



DeafBlind
ONTARIO FOUNDATION

Annual **25** Report **26**



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Our Mission

Inspiring investment in the future of individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing, non-verbal and deafblind.



Our Vision

Transforming lives,
one gift at a time.



Strategic Plan 2023–2026

In 2025–2026, DeafBlind Ontario Foundation continued to advance the priorities of its 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, with a focus on sustainability, growth, and strong stewardship in support of our mission and the work of DeafBlind Ontario Services.

We will increase our capacity to manage and grow our housing and accommodation assets

Strengthening the Foundation's housing and accommodation assets remained a key strategic priority. Accommodation and housing needs continue to be monitored, with a focus on ensuring existing and future accommodation solutions are sustainable, appropriate, and aligned with the evolving needs of people supported. In addition, early-stage planning advanced in priority growth regions, including Ottawa, where the Foundation explored potential future housing opportunities connected to major residential developments offering a mix of affordable and market rental units.

We will ensure continued effective stewardship and accountability

Strong governance and accountability remained central to the Foundation's work. The Board and Investment Committee continued to provide oversight to support financial health and responsible management of resources, while Board recruitment and education strengthened leadership capacity. During the year, the Board initiated the 2027–2031 strategic planning process to support long-term readiness.

The Foundation continues to lead with our **Core Values** and **Foundational Principles**, reinforcing alignment and a consistent, person-centred approach to stewardship, growth, and impact.

We will increase our capacity to raise funds

The Foundation continued to strengthen its fundraising capacity by focusing on sustainability, leadership engagement, and effective donor stewardship. Building on our 2023 *Fundraising Assessment and Recommendations* report, the Foundation has been actively using its guidance while working with an external fundraising consultant to refresh and strengthen the strategy, incorporating the perspectives of new employees and aligning it with the current fundraising landscape. These efforts, alongside ongoing donor engagement and diversification of revenue sources, are positioning the Foundation for long-term growth and resilience.

Letter from the Board Chair & CEO

Over the past year, DeafBlind Ontario Foundation has continued to grow and evolve, remaining steadfast in our commitment to the individuals we serve.

We are deeply grateful to our generous donors and partners who invest in the futures of people who are deafblind, as well as individuals with a developmental disability who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or who use non-traditional forms of communication.

At the heart of our work is a firm belief that every person's voice, choices, and lived experience must guide our actions. Thank you for your continued support and for helping raise significant funds that directly advance our mission.

Ottawa continues to be a priority region within our strategic growth plans. Building on our accommodation and housing strategy, we actively explored opportunities to expand our reach and increase access to appropriate housing. This included investigating high-level opportunities within major new developments across the Ottawa area that will offer a combination of affordable and market rental units in the coming years. These efforts are critical to ensuring the individuals we support can access safe, inclusive environments designed to meet their unique accessibility needs.

As we enter a new phase of growth, strengthening leadership and governance

remains a key focus. We are pleased to welcome four new Board members who will be joining us this year, bringing valuable expertise and fresh perspectives to our work. In support of strong governance practices, the Board participated in targeted learning sessions, including refining our elevator pitches and engaging in meaningful one-on-one fund development discussions with employees. We have also launched our 2027–2031 strategic planning process, which will help guide and align our efforts in the years ahead.

A significant highlight of the year was our annual #DoBlue campaign, held last June during National Deafblind Awareness Month. This initiative helped raise vital awareness across our communities and encouraged active participation by inviting supporters to post photos in blue to show their solidarity. The campaign was further strengthened by a Board-led matching commitment, in which Board members collectively matched the personal donation made by our CEO—demonstrating leadership and shared commitment to the Foundation's mission.

Our community presence also saw exciting growth through an addition of a new bingo permit in Val Caron (Sudbury), Ontario. This expansion into the area's charitable gaming has not only provided a new stream of revenue but has also served as a vital platform for outreach. Through this initiative, we have welcomed new volunteers into the Foundation family

and reached a broader audience of people who are now learning about our specialized services for the first time.

