

A young girl with long dark hair and a pink bow, wearing a green hooded jacket with a yellow apple patch, is reaching out with both hands towards a large, iridescent bubble. She is standing in a grassy park area with trees and a stone path in the background. Another smaller bubble is visible in the distance to the right.

LAWSON FOUNDATION

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

The Lawson Foundation is a national family foundation that invests in and engages with ideas, people and organizations that contribute to the wellbeing of children and youth and their development as active and engaged members of society.





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A YEAR OF RENEWAL AND NEW DIRECTIONS

2015 was another year of exciting and inspired work focused on children and youth. Our agenda was full, active and exhilarating. Here are just a few highlights.

This year saw the opening of Foundation House - a collaborative and shared space for philanthropy created in partnership with the Laidlaw Foundation and the Counselling Foundation of Canada. But it's much more than a shared space, it's a hub for philanthropic and nonprofit collaboration, learning and sharing. We have already witnessed the power and potential of Foundation House in helping make connections and in creating strategic conversation and debate around philanthropy. We do hope that family members, grantees and stakeholders feel like they can always drop in and meet us in this amazing new space.

2015 also saw the Lawson Foundation join a number of other philanthropic organizations in signing the Philanthropic Community's Declaration of Action in response to the release of the final recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Declaration is a call to action for moving forward in an atmosphere of understanding, dignity and respect towards the shared goal of reconciliation with Canada's indigenous peoples.

A key part of 2015 included our new Outdoor Play Strategy and the funding of initiatives across the country in a new cohort approach. A lot of energy and enthusiasm went into this initiative and we are really pleased with the direction and the response that we're seeing from grantees and the broader community. We truly feel that with the right investment and with a focus on bringing people together to learn from each other, we will be able to move the needle in Canada on increasing children's opportunities for unstructured outdoor play to support their healthy development.

And how about our 5G Fund: Accelerate initiative, led by our 5th Generation (5G) family members! The 5G are keen to move into the world of philanthropy, learn about trends and explore different ways of supporting great projects that can make a difference in the lives of Canadian children and youth. This year the focus was on a micro-granting program that focused on youth and mental health.

Of course, none of what you will discover through our annual report could have been accomplished without the guidance of our committed Board of Directors and our many volunteers who work on various committees to ensure that the Foundation runs smoothly. Our thanks to all of them.

A big thank you also goes to our staff who continue to innovate and push the envelope on so many fronts, all in support of children and youth in Canada.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Wood'.

Jonathan Wood
Chair



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Marcel Lauzière'.

Marcel Lauzière
President & CEO

OUR APPROACH

Our work is focused on the wellbeing of children and youth. We invest in three interconnected impact areas that we believe have a lasting positive effect on their development:

Early Child Development

Promoting and enhancing early child development for the benefit of children, families and Canadian society.

Healthy Active Living

Increasing opportunities for all children and youth to be active and make healthy choices to ensure their full potential.

Children, Youth and the Environment

Promoting the value of outdoor spaces and providing opportunities for children and youth to connect with, value and become stewards of their natural environment.

With a focus on collaboration and continuous learning, we support projects and initiatives of Canadian charities working in these impact areas through:

Our grants to charities

For a variety of activities including community action, knowledge mobilization, monitoring, leadership, knowledge development, capacity building, and evaluation.

Our role as a convenor, connector and collaborator

To create bridges and conversations, by bringing leaders and organizations together to share knowledge and learn from one another.

Our impact investing strategies

Leveraging our foundation assets to make intentional investments in social good.



FOUNDATION HOUSE

The Lawson Foundation officially took up residence at Foundation House - a new hub for philanthropic collaboration, learning and sharing in Toronto.

As one of three founding partners, along with the Laidlaw Foundation and the Counselling Foundation of Canada, the Lawson Foundation is excited by the potential of Foundation House to spark greater collaboration in the philanthropic and charitable sector.

And the idea is taking off with a stellar group of organizations joining us at Foundation House including the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC), the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) and the Canadian Environmental Grantmakers' Network (CEGN). Philanthropic Foundations Canada (PFC), Community Foundations of Canada (CFC), The Circle on Philanthropy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, and GrantBook also have a presence at Foundation House.

Great people sharing great ideas!



5G FUND: ACCELERATE



Stephanie Wood (Co-Chair)



Jason Woods



Anna Gardiner



Robbie Gardiner



Bryan Lawson (4th Gen)



Robin Lawson



Charlotte Gardiner



Taylor VanDuzer



Christina Wood



Amanda Mayer (Staff, Co-Chair)

In 2015, we reached out to the fifth generation of Lawson family members and invited them to roll up their sleeves and engage in the work of the Foundation.

The result? 5G Fund: Accelerate. A micro-granting program that aims to kick-start ideas that will contribute to the wellbeing of Canadian communities.

In its inaugural year, 5G decided to focus on youth mental health and awarded 14 micro-grants for a total of \$38,800 in support for youth mental health projects across Canada.

For more information about the funded programs, visit lawson.ca/accelerate.

