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Executive Director Report – Annual General Meeting October 3, 2019

It has been an immense privilege spending the last year connecting families in need with the support of their community and working alongside such an amazing group of staff, volunteers, supporters and friends.

A record number of YANA clients experienced immense health challenges this past year, and we were able to respond without doubt, providing them travel funding and accommodation support. Inspired by our clients’ strength in the toughest of circumstances, the YANA team remained committed to providing the increased resources needed. The community generously rallied behind the tremendous efforts of our staff, board directors and volunteers resulting in a record breaking year of fundraising success. Since YANA’s inception 33 years ago, Comox Valley families have been able to count on the legacy of caring and compassion our founder Sandra Williams began. We are extremely proud to act as stewards of our community’s generosity ensuring no local family will ever be alone when faced with health concerns for their children.

The following report summarizes our programs with a focus on YANA’s 2018-19 fiscal year.

OUR COURAGEOUS CLIENTS

This past year we helped 202 children from 187 families, assisting with 593 medical trips (Figure 1). Our clients reside across communities within School District 71 including Denman and Hornby Island. Courtenay (65%) and Comox (15%) residents account for 80% of the service records, with the remaining 20% distributed amongst the smaller communities.

The destinations for our client’s medical trips were 42% Vancouver (BC Children’s Hospital or BC Women’s Hospital), 40% Victoria , 10% Nanaimo, 5% Vancouver (other hospitals and doctor’s offices) and 3% to other locations.

Figure 1– YANA Client Care

YANA	% change 2018 to 2017	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Clients	15%	202	176	172	141	146	134
Families	16%	187	161	156	126	128	119
Service Records	23%	593	482	384	334	358	309

The majority of the medical trips we supported required overnight stays (66%) with YANA helping families to access free accommodation either by booking accommodation directly for clients, through reimbursement of accommodation receipts or by referring clients to other programs to cover accommodation expenses.

As Figure 2 indicates, we helped with medical trips for children of all ages with elementary-school children accounting for the largest portion of the cases. Our vision is to facilitate equal opportunities for families to access quality medical care. Fortunately our definition of medical care is broad enough to cover the wide variety of services that our clients require (Figure 3).