Throughout the year, DeafBlind Ontario Services and the Foundation continued to embed the foundational principles of **Person-Centered Dedication** and **Infinite Possibilities**, established in 2024/2025. Alongside our core values—**Pursuit of Excellence**, **Collective Success**, **Fearless Empowerment**, and **Accountability in Action**—these principles guided our efforts to unlock potential and support individuals in living their best lives. Your generosity continues to bridge critical gaps, helping fund specialized equipment, essential accessibility upgrades, wheelchair-accessible vehicles, and meaningful recreational programs.

Because of you, our mission is not only sustained, but strengthened—reaching further and making a deeper difference every day.



Roxanna Spruyt
CEO



Gwen Elling
Board Chair

Board Members

Gwen Elling
Chair

Martha Beaumont
Vice Chair

Jim Dadson

Stacy Hushion

Greg Paget

Saide Sayah

Loran Upton

Jocelyn Willoughby

Ontario Volunteer Service Awards

15
years

Gwen Elling

Our Values and Principles in Action.



Person-Centered Dedication



Infinite Possibilities



Pursuit of Excellence



Fearless Empowerment



Collective Success



Accountability in Action

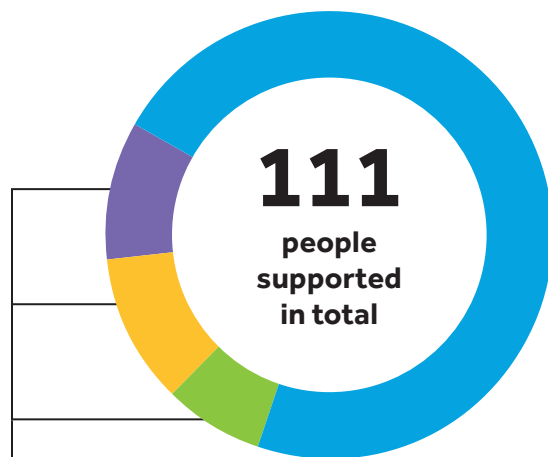


Transforming Lives, Together

Everyone deserves the opportunity to live independently, make their own choices, and access their communities in ways that are meaningful and accessible. For the people supported by DeafBlind Ontario Services, these opportunities were not always a given. They were made possible through specialized supports and a deep commitment to communication, dignity, and inclusion.

Because of you, the impact of this work is felt in everyday moments. Through supported living homes and community services, our reach extends into remote communities and urban centers across the province, providing opportunities that reflect the unique needs of the people we support who are deafblind, as well as those living with a developmental disability who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or who use non-traditional forms of communication.

Your generosity is helping to transform lives, one gift at a time.



People are supported through **Tremplin programs**, a blend of supported living and community engagement that builds independence and life skills.

People receive specialized expertise through **collaborative partnerships with other service agencies**, extending person-centered support beyond our direct programs.

People are supported through our **Supported Independent Living (SIL) program**, enabling greater autonomy while staying connected to their communities.



Our reach continues to grow with

22 physical locations
across Ontario.



Through the generosity of individuals, foundations, corporate partners, service clubs, and community fundraisers, we successfully raised

\$575,636
this past year. Thank you!

Your Gifts At Work

Donors like you inspire our mission every single day.

Because of you, individuals who are deafblind, as well as those living with a developmental disability who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or who use non-traditional forms of communication, experience greater independence and a future filled with possibilities.

Your generosity creates potential: accessible homes where comfort and safety come first, specialized equipment and assistive devices that empower choice, and access to wheelchair-accessible transportation that opens doors to the community. Every gift reflects your belief in the potential of people who deserve to live their best lives.

Our vision is bold and hopeful: Transforming lives, one gift at a time.

Your support moves us closer to this vision, strengthening our mission to inspire investment in the future of the people we serve. With your partnership, we're building communities rooted in inclusion, resilience, and limitless possibility, values that guide our every step.

Imagine a future where barriers fall away, where communication is accessible to all, and where home means a safe space always within reach.



Building Independence

You are helping us meet urgent needs.

Access to safe, affordable, and barrier-free housing is a fundamental human right and a core pillar of our vision to transform lives through the power of giving.