IMPACT INVESTING

In addition to our grantmaking, the Lawson Foundation is leveraging its assets to create social good through impact investing. Unlike grants, impact investments are investments made into social enterprises, organizations, and funds with the intention to generate measurable social and environmental impacts alongside a financial return.

In 2015, the Foundation made two impact investments:

Trec SolarShare Co-Operative

Investment: \$200,000

SolarShare is a nonprofit cooperative with a mission to grow community-based solar electricity generation in Ontario by engaging citizens in projects that offer tangible environmental, social and financial returns (triple bottom line).

Innovation Works

Investment: \$500,000

Innovation Works is an initiative to provide collaborative shared space for charities, nonprofits and social enterprises that are working for social good in the London region in Ontario. Innovation Works is on track for its opening in June 2016.

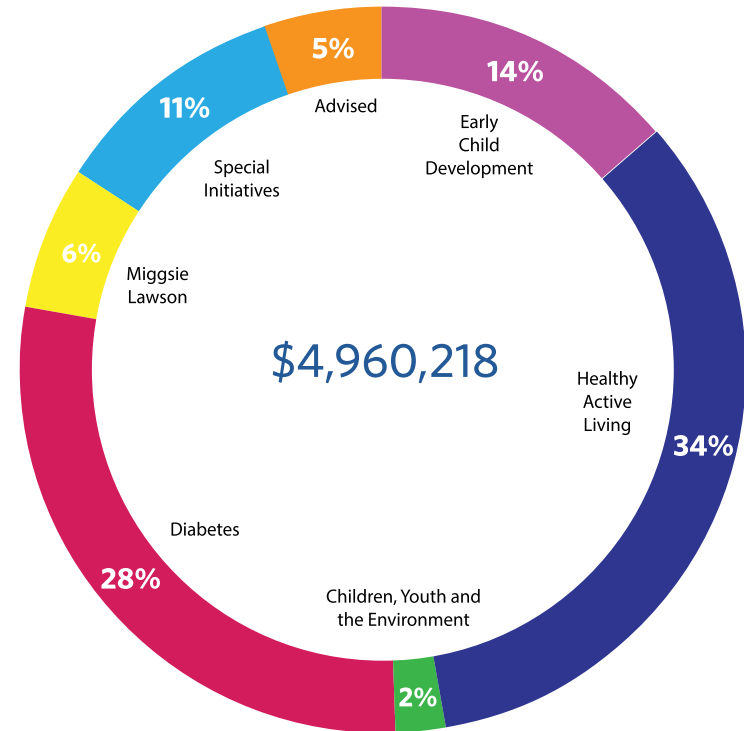
The Foundation also granted \$240,000 to the MaRS Centre for Impact Investing to help advance the marketplace for impact investment in Canada. This represents an important way for the Foundation to play a leadership role in impact investing in Canada.





FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2015 Grants



Impact investment commitments \$2,200,000

Total investments in communities \$7,160,218

The information presented for the year ending December 31, 2015 is derived from our 2015 Financial Statements which were audited by PwC LLP. The statements are available online at lawson.ca.

FUNDED PROJECTS

Early Child Development

The Board approved \$305,000 in new grants and disbursed \$676,000 in payments in 2015.

UNICEF Canada Children's Observatory
Canadian UNICEF Committee

Encyclopedia on Early Child Development
Fondation Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Sainte-Justine

A Smart Investment in Our Future: Igniting a commitment
to an early childhood system
Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC) Child Care
Education Ontario Inc.

Children, Youth and the Environment

The Board approved and disbursed \$110,000 in new grants
in 2015.

Systematic Review on the Impact of Nature on the Healthy
Development of Children and Youth: Evidence, Gaps and
Opportunities
University of Victoria

Systematic Review on the Impact of Nature on the Healthy
Development of Children and Youth from an Environmental
Psychology Perspective
Western University





SPOTLIGHT: Collaboration in Action

The Lawson Foundation is a founding member of the Early Child Development Funders Working Group (ECD-FWG) which began its collaboration in 2009. The group is many things: a cross-Canada learning network, a deeply shared commitment to children, a link among eight very diverse foundations. Its goal is simple - the availability of quality, publicly-funded early childhood education for every preschool child.

Above all, the group is living proof of the power of collaboration.

In June 2015, the group published a joint open letter to the leaders of the main political parties to urge Canada's politicians to recognize that early childhood education is a must-have element in building a more prosperous country and to invest in quality early childhood education for all children across Canada. This was followed by a series of meetings with ministers and senior officials in provinces across the country.

Members:

Atkinson Foundation
Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon
Jimmy Pratt Foundation
J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
Lyle S. Hallman Foundation
The Lawson Foundation
Margaret & Wallace McCain Family Foundation
The Muttart Foundation

SPOTLIGHT: Launch of Outdoor Play Strategy

In delivering on our new strategic direction, the Foundation embraced outdoor play as a significant area of focus for our work to support and encourage healthy active living for children and youth - recognizing that play, particularly unstructured outdoor play, is essential for healthy child development.

In 2015 we developed and launched our Outdoor Play Strategy that aims to increase children's opportunities for self-directed play outdoors in all settings - at home, in school, in child care, the community and nature. To date we have committed \$2.7 million to the Strategy through 2018.