Figure 2 – YANA Service Records by Age 2018-19

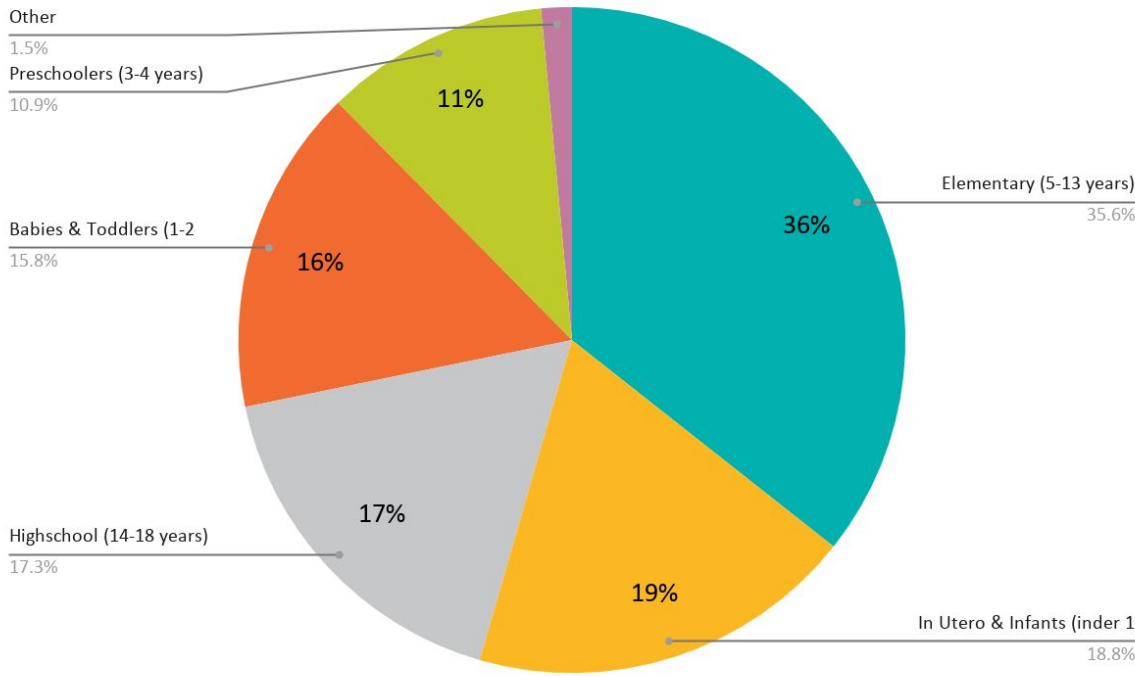


Figure 3 – Reasons for Medical Travel

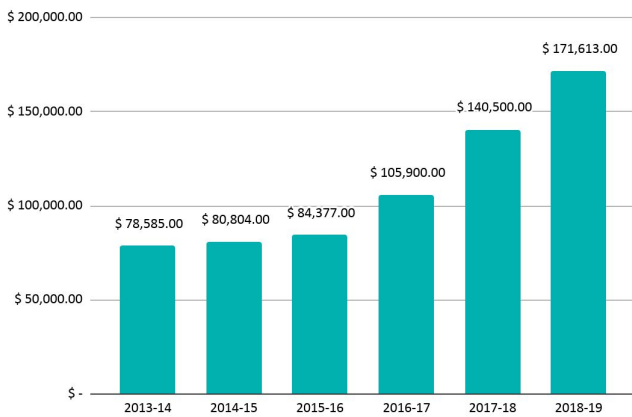
Diagnosis	% of cases		% of cases
Cancer	17%	Cardiology-related	4%
Orthopaedics/Spinal	12%	Autism/ADHD/Assessment-related	3%
Surgical	12%	Other - Kidney related	3%
High-risk pregnancy	11%	Allergy/Immunology/Biochemical	3%
Neurology-related	9%	Multi-system Disease (i.e. Cystic Fibrosis)	3%
Gastroenterology-related	8%	Specialty Dental/Tongue Tie Reversal	2%
Mental Health/Psychiatry	6%	Other- describe diagnosis/reason for need to travel	2%
Ophthalmology-related	6%	Urology-related	2%
Birth-related	5%	Dermatology-related	2%
Audiology/Hearing-related	5%	Undefined	1%
Respiratory-related	5%	Genetics Testing/Rare	1%
Endocrinology-related	4%	TOTAL	100%

FAMILY FUNDING

Family funding was up significantly again this fiscal year. YANA provided \$171,613.00 in family funding for 2018-19, a 22% increase year over year (Figure 4).

The increase can be attributed to an increase in the number of families we served, the nature of their medical circumstances (requiring multiple trips and long stays) and continued education and outreach. Staff, board, volunteers and ambassadors help ensure that families know YANA will support not just their initial trip, but their ongoing care as well. Connecting with more Comox Valley families and providing long-term support to those families is something to be very proud of and something that is only possible with the continued support of our community.

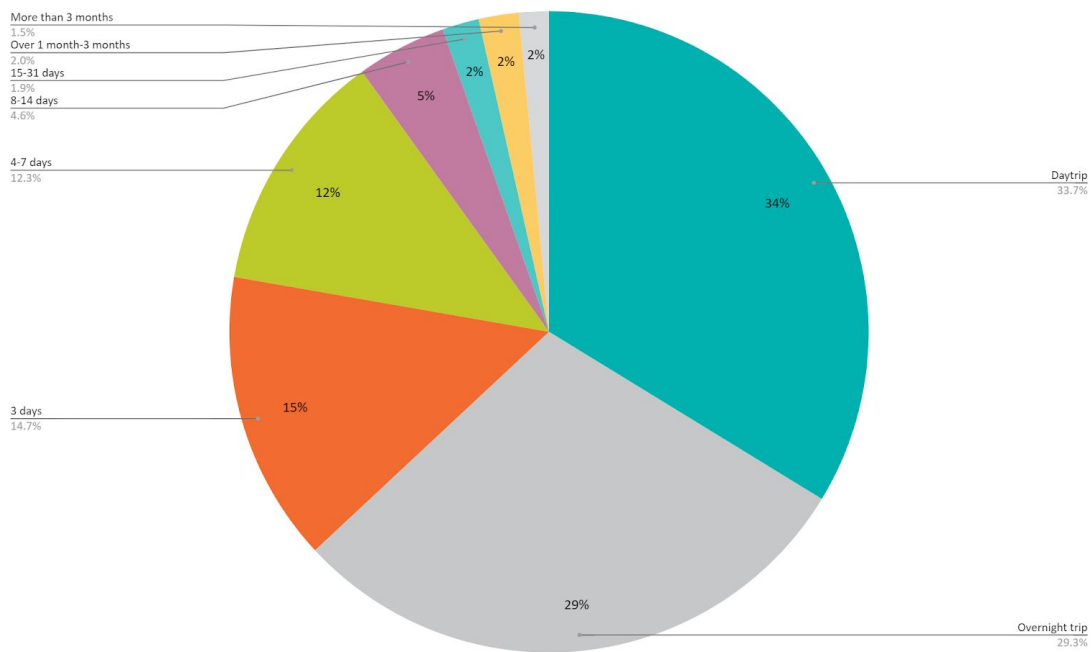
Figure 4 – Family Funding for Medical Travel 2014 – 2019