We are in the business of providing support and housing for vulnerable populations. Rising housing and construction costs mean that accessible homes are increasingly out of reach for the people we serve. Yet this is exactly where your compassion is creating lasting change. Guided by our Strategic Plan, we are committed to expanding and strengthening our housing and accommodation assets so more individuals can live with independence, safety, and dignity.

Your generosity provides housing where people can age in place with support, building a proud community that experiences daily life with confidence. Together, we are creating stronger, more inclusive communities.





Living Life On His Own Terms

DeafBlind Ontario Services' Supported Independent Living (SIL) program provides customized support for people who are deafblind or living with a developmental disability who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or use non-traditional forms of communication, and live semi-independently with minimal support.

Doug, a Deaf individual who communicates using American Sign Language (ASL), thrived for many years in SIL, where tailored communication support and personalized planning helped him stay connected and engaged in daily life.

As Doug began experiencing age-related changes in both vision and hearing, his support needs evolved. Now deafblind, Doug recently moved into one of our supported living homes, gaining access to 24/7 specialized support while still maintaining the independence he deeply values.

Donor generosity makes transitions like Doug's possible, funding accessible housing, communication supports, and skilled intervenors who help individuals make their own choices and live life on their own terms.

Peterborough Housing Update!

Thanks to you, Crowley House in Peterborough has become a shining example of what accessible, person-centered housing can be. After extensive renovations, three individuals officially moved into their new home in June 2025, marking a major milestone in expanding safe, barrier-free housing.



Phase 1 Upper Level—Complete

Transforming the upper level into a fully accessible space, including widened hallways and doorways, automatic bedroom door openers for safety, a new garden-door roll-out to the back deck to enjoy outdoor spaces, and a full elevator installation.

Phase 2 Lower Level—In Progress

Renovations have started with a focus on completing a lower-level apartment suitable for one individual.

With continued donor support, Crowley House will further expand its capacity and remain a model of person-centered, accessible housing.



Take a Virtual Tour!

Scan the QR code to experience the accessibility features of a DeafBlind Ontario Services supported living home!



Bridging the Gap to Accessibility

For Corey, every community experience begins with anticipation.

With the support of Lenni, Corey's Certified Deafblind Intervenor Specialist (CDBIS), community outings are carefully planned using a personalized communication system. Corey uses a tactile calendar with objects that signal what's planned for the day ahead, helping him understand the activity and prepare. As the moment approaches to leave his house, Corey's excitement builds. His posture straightens, his eyes widen, and he begins to vocalize. Non-verbal cues like this show Lenni that he is already engaged in the experience to come.

Corey is deafblind and has a complex medical condition, and these moments are made possible by thoughtful planning and the right supports. Each outing requires careful coordination, accessible transportation, equipment, arrangements for accessible seating, and effective communication to ensure his safety and participation. With this support, Corey experiences the world around him more fully and without barriers.

On a recent trip to Toronto, Corey visited Medieval Times, Ripley's Aquarium, and the Hockey Hall of Fame. At Medieval Times, the music, armour, and castle surroundings created an immersive experience. Lenni shared that Corey laughed and leaned into the energy of the room until his paper crown tumbled off mid-cheer!

Throughout the trip, Corey showed his enjoyment through movement, vocalization, and touch, reaching out and responding to the world around him. His enthusiasm drew people in, and employees and visitors smiled as they shared in the moment. As Lenni says, "his joy is contagious, and people feel it."

Using adapted sign language, including tactile sign and simplified LSQ (Langue des signes québécoise), Lenni shared information moment by moment, giving Corey context, supporting choice, and allowing him to respond to what was happening around him.

Corey's interests guide his activities. He is especially drawn to sensory-rich environments like swimming and live events where sound, movement, and atmosphere come together. Here, he can engage in ways that are meaningful to him. Corey isn't just an observer; he's a participant. His presence serves as a reminder that everyone has the right to participate and be acknowledged.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, people like Corey can access accessible transportation, specialized equipment, and life-enriching experiences that support independence and full participation in community life. Together, we're removing barriers and building communities where every person is celebrated and supported.



A Place to Feel Safe

Sometimes the most meaningful moments happen quietly—when an urgent need is met with compassion, care, and swift action.