The projects range across physical activity, recreation, injury prevention, public health, early childhood education, environment, education, mental health - all focused on children's outdoor play. Collectively the projects will produce tools, resources and training to build practitioner and decision maker capacity to support outdoor play, test delivery models for community implementation, and use research and evaluation to measure the effectiveness of various approaches.

We are using a cohort approach where the projects will convene periodically to network, share and learn together. An evaluation has been commissioned to capture what the Foundation and our grantees will learn.





Healthy Active Living

The Board approved \$2,562,650 in new grants and disbursed \$1,674,150 in payments in 2015.

A Child's Right to Free Play: A risk mitigation policy toolkit to support risky play
Canadian Public Health Association

Children's Outdoor Play Experiences: Why they play and how they benefit
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Foundation for the Forest and Nature School Movement in Canada
Child and Nature Alliance of Canada

YYC PLAY
City of Calgary

Can loose parts foster unstructured, self-directed, risky outdoor play? A multilevel intervention in early years settings
Dalhousie University

The Opal Project: Modelling outdoor play and learning in school communities
Earth Day Canada

Dig in to Play!
Ecosource Mississauga

Creating a Nurturing Outdoor Environment: Supporting active play for infants and young children
Fonds du Regroupement des Centres de la Petite Enfance de la Montérégie

Embracing Our Winter City: Extending, enhancing and expanding winter play opportunities for preschoolers
Glenora Child Care Society

Active Outdoor Play: Position statement activation and impact
KidActive - Healthy Kids, Communities and Outdoors

Play Ambassadors
Nose Creek Sports and Recreation Association

Building Capacity: Creating specialized outdoor play training to empower children's experiences
Okanagan College

2015 Report Card on the Physical Activity of Children and Youth
ParticipACTION

Evaluation of the Outdoor Play Strategy
The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation

Go Play Outside: Reframing risk to promote children's outdoor play
University of British Columbia

Outdoor Classroom Specialist
YMCA of London Foundation

Diabetes

The Board approved \$1,250,000 in new grants and disbursed \$1,410,043 in payments in 2015.

NorWest Mobile Diabetes Screening and Intervention
NorWest Co-Op Community Health Centre

Developmental Origins of Chronic Diseases in Childhood in Manitoba
University of Manitoba

An Investigative Documentary Book: Confronting type 2 diabetes among children in Manitoba
University of Manitoba

2015 International Diabetes Epidemiology Group meeting in Vancouver
University of British Columbia

Miggsie

In 2015, the Foundation approved 181,500 in new grants and disbursed \$316,500 in payments to the London area community from the Miggsie Fund, bringing total grants disbursed from the Fund to \$2,278,000.



Advised Giving

The Board approved and disbursed \$249,125 in grants during the year to charities in communities across the country.

Special Initiatives

In 2015, the Foundation continued to demonstrate its responsiveness and nimbleness as a funder with grants to support efforts relating to the welcoming of Syrian refugees to Canada as well as disaster relief in the wake of the devastating earthquakes that struck Nepal in April.

The Board approved \$873,300 in new grants and disbursed \$524,300 in payments during the year to support the engagement of the 5th generation of family members (5G), to support new ideas, opportunities and partnerships to support initiatives of historical and legacy interest, and to strengthen philanthropy in Canada including:

Communicating the Value and Role of the Philanthropic Foundation Sector to Canadians
Philanthropic Foundations Canada

Strengthening Governance: National Standards Program
Imagine Canada

Supporting Collaboration Through Innovation Works
Pillar Nonprofit Network



For more information on any of our grants,
visit lawson.ca.

SPOTLIGHT: DEVOTION


DEVOTION - Developmental Origins of Chronic Disease in Childhood : A research cluster led by the University of Manitoba and the Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba.

\$1.2 million over six years (2015-2020).

Integrating the strengths and infrastructure of two accomplished research teams in partnership with existing knowledge users, patients and policy makers, DEVOTION is creating a new "bench to backyard" network focused on the developmental origins of chronic diseases in youth. By the end of the first five years, the DEVOTION cluster will:

- Create one of the largest biobanks of tissues for epigenetic and microbiota analyses
- Develop administrative databases to make population-level discoveries related to the early-life determinants of chronic disease in youth
- Identify and support implementation of new interventions to reduce the burden of chronic disease, targeting the ideal period of life to intervene in children at highest risk for chronic disease.

The Lawson Foundation is supporting DEVOTION'S efforts to build capacity and promote knowledge mobilization in indigenous communities across Manitoba and links to public policy.

A photograph of a person's legs and feet standing on a large, dark, wet rock in a shallow stream. The water is dark and rippling. The background is a dense thicket of green grass and foliage. The lighting is soft, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

// Go and play.
Run around.
Build something.
Break something.
Climb a tree.
Get dirty.
Get in some trouble.
Have some fun. //

- Brom, *The Child Thief*



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Program Director

Karen Pischedda
Grants Manager

Karen Shelstad
Program Director

Marcel Lauzière
President & CEO

** Board or committee term
ended in May 2015.*

*** Board or committee term
started in May 2015.*

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