Direct Funding Program

Through our direct funding program, funds are distributed to families to use, at their discretion, to assist with financial needs related to accessing medical care for a child or a pregnant mother away from home. We work directly with client families to develop a care plan. Central to this is determining the funding amount based on the location and duration of the required health care. YANA has a funding formula to guide decision-making and we factor in whether a family can access other support systems like the Travel Assistance Program offered by the BC Government. Families provide documentation verifying their required time away or we work together to ensure all necessary administration is complete.

Figure 5 – Duration of Medical Trip



The duration of medical trips ranged from daytrips (34%) to stays of over 6 months (Figure 5). Just over half of our clients received support for one service in the year, and 48% of clients made multiple trips in the year (Figure 6).

Figure 6 – YANA Services

Services Per Year	% of Clients (2016-17)	% of Clients (2017-18)	% of Clients (2018-19)
10 or more services/year	2%	26%	5%
7-9 services/year	4%	8%	3%
5-6 services/year	5%	16%	6%
3-4 services/year	14%	22%	17%
2 services/year	25%	10%	16%
1 service/year	50%	18%	52%

The funding guidelines approved by our Board of Directors ensure we distribute funds fairly and help us manage program expenses with some certainty. Funding amounts are adjustable in special circumstances. We have a Client Services Committee to assist with decision-making when necessary. The committee also provides guidance to ensure our care aligns with YANA's mandate. Thank you to Laura Bomback, Kate Berg and Ashley Smith who were members of the Client Services Committee for the 2018-19 year.

Emergency Funding

\$1,000 is safely stored in the Maternal Child Unit at the local hospital to sustain our very important gateway program known as our Emergency Funding Program. The emergency funds are dispersed to families who have a child or a pregnant mother who requires emergency medical transport from the Comox Valley hospital to another location for medical treatment. \$200 cash is given to each family along with a letter of introduction to YANA’s services and an invitation for the family to contact us for further help when they reach their treatment destination. Last year we provided \$9,600 (no change from 2017-18) in emergency funding at the North Island Hospital, Comox Valley.