DeafBlind Ontario Services was recently approached to support an individual who urgently needed a safe place to call home.

Their living situation had become unstable, and without immediate intervention, their well-being was at risk. For people who are deafblind, as well as those living with a developmental disability who are Deaf, hard of hearing or use non-traditional forms of communication, securing appropriate housing is rarely simple. True accessibility depends on more than shelter alone—it requires safety, affordability, thoughtful design, and access to specialized supports that are not always easy to find.

Responding quickly in moments like these is essential. When safety and stability are at risk, waiting isn't an option.

Thanks to the generous support from donors, we were able to act.

Working closely with our services teams, we moved quickly to design and prepare an accessible apartment tailored to this individual's unique needs. Every decision

was guided by our person-centred service model, with careful attention given to how the individual communicates and interacts with their environment. Layout, safety considerations, and accessibility modifications were thoughtfully designed to support independence, dignity, privacy, and comfort.

This home was created not only to meet urgent, immediate needs, but to also support long-term well-being. Built with adaptability in mind, it can continue to meet the individual's changing needs over time—offering stability today and into the future. Accessible housing is about far more than physical space. It's about creating an environment where someone can make their own choices, feel grounded, and build routines that support overall wellbeing.

For individuals with sensory loss, housing stability can be transformative. It becomes a foundation for building independence, dignity, and meaningful connections.

Although DeafBlind Ontario Services receives provincial funding, it doesn't meet all the needs of the people we support. Flexible, donor-directed funding makes it possible to respond when circumstances are urgent and time is critical. Today, this individual is on the path toward stability in a home designed for their safety and independence. Their story reflects what is possible when emergency response is paired with person-centered support and thoughtful investments in accessible housing.

This is the impact of compassionate giving.



Our Donors

Your generosity touches every story we share, and many more still being written. Most of all, we celebrate you and the difference you make every day. On behalf of all of us, thank you!

Foundations

Charities Aid
Foundation Canada
Charles Norcliffe Baker
and Thelma Scott
Baker Foundation
Durham Community
Foundation
Harry P. Ward Foundation
Hodgson Family
Foundation
J.P. Bickell Foundation
Luke Four Foundation
R.A. Beamish Foundation
The Catherine and
Maxwell Meighen
Foundation
The Oakes Foundation
The Oakville Foundation
for Intellectually
Handicapped People
The Robert Campeau
Family Foundation
The Victor & Rhoda
Shields Charitable
Foundation
Unity Values Foundation
Wilf and Jean Bell
Foundation
Youth and Philanthropy
Initiative Canada

Corporations

Ability Hive
Beyond the Pale
Brewing Company
BNI Business Elite
Cordeiro Roofing
Elavon
Export Development
Canada
Filles Isabelle D'Embrun
HIEC
Hydro One
Jeff Smith Plumbing-
Heating Ltd.
MacNeil & Dodd
Pharmacy
Magna International
McLellan Group
Contracting
National Mah Jongg
League Inc.
Needham
Promotions Inc.
Pam Bechard, Royal
LePage RCR Realty
Resident Care Pharmacy
Santos Hair Studio
Snyder Construction
The Bargains Group
The League of
Super Heroes
United Way Toronto
& York Region

Service Clubs

100 Men Who
Give A Damn
Newmarket-Aurora
Innisfil Lions Club
Knights of Columbus
St. Justin, Martyr
Council 11708
Minnow Lake Lions Club
Rotary Club of
Bridgenorth-Ennismore-
Lakefield Inc
Russell Lions Club
Udora Leaskdale
Lions Club
Valley East Lions Club

Individuals \$50K+

Watson, John & Josie
Molnar, Ken

Individuals \$5K+

Clarke, Stephen & Michèle
Morris-Dadson, Jim &
Anne

Individuals \$1K–\$4,999

Barber, Bryant & Jean
Beaumont, Martha
Chiu, Emily &
Arthur Law
Coutu, Raymond
& Nicole
Dash Addi, Osnat
Dee, Betsy
Dunn McIntyre,
Chelsea
Elling, Gwen

