



**"No child who does not want to be alone, should ever have to be"** – Sister MacNamara

# Rossbrook House 2020-2021 Annual Report

## Executive Director's Report 2020-21

**"What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you."**

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

We continue practicing the routines of the pandemic. Restrictions, masks, hand sanitizer, cancellations, closures, and Zoom. What has changed is vaccinations are available, and there is now light shining on the horizon.



The pandemic has accentuated the systemic inequities on the planet, and in our own city. It has also uncovered deeper reserves of creativity and generosity in all of us. Empathy for each other has us reaching out as we do during a flood. We have become deeply conscious of the essential needs of each other for food, shelter, and safe places to be. Sandbags have become food hampers and donations.

When the call came from Rossbrook House to help us keep the doors open 24 hours your response was immediate and dramatic. You were quick to offer support as were our good friends at United Way Winnipeg and The Winnipeg Foundation. We also gained a new partnership with End Homelessness Winnipeg who made our continuing overnight shifts possible by directing federal Reaching Home funds our way.

You helped us provide thousands of hot meals and hundreds of warm sleeps for those in need. We also continued to adapt and provide programming so the children and youth coming to Rossbrook House could safely continue to belong, play, learn and become...

Even through the code red period we managed to hold activities like an online session with the St Boniface youth bio-lab program, that delivered lab equipment for the kids beforehand as well providing supper for everyone in the building.

The drop-in doors were opened continuously and with the adoption of iPads and laptops, there were still activities that allowed kids to continue learning. As well, new computer terminals and boosted wi-fi allowed older youth to connect to their email and social media, even online classes.

As with the summer, Christmas was not cancelled at Rossbrook House. There was plenty of seasonal food provided by Sons and Daughters of Italy, Westworth United Church's annual turkey dinner donation, and many other thoughtful gifts. There were lots of presents donated and funds to custom purchase for the kids. Our Learning Always staff created a wonderful physically distanced event for our participants and their families. They got to choose presents and bring home a variety of seasonal food and treats.



In February Rossbrook House staff were included as essential workers for early vaccination as part of the 24/7 safe space emergency shelters network. Staff have worked heroically over the last year and have adapted to stressful situations that have sometimes left them depleted. As we moved out of the cold weather and back into focusing on our regular age groups and hours there is a natural calm and opportunity to rest before our staff gear up for an active summer.

I will end with a quote by John Lennon. It succinctly captures endurance, perspective and hope: **"Everything will be okay in the end. If it's not okay, it's not the end."** Until then, we will keep our doors open!

**Phil Chiappetta**  
Executive Director, Rossbrook House



## President's Report

We on the Board of Directors continue to be honored to have the opportunity to work with the children, youth and families who come to Rossbrook House. We are guided, as always, by the words of Sister Geraldine McNamara's vision; **"No child who does not want to be alone should ever have to be"** and the mission of Rossbrook House to provide **"a safe place for children and youth to belong, play, learn and become..."**



The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has challenged us in many ways, as Phil Chiappetta has outlined in his report. Activities have had to be modified, postponed or cancelled. Other activities, including our Board and committee meetings migrated to Zoom and like much of the world, our Board work was done while looking at each other on screen. Some things just couldn't quite be done the way we wanted them to be on Zoom. For example, much planning had already been done for our "No child alone" dinner that we were hoping to have in January. Like many other events, that has had to be put off. As always, our staff and attendees are coming up with innovative ways to stay open to serve our community. The work of the staff has been nothing short of amazing.

As I finish my term as President, I want to express my thanks to the Board and staff for all the work they have done over the past three years. I remain grateful for the generous support of our many funders. These include individuals, organizations, businesses, labour groups, church groups, sports groups and our three sustaining funders the City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba and the United Way.