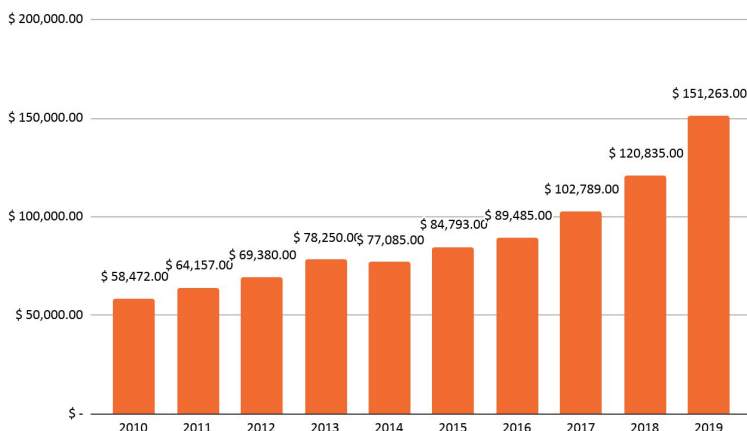
ACCOMMODATION

YANA maintains four fully furnished apartments at 3300 Oak Street in Vancouver within walking distance of Children’s Hospital and also assists with finding and funding accommodation in alternate treatment destinations and when all 4 apartments are full in Vancouver. Whether through referral to other programs or by covering accommodation directly, YANA ensures that families have free access to accommodation. YANA also assists with local accommodation expenses for residents of Denman and Hornby Island when a child or pregnant mother needs to be at or near the Comox Valley hospital for multiple days.

As Figure 7 indicates, YANA’s accommodation expenses for families are growing significantly. The cost to rent and maintain our apartments remains fairly stable so the growth is driven primarily by increased number of clients and trips, as well as stays in hotels or BnBs which YANA provides to clients when alternative, suitable low-cost accommodation is unavailable or not easily accessed. Record high occupancy rates for our low-cost accommodation partners like Jeneece Place, Ronald McDonald House and Easter Seals House mean we need to provide higher cost accommodations like hotels and Air BnBs more often. High demand for those short term rentals and hotels due to the housing crisis pushes nightly rates higher compounding the impact. It should be noted that while these factors all contribute to higher costs for YANA, the support for families is more valuable than ever. The costs of unexpected hotel stays in major city centres could be crippling for most families without assistance from YANA.

Work is progressing toward building a “Home Away from Home” housing facility near Nanaimo Regional Hospital. The addition of this Jeneece Place-like facility will help better accommodate our families at a lower cost.

Figure 7: YANA Accommodation Program 2010 – 2019



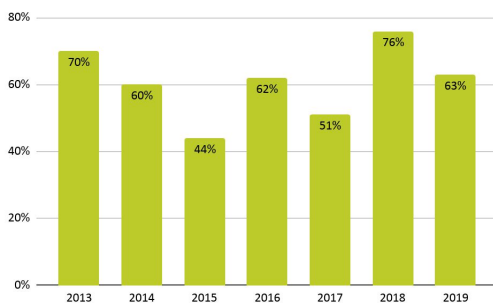
YANA Apartments

The YANA apartments tend to be used by families staying for many days in Vancouver. Approximately 13% of the overnight trips to Vancouver included stays at the apartments, accounting for over 900 room nights. The YANA apartments are well-kept, tidy and stocked with basic necessities. Families are required to clean the apartment prior to their departure. We continued with our annual cleaning and maintenance plan to ensure professional cleaning happened at least once a year and necessary repairs were handled. The building manager and our Vancouver-based volunteer help us maintain quality standards at the apartments.

We were able to provide furniture upgrades to the apartments this fiscal year, thanks to a generous grant from the City of Courtenay, and the expert help of volunteers Jayne Forbes, Kelly Rusk, Kate Berg, and Vancouver handyman Steve. A new sofa bed was added to apartment 216, and all 4 apartments received new dining room sets, storage-ottoman-type coffee tables, local artwork, HDMI cables, rugs and new curtains and rods. Jayne was also able to completely update the inventory of items in each apartment and redistribute and purchase small items to provide consistent amenities across all four apartments. The property management company removed the carpets from apartment 109 and replaced them with vinyl plank flooring. The improvement to the cleanliness, and therefore healthiness, resulting from this change was remarkable. We are hopeful that we will receive grant funding in the next fiscal year to make the same change in the remaining 3 apartments.

While there are many accommodation options in Vancouver, there are few that offer the privacy and close proximity to BC Children's Hospital. Our apartments also fill an important service gap as not all housing programs accommodate the variety of medical conditions that our clients face or provide free accommodation for as long as required. As shown in Figure 8, occupancy at the apartments is variable year over year. Having four apartments has provided latitude in booking the apartments. The annual average occupancy for all four apartments was 63% this past year, a 17% decrease from the previous year. The average occupancy since 2013 is 61%. We will continue to monitor this data to ensure our capacity aligns with need.

