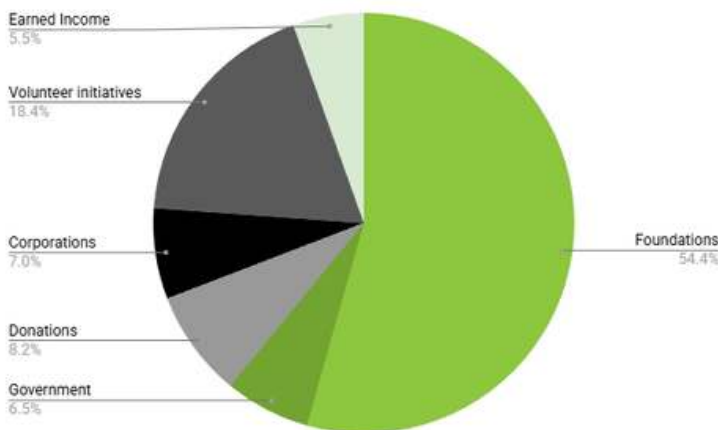
Thank you for caring about families like ours.

Board of Directors

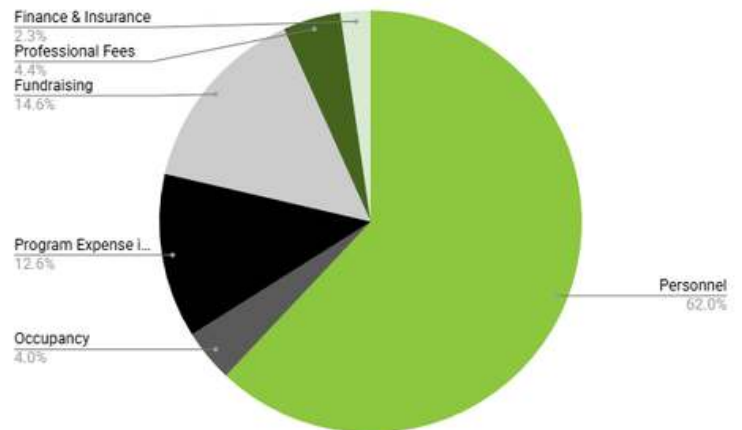
Lynne Lyon, President
 Brendan Hill, Vice President
 Brenna Bizley, Treasurer
 Sheryl Hunter, Secretary
 Kat Bercuson, Director
 Erin Bibby, Director
 Gordon Humphrey, Director
 Adriana Micanovic, Director

Fiscal Year Ending October 31, 2025

REVENUE \$793,658



EXPENSES \$794,062



Audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending Oct 31st, 2025 are available following the Annual Members' Meeting held virtually at 6:30 pm on Thurs. March 5th

Our Lived-Experience Autism Perspective (LEAP)



Autism Home Base (AHB) exists to remedy the social isolation experienced by Autistic adults as well as their lifelong family caregivers. AHB offers a welcoming social connection space, recreational programming, and life learning options for members with unique interests as well as unique support needs.

We value the decades of experience Autistic individuals and those who support them have compiled through their lives. Theirs are the human stories that lead to understanding, acceptance and appreciation of autism. AHB builds bridges to inclusion and appreciation by sharing those voices of real life experiences.



Our unique LEAP trainings are offered to government, business and community service providers in-person or via e-learning.

At our World Autism Day event in April 2025, we were thrilled to screen a film conceived and directed by a former summer student. The film, *Outliers*, shares the touching and authentic stories of three AHB member families.



Outliers

A short documentary film covering the lives of neurodivergent adults, how it impacts their lives and the lives of their families. Provided courtesy of the film's director, Charlotte McDowell.

Our Growing Community

Every human experiences the world differently. Autism is defined by behaviours and communication differences that set individuals apart in social situations and in life.

Some, but not all of us, have challenges to traditional learning. Some, but not all, have mental wellness challenges. Some are highly independent, others need environmental adaptations to be successful, some of us require complex care and supports. Most are living at home with aging caregivers. Most are unemployed. Half don't communicate verbally and require full-time, life long support.

Aging parent caregivers are stymied in careers and many, who may not be financially, physically or emotionally equipped to retire early and take on full-time caregiving, will be forced to do so.

Here in Durham Region alone, another 650 autistic youth will turn 21 in the next 5 years and age out of school services. Adding to the thousands whose names are buried on wait lists for housing and day programs. There is a tidal wave of need rising. Government will not be able to meet the economic and housing needs of those who require complex care. When basic needs are not met, there will be a health and mental health crisis beyond capacity forecasts.