**Denis Bracken**  
President,  
Rossbrook House Board of Directors

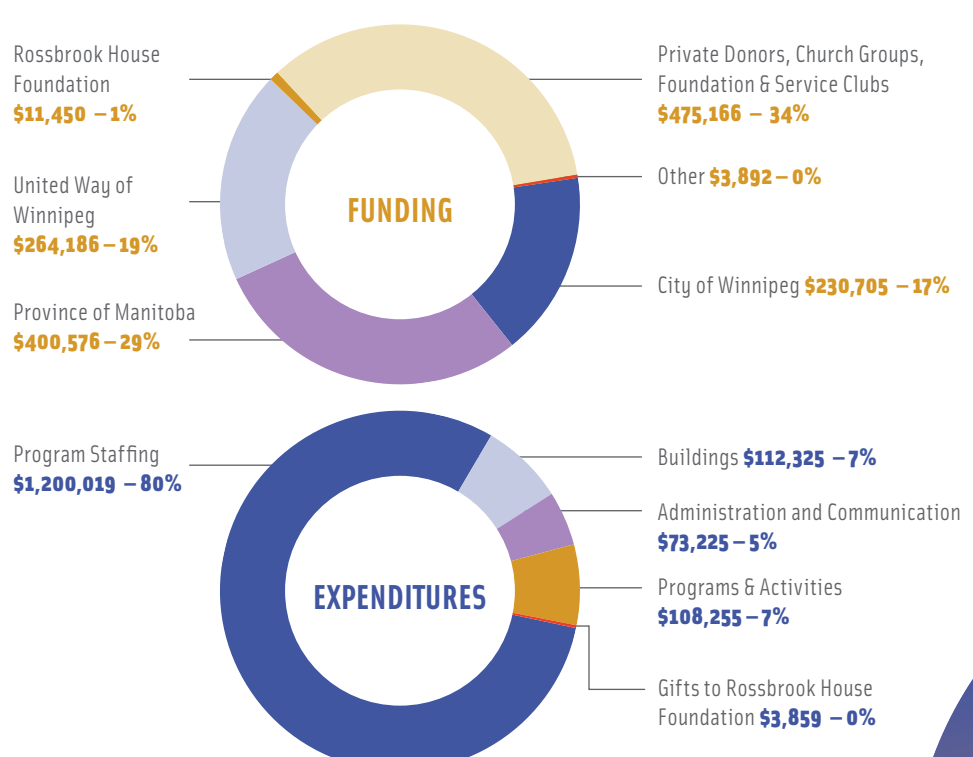
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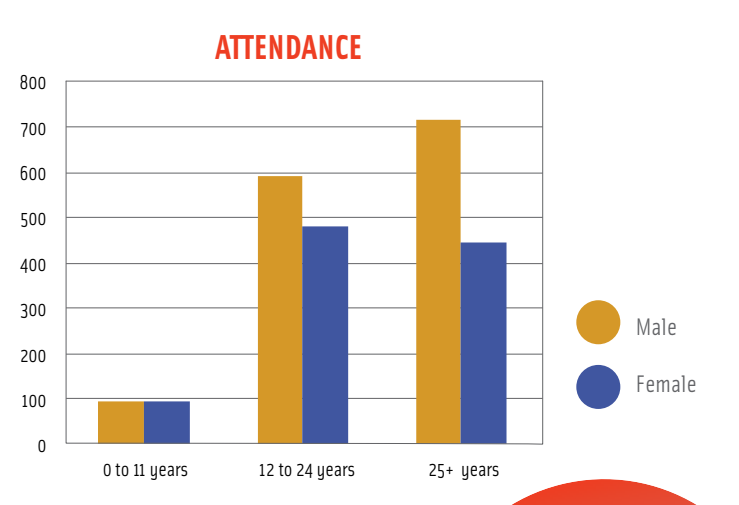


The 2021 Annual Community Meeting is online. Watch June 29 at 9am or anytime afterwards. [rossbrookhouse.ca](http://rossbrookhouse.ca) and on our YouTube channel.

## Financial Information



An audited financial statement is available upon request.



# THANK YOU to supporters of Rossbrook House and the Foundation.

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