Figure 8 – Average Annual Occupancy at Four YANA Apartments 2014 – 2019



Denman Hornby Connector Program

After the success of the pilot program that launched in June 2016, we applied for, and received full grant funding for April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2020 from The Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island for the Denman Hornby Connector Program. The Denman Hornby Connector for Expecting Mothers helps families cover the accommodation expenses incurred due to the necessity of temporary relocation to the Comox Valley, in order to be closer to maternity care and the Hospital in the weeks surrounding their baby's birth. In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the program supported 6 expectant mothers covering \$4,857 in accommodation expenses. We are looking forward to supporting more families in the upcoming year as awareness increases about this new program.

FAMILY SUPPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM - YANA CONNECTS

Thanks to the generous funding from Children’s Health Foundation Vancouver Island, and the development and planning Marcie Dumais completed while she was with YANA, we launched our new Family Support Enhancement Program called “YANA Connects” this year. YANA Connects is an opportunity for YANA families to connect online through a private Facebook group. It is for parents, or primary caregivers, of a YANA child, past or present and participation is completely voluntary. The online group offers a safe space where caregivers can lean on each other for peer support and camaraderie. The private Facebook group also serves as a place for members and moderators to post tips, advice, and information that relates to advocacy and support for parents and caregivers as well as children’s health issues. Dennyse Harris did a fantastic job developing the program from its inception, hosting a launch event, facilitating sign up processes, developing a content calendar and encouraging meaningful interactions within the group.

The work during the first year of the program was focused on the creation of the actual online group, and on creating program awareness. The private Facebook page was launched after an intensive phase of best practice research, focus group engagement, internal testing and content development. Program awareness was created through the development of program specific branding (Figures 9 & 10), creation of print and digital promotional material, and creation of family-centred messaging regarding how and why to join the group.

Figures 9 & 10 – YANA Connects Logo and business card front/back



At the end of the first grant cycle year (April 1, 2018-March 31, 2019), 34 members had joined the group, with 97% of those members still in the group. 91% of members surveyed indicated that they either agree or strongly agree that they felt an improved sense of belonging and ability to cope with stress since joining the YANA Connects group. Topics and discussions within the group focused on areas of reported interest from surveyed parents, and there were several meaningful engagements and supportive one on one connections within the group. Lessons learned throughout the first year have pointed us toward focusing on more direct messaging to families about the group, recording and posting of videos from expert speakers covering YANA specific topics, and consistency of staff and messaging to increase intake into the group.

We welcomed Keltie Schalm as the new ongoing facilitator/moderator for the group just before the end of the fiscal year and are excited to see the group membership, engagement and support continue to increase so that the program will truly become a robust additional arm of support for YANA families.

CLIENT CARE PARTNERSHIPS

North Island Hospital, Comox Valley - North Island Hospital, Comox Valley was an important community partner as we work together to carry out our emergency funding program. Local physicians, midwives and healthcare workers are also critical partners as they refer clients to YANA and also assist with verification related to clients' need to travel for medical care.

Jeneece Place - The Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island (CHFVI) operates and funds Jeneece Place, which provides short and long term accommodation for Vancouver Island families when they have a child receiving care in Victoria at a subsidized cost. Jeneece Place is located on site at Victoria General Hospital and offers cleanliness, convenience and comfort. Whenever availability allows, we book our clients to stay at Jeneece Place. Jeneece Place continued to experience high occupancy rates this past year, but they consistently made an effort to accommodate our clients despite the increased occupancy. We were fortunate to have 89 client trips include at least one night at Jeneece Place. Maintaining the excellent working relationship we have developed with Jeneece Place is very important to us. We strengthened our partnership with Jeneece Place this year to better support our clients. We instituted formal authorization for Jeneece Place staff to make bookings at Hotel Zed on our behalf if a Jeneece Place room becomes unavailable on short notice and YANA staff are not available.

Bear Essentials - The Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island also administers the Bear Essentials Program which helps families cover unexpected or extraordinary expenses related to their children's health and special needs, especially families whose needs fall between the cracks of other available programs or are of an urgent need. YANA is a referring agency for the Bear Essentials program, and submits applications to Bear Essentials for families' expenses that fall outside or over and above YANA's mandate. In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, we submitted 3 applications for support, with 1 application being approved. We also jointly supported a family with Bear Essentials where specific accommodations were required, and another where YANA covered travel funding and Bear Essentials covered the accommodation expense. We are grateful and excited that the partnership and cooperation between our agencies is providing increased support for local families.