Autism Home Base is a supportive, connected community. We provide social relief to Autistic adults and their caregivers, so they have a place to belong, quality of life, and a reason to hope.

AHB cares for caregivers too. Two new project grants in 2025 brought caregivers together in new ways.

First, our new Global Chefs program created opportunities for senior caregivers to build meaningful, supportive connections by sharing favourite food, cultural traditions and life experiences.

Then, also new in 2025, our new Care2Share directory was conceived to pair parent mentors with younger families who are approaching high school and life transitions. We are grateful for the generous leadership of the Family Resource Programs of British Columbia who shared their systems, training and best practices. This type of selfless partnership keeps our sector strong, efficient and effective.



Organizational Capacity

A registered Canadian charity, Autism Home Base has processes and systems in place to ensure transparency and accountability.

Our funding model demands specific bookkeeping practices to ensure that project grants and restricted gifts are accurately expensed and recorded.

AHB brings strong governance, long-term funding partnerships, and evidenced results. We provide annual quantitative and qualitative reporting to funders including: # of participants; # of program hours; member satisfaction surveys, externally prepared program evaluations, annual audited financials.

Members with autism experience elect our Board of Directors who, along with staff, bring their own lived perspectives.

Our staff team are experienced sectors specialists with non-profit, program, volunteer, and fundraising management expertise. In 2025 we added one full time and two part time staff. Autism Home Base values and invests in workplace culture, professional development and prioritizes employee well-being.

We are proud to be shaping the work experiences of tomorrow's leaders through placement learning opportunities and seasonal work for 17 post secondary students.

AHB ensures high quality programming by contracting and partnering with external subject matter experts in arts, fitness and wellness disciplines.



Cooking Program Evaluation 2025-2028

Mixed-method research studying the impact on social valorization in autism from shared cooking and communal dining experiences. A control group of AHB members and caregivers not participating in the cooking programs will provide comparison data. The first round of data collection was completed in 2025. Pre-program interviews for the second round of data collection will capture the upcoming 12-week programs starting in January.

2025 at a Glance

- 3396 visits to the hub
- 275 participants accessed our programs
- 31 new families joined our community
- 36 caregivers made meaningful connections through food and culture during our Global Chefs
- 2150 hours of facilitated programming
- 491 hours of sports and active play; 660 hours of Visual, Dramatic and Culinary Arts ; 664 hours of Social programming, 47 hours of Life Skills, 288 hours of Summer Palooza
- 1452 drop-in hours
- 41 different weekly/ monthly/one-off programs, 12 were new in 2025
- 3 new cooking programs served 48 individuals
- 89 volunteers contributed 1650 hours
- 638 donors contributed through community volunteer events including the Towie's Polar Swim in Newcastle and Autism Angel's Family Walk in Whitby
- 166 new donors during 2025
- 212 participants completed our Lived-Experience Autism Perspective (LEAP) training
- 17 post-secondary students gained employment experience through school placements and seasonal employment
- Autism After 18 was championed at 19 community events
- 8 sector partners participated in our 'Success in Community - Knowledge Exchange' Symposium



Autism Home Base Durham delivers a cost-effective, impactful service that empowers families to get out of the house, active, and connected to a supportive community.

Evidence shows that healthy, connected families experience improved quality of life, reduced need for medical and mental health interventions, and greater potential to age in place at home with family.

Our organization is a distinctive cooperative, established and led by families, for families. We work to inspire similar initiatives across Ontario, empowering communities to foster inclusion and well-being.



COMING UP IN 2026

CLARINGTON POLAR BEAR SWIM

SATURDAY, APRIL 4TH
BOND HEAD PARKETTE, NEWCASTLE
CLARINGTONPOLARBEARSWIM.COM

AUTISMS ANGELS FAMILY WALK/RUN

SUNDAY MAY 3RD
HEYDENSORE PARK, WHITBY
AUTISMSANGELS.COM

WORLD AUTISM DAY

THIS YEAR WE'RE CELEBRATING
ON WEDNESDAY APRIL 1ST
AT THE PORT OF WHITBY MARINA
AUTISMHOMEBASE.COM/WORLD-AUTISM-DAY

GOLF TOURNAMENT

TUESDAY, JUNE 16TH
LEBOVIC GOLF CLUB
14020 LESLIE STREET, AURORA
AUTISMAFTER18.CA



a registered Canadian charity #81352 5797 RR0001

AutismHomeBase.com
289-278-3489

The Hub
132 Church St. 2nd Floor
Bowmanville, ON L1C 1T5

The Studio
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Bowmanville, ON L1C 3H7