Fransky, Dennis
& Janet
Gagnon, Lise
Gaylord, Steven
Giesbrecht, Leslie
Heier-Siemens,
Kathryn
Hooton, Doug & Barb
Hushion, Stacy
Keyes, Karen

Malott, David &
Trixie Kretschmer
Momtahan,
Parham & Kathy
Moore, Jennifer
Paget, Greg
Pringle, Andrea
Quinn, Josie
Sayah, Saide
Sikkema, Sarah
Simpson, Lorraine

Siu, Rosanna
Spruyt, Roxanna
Thibault, Normand
Veldhuis, Tracey
Watkinson, Brian
& Rebecca
Webster, Bruce & June
Willoughby, Jocelyn
Willsie, Mark & Susan
Wookey, Sue
Zeng, Stella

Individuals \$500–\$999

Amarasinghe,
Flory
Avis, Janet
Barker, Tiffany
Barkwell, Judy
Beaumont,
Katherine
Boychuk, Rick
Brouillet, Terry
& Danielle
Day, Doug
& Phyllis
Downer, Doug
Flinn, Kim and Tim
Fuglsang, Sandra
Jaarsma, Erica
Katarni,
Aakanksha
Lawes, Ronald
& Sharon
Littell, Linda
Madho, Karen
McEvoy, Steven

McGuigan, Sharon
Osborne, Sarina
Parry, Richard
Patterson, Kelly
Peters, Kathy
Piercy, Shirley
Pigeon-Way,
Crystal
Piggott, Annette
Reed, Sarah
Rice Menezes,
Sheryl
Schmalz, Michael
Sheahan, Karen
Vanbodegom,
Samantha
Villeneuve, Ashley

Individuals \$250–\$499

Ajemuta, Deborah
Amarasinghe,
Lekamlage Don
Aldous Silas
Allford, Shannon
Arasaratnam, Ahalya
Avis, Janet
Becker, Ewald
and Karen
Benton, Sue
Bierhals, Andrea
Bojin, Minda
Brewster, Lori
Cruz, Fernando
Daoust, Kevin
Dunn McIntyre,
Chelsea
Dyball, Terri
Edidi, Olabanji
Egelton, Stephanie
Fatijewski, Fiona
Fransky, Dennis
& Janet

Gundogan, Surreya
Halman, John & Jackie
Ikhlaq, Ahmed
Jasrotia, Preet
Kanwal, Kanwaldeep
Kingyens, Candace
Knox, Doug & Eileen
Kosiw, Jim
Mackinnon, Brent
McConnell, Maggie
Mesko, Amanda
Moto, Vera
Murray, Michelle
Nevett, Sarah
Parsons, Laura
Pinn, Alyssa
Shaw, Shanon
Sheni, Jasbir Kaur
Stevenson, Amy
Udoenko, Nataliya
Violette, Cassandra
Youm, Chun Goon

Friends with Vision Monthly Giving Program

Ajemuta, Deborah	Kingyens, Candace
Amarasinghe, Lekamlage	Kosiw, Jim
Don Aldous Silas	Littell, Linda
Barkwell, Judy	Mackinnon, Brent
Beaumont, Martha	Malott, David &
Becker, Karen	Trixie Kretschmer
Benton, George & Katie	McConnell, Maggie
Benton, Sue	McEvoy, Steven
Boychuk, Rick	McGuigan, Sharon
Coutu, Raymond & Nicole	Moore, Jennifer
Downer, Doug	Morris-Dadson,
Edidi, Olabanji	Jim & Anne
Egelton, Stephanie	Olabanji, Edidi
Elling, Gwen	Pandit, Manan
Fatijewski, Fiona	Parr, Jeremy
Flinn, Kim and Tim	Peters, Kathy
Ford, Julia	Pietropaolo, Domenico
Fransky, Dennis & Janet	Porteous, Judy
Gagnon, Lise	Rice Menezes, Sheryl
Gaylord, Steven	Scopazzi, Peter
Halman, John & Jackie	Somerton Dupuis, Tracy
Heier-Siemens, Kathryn	Webster, Bruce & June
Hooton, Doug & Barb	Willoughby, Jocelyn
Jagota, Chandni	Willsie, Mark & Susan
Kanwal, Kanwaldeep	Youm, Chun Goon
Katarni, Aakanksha	Zeng, Stella

Your support makes the impossible, possible.