BC Family Residence Program - YANA works in partnership with the BC Family Residence Program (BCFRP) to fulfill accommodation needs in Vancouver. The BCFRP provides subsidized accommodation for families whose child is receiving care at BC Children's Hospital or Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children for up to 30 days per stay. We refer YANA families to the program for short stays and when our apartments are full or are not suitable. Another way we partner with this program is that the YANA apartments are an approved accommodation with BCFRP such that we are able to invoice the program \$51.95 per night (increased from \$50.00/night in 2017-18) for qualified families who stay in the YANA apartments. We received significantly less BCFRP income this year (\$6,217.50) due to many long stays that had exceeded the 30 day BCFRP maximum support. We drew upon Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction support adding \$3,392 in rental income.

Social Work - We work closely with social workers at the Nanaimo Regional Hospital and with social workers in Victoria and Vancouver. In many cases, social workers identify need and help Comox Valley families connect with our services. We have built solid relationships with social workers at BC Children's Hospital and at Victoria General Hospital. We will continue to work to strengthen our connection with social workers at these locations, as well as at BC Women's Hospital, Peak House, Ledger House and Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health.

Consumer Accommodations Providers - Our client care team has been working to create and document "preferred accommodation" contacts in Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo to reach out to when YANA apartments and low-cost accommodations are unavailable. We are grateful to have found some hoteliers and several BnB operators that believe in YANA's work and consistently offer us discounted rates and flexible check-outs whenever they are able.

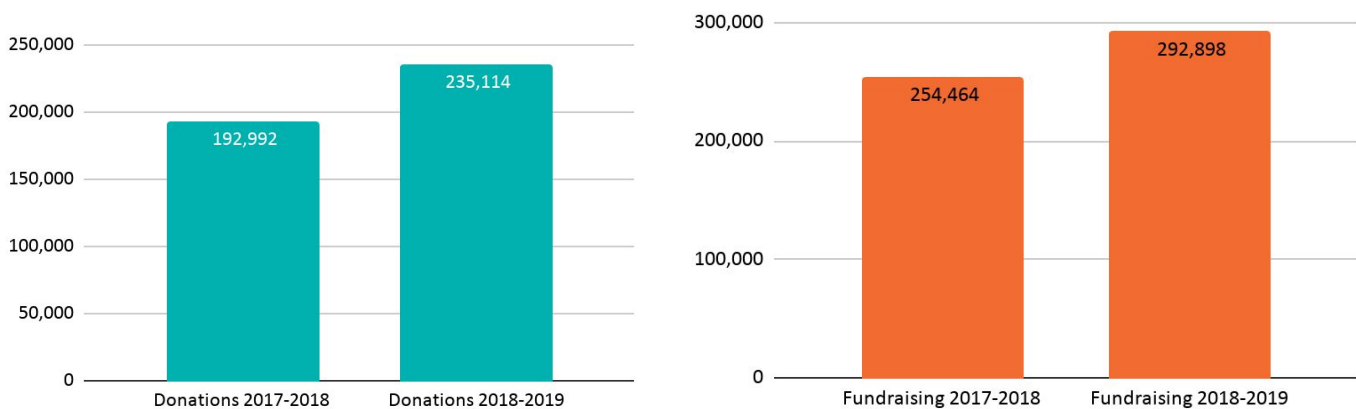
COMMUNITY AWARENESS & COMMUNITY-LED FUNDRAISING

In our work at YANA, we support families experiencing significant challenges and sometimes unthinkable agony. It is crucial that we also take time to appreciate the joy our families bring. Our events and speaking opportunities help us do this and have become an integral part of the culture of love that surrounds YANA. Our events and presentations raise awareness about our programs and connect supporters to our cause.

Deanne McRae has done an outstanding job in her role of Community Relations Coordinator strengthening our fundraising capacity, engaging volunteers, and drawing support from the wider community through social media.

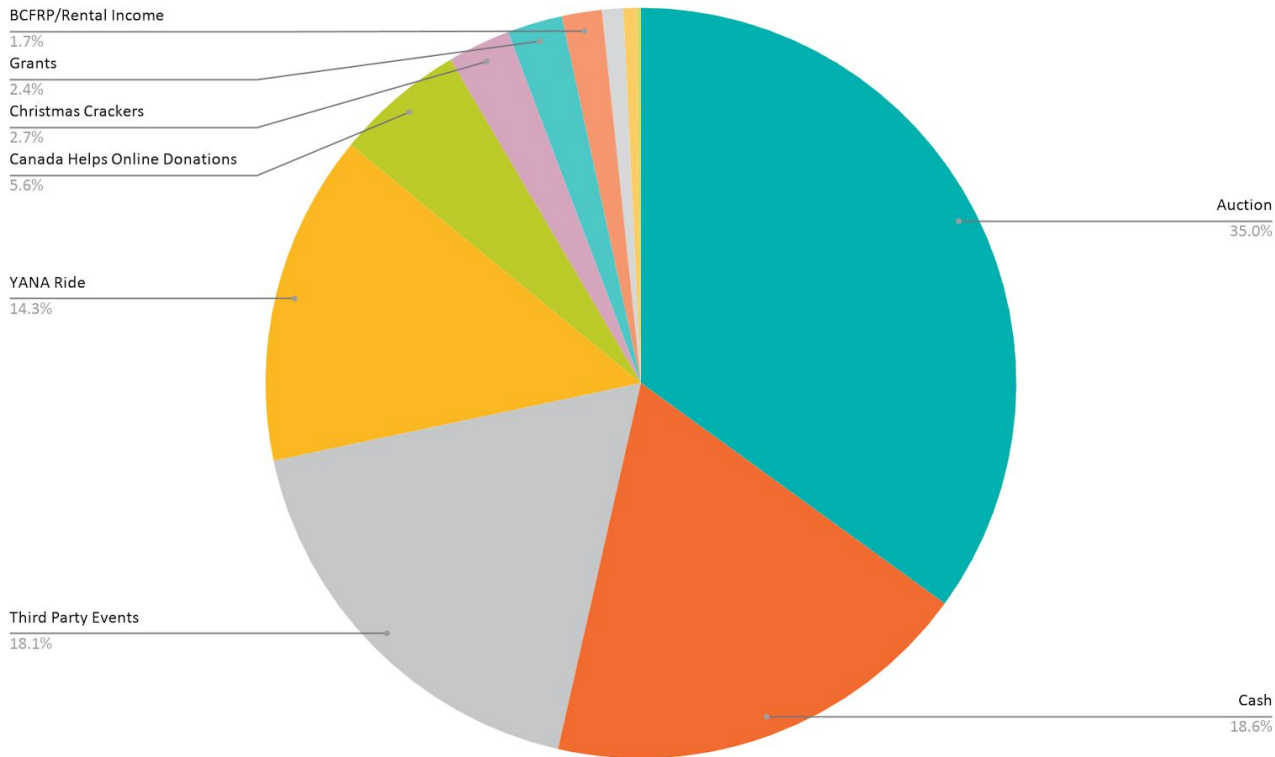
While this year saw a substantial increase in both family funding and accommodation, thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters and champions in the Comox Valley and beyond, there was a corresponding significant increase in both donations and fundraising (Figures 11 & 12) over the previous year. A significant portion of this increase was in our Community-Led or Third Party Fundraising. YANA's directors and ambassadors have supported Deanne's efforts promoting YANA and nurturing relationships with community champions. The teamwork has shown tremendous results! This year's digitizing and streamlining of the donation acceptance, fundraiser planning and event management processes has positioned us well for continued growth and opportunity in these areas.

Figures 11 & 12 – Donations and Fundraising Income Year over Year



YANA's overall income was up 18% over the previous year, and the continued success of our diverse fundraising and donation support bodes well for our stability. (Figure 13). While our efforts traditionally have focused on fundraising events, we will need to increase focus on developing a strategic fundraising plan that incorporates donation campaigns, planned giving and corporate support. Activating more alternative funding sources will preserve resources, increase staff and volunteer capacity, and ensure we can sustainably continue to meet growing program and operational needs.