You're shaping a future where no one is left behind.



Highest Priority Needs: Where Help is Needed Most

The needs of the people we support can change quickly, and meaningful impact often depends on our ability to respond without delay.

The Highest Priority Needs focus ensures we can act when and where support is most urgently required.

Investments in this area help stabilize core operations, respond to emerging challenges, and advance initiatives that strengthen services across the organization.

This flexibility allows us to make thoughtful, timely decisions that protect supports today while positioning us for a stronger, more resilient future.

When donors choose this pillar, they empower us to direct resources to the areas with the greatest potential to improve lives—right when it matters most.

Accessible Housing Fund

Foundational Support for Independence

A safe, accessible home is the cornerstone of independence, dignity, and well-being for people with sensory loss. DeafBlind Ontario Services' supported living environments go beyond shelter, offering purpose-built homes with round-the-clock support that enable individuals to live confidently and safely.

This pillar supports the ongoing care of existing homes while creating opportunities to expand accessible housing in new communities. Investments help strengthen long-term housing stability, modernize and maintain infrastructure, and ensure these homes remain sustainable for years to come.

Accessible housing is not just a place to live—it is the foundation that allows people to build meaningful, connected lives.

Specialized Equipment

Enhancing Safety, Communication and Daily Life

Specialized equipment plays a critical role in enabling independence and safety within supported living environments. From adapted bathrooms and lifts to communication technology and mobility supports, these tools make daily activities more accessible and dignified.

Gifts to this pillar ensure homes remain fully equipped to meet evolving needs, reduce barriers within living spaces, and support participation in everyday routines. The right equipment allows individuals to engage more fully in their homes and communities—safely, confidently, and with greater autonomy.

Transportation Fund

Connecting People to Opportunity

Mobility can't be taken for granted. Many people we serve have additional physical or medical challenges that limit access to transportation. Without it, opportunities for volunteering, education, healthcare, and everyday errands disappear.

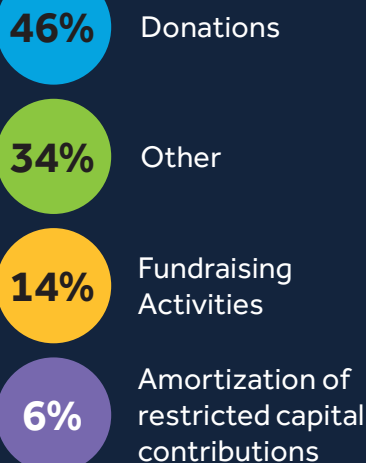
The Transportation Fund supports the purchase and maintenance of wheelchair-accessible vans, provides reliable access to medical care and essential services, and fosters community participation and social inclusion. Freedom of movement means freedom to live fully — and your investment helps make that possible.

Together, We Create Lasting Impact

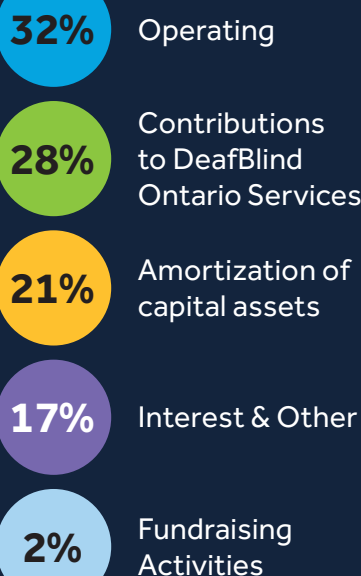
Each pillar plays a distinct role, but together they strengthen independence, stability, and connection for people with sensory loss across Ontario. Your support enables thoughtful stewardship of resources today while building capacity for tomorrow—ensuring we can continue changing lives in meaningful, sustainable ways.

Our Financials

Revenue



Expenses



The above was summarized from the draft audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2026. The complete audited financial statements are available online at deafblindontario.com.



DeafBlind
ONTARIO FOUNDATION



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