Figure 13: YANA 2018-2019 Income Sources



For more specific information related to this topic, see the Community Relations Report.

BOARD-LED FUNDRAISING

As mentioned, YANA events have become an important part of the unique culture and loving spirit that surrounds the work we do in the community. Our board fundraising initiatives have grown over the years with the Big Love Benefit and the Simon's Cycles (now Comox Bike Co.) YANA Ride continuing to show significant increases year-over-year (Figure 14). The effort, expertise, time and energy our board, volunteers and staff continue to dedicate to these annual events is outstanding and is appreciated beyond measure.

Figure 14: Board-Led Fundraising Year over Year

Fundraiser	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Increase
Auction	\$162,194.69	\$194,529.08	20%
YANA Ride	\$69,124.90	\$79,285.46	15%
Christmas Crackers	\$14,294.56	\$15,082.40	6%
Kids' Clutter	\$5,585.10	\$3,165.10	-43%
OVERALL	\$251,199.25	\$292,062.04	16%

OPERATIONS

2018-2019 was a year of excitement, challenge and learning for myself and Deanne as newcomers to the YANA team. As a core team of one full-time Executive Director and one part-time Community Relations Coordinator, we were very grateful for the support we received from our dedicated casual staff. Jaqueline Moore continued as our diligent contract bookkeeper, Joan McCaughey was our “rock” of client care, and Dennyse Harris took on the roles of client care relief as well as the development and facilitation of our new “YANA Connects” parent support enhancement program. The year brought new outside opportunities and adventures for Dennyse, so we excitedly welcomed Keltie Schalm back to the team as the YANA Connects facilitator, and Kris Johnson back in a casual client care role. Andrea Postal rounded out our client care team allowing Joan focus on the travel and relaxation of retired life while still covering sporadic days off when needed. Starting in November, our client care relief staff began providing ongoing client care support, both onsite and remotely, which allowed for increased time to dedicate to operations, systems improvement, event planning and documentation etc. This was an important step in allowing us to stay on top of the increased caseload and fundraising demands.

Our veteran volunteers came through with skills, hours and commitment that was truly like nothing I’ve ever experienced. Lesley “Saves-the-Day” Hunter continued to volunteer in the office a minimum of twice a week providing reception, administration, bookkeeping and event preparation support. She graciously accepted the role of factodian, document locator and cheerleader as well. We wouldn’t have made it through this year without her! Jayne Forbes volunteered countless times throughout the year in Vancouver assisting with apartment access for clients as well as maintenance and supply replenishment. Marcel Moose, our Treasurer expertly oversaw all aspects of our financial operations, and Kelly Rusk, Board President, took on leadership, mentoring and all tasks asked of him with an extraordinary amount of dedication. The fundraising work tirelessly supported by our entire Board of Directors, YANA Ambassadors and key volunteers made the entire successful year possible allowing us to dedicate precious resources where they are needed most- to our strong YANA families.

This year has seen the implementation of several systems and programs that will keep YANA on a path of operational efficiency to help keep step with program growth. Online timesheets and apartment scheduling, digital forms for donation tracking, online Third Party Fundraising forms, volunteer sign up software, Google Drive use for shared file access and an online project management platform are some of the additions that volunteers and staff embraced and have begun to master. Just like the consistent paper forms and project binders that were implemented a few years ago, these electronic systems are the next phase in efficient operations management for YANA.

The Annual General Meeting on October 3rd will sadly be Deanne McRae’s last day in a staff role with YANA. She has done an absolutely stellar job in her position, and we feel very lucky to have worked, achieved, laughed, and loved alongside her. We are sure her transition to new-found balance and to YANA volunteering will be smooth and successful. We’re thrilled to be welcoming Shormila Bakshi to the YANA family as our new Community Relations Coordinator. Her razor sharp skills, community passion and engaging personality are a wonderful fit for this position and we know she is going to rock this role.

CLOSING

After 33 years, YANA continues to be an important community resource for local families. The community support received by YANA in 2018-19 is a true example of how deeply rooted generosity and volunteerism are in the Comox Valley. We are a community that cares about children and families; one that wraps them in love when they need it most. We are honoured that YANA embodies the values that represent the heart of our community.

Kelly Barnie | YANA Executive Director