



A Day in Review 2020-2021



## A Typical Day???

- ⇒ 'I'd like to start with the "day before" the typical KAP day'
- ⇒ 'Most evenings of the week we are emailing back and forth, coordinating for the following day'
- ⇒ 'Thursday, started yesterday with shopping and prepping to cook for 60 (+) participants - there is every chance I will receive a text early the next morning saying something has changed'
- ⇒ 'Looking back at my schedule, I see there is no typical day ever!'
- ⇒ 'What is a typical day? Such a hard question when there are no two days the same. There is so much work to be done'
- ⇒ 'A "typical KAP day" is impossible to capture—and frankly, when looking at the nature of the work we do, there is nothing "typical" about it'

## **What a Year!**

In one year Kids Action Program works with and supports families throughout Kings and Hants Counties. Here is a high level overview of the 2020-2021 fiscal year:

- ⇒ Programs were offered at different outdoor sites when possible—virtual when it was not possible to meet in person
- ⇒ 776 parents/caregivers attended programs or received support
- ⇒ 1707 children were positively impacted through attending programs and/or through their parents learning new ways in which to interact with their children
- ⇒ 63 pre- and postnatal women were supported throughout their pregnancies—support continues after the baby is born—47 healthy babies were born
- ⇒ More than 100 men accessed programs
- ⇒ KAP delivered food and essentials to families no less than 3 times per week (most weeks more)
- ⇒ Kids Action Program has many partnerships with likeminded organizations and/or individuals—VCLA, Churches, Universities, Doctors, Lawyers, Mental Health, etc.
- ⇒ Kids Action Program partners with the local radio station, Rewind each year to provide Christmas to families and children throughout Kings County—we help over 350 people each year
- ⇒ Kids Action Program is responsible for organizing the Angel Tree in Hants—more than 150 people are assisted during Christmas
- ⇒ Kids Action Program worked cooperatively with the Department of Community Services to provide food for families





## **And the Day Begins**

- ⇒ 'Most days start out with a phone in my hand continuing conversations from the night before and starting new ones for the day'
- ⇒ 'I try to leave my house between 8 – 8:30 am in the morning and head out to deliver food and supplies to families'
- ⇒ 'I usually rise around 7:30 often to my phone ringing, it's usually a participant with last minute changes about the day'
- ⇒ 'I attempt to leave my house around 9:00 to begin the participant pick up and delivery to programs'
- ⇒ 'I usually start my day at 6:00, it's quiet and I can think about the day...of course it always changes. I can plan, but...'



## **Some things people may not know...**

While many people in Kings County are familiar with the programs offered in this area, you may not be familiar with our programs in East Hants, specifically, Kennetcook and the surrounding area. Many of the programs are similar, however, some are specific to each county. As well, you may not recognize a few of the names as I introduce the entire staff, a dedicated and caring group of individuals I have the honour and privilege of working with.

The incredible team members offering services in Kennetcook and surrounding area are:

Hants County— Kim Burns, Director, Hants County

Diane Hennigar, Children's programmer

Ashley Boyd, Great Beginnings Prenatal and Early Infancy Program

The extraordinary staff team offering programs in Kings County are:

Kings County— Suann Boates, Director, Kings County

Mark Crouse, Children's Program Director

Donna Ellis, Community Outreach Specialist

Sandra White, Coordinator, Great Beginnings Prenatal and Early Infancy Program

Leah Salsman, Community Outreach Specialist

**This is the most amazing and dedicated group of individuals I have ever the honour of working with. They bring strength, skill and hearts to our team! They are also respectful, non-judgmental, work with integrity and are committed to the people we serve. This is how they describe one another:**

**Suann Boates** is the Director in Kings County. Suann is remarkably kind and compassionate. She cares deeply about the people that she works with and our community; I can see that through her tremendous work, and her caring that drives it. She is always checking in on your well-being, as well as sharing her appreciation for others. Suann is a gentle soul, do not let that fool you though. She is a strong, capable woman who believes everyone has the right to be heard and treated with respect – she ensures they are! She is dedicated, honest and has a high level of integrity. She works tirelessly to support a high number of families because she believes in people. Kids Action Program is fortunate to have her. If we did not, a lot of families would be left dealing with a system they do not know..

**Kim Burns** is the Director in Hants County. Kim is one of those people who you know is always in your corner. She listens without judgement and validates your feelings. She carries a lot yet never complains or looks for praise. She is the type of person who does things because it is the right thing to do, not because she feels she has to. She is one of the most positive people you will ever meet, and it is contagious. She is a champion for her community and works continuously to help make things easier for the children and families she comes in contact with. If something is going on in her neck of the woods, you will no doubt find her there. She is kind, compassionate and dedicated to this work. Kids Action Program is fortunate to have her. If we did not, a lot of families would be unsupported.

**Mark Crouse** is the Children's Program Director (Kings). Mark is a kind-hearted, thoughtful, family-focused man. He loves to laugh, has a very dry wit, is creative and someone every child should have as a role model. He is an honourable man, one to look up to. Mark loves connecting with the outdoors, providing adventures and sharing his love of nature with others, especially the children. He is a gentle soul who cares deeply about children and families. Mark is a quiet person who will have an impact on the children he works with for the rest of their lives. He is in his element when he is teaching children in a way in which they learn best – through experience.

**Donna Ellis** is a Community Outreach Specialist (Kings). Donna is kind-hearted, compassionate, and authentic. She sincerely cares about people, sometimes referring to herself as the mother some people need. Donna is a sincere person with a high level of integrity. If you ask her a question, she will answer – honesty. She is an integral team member without whom, we would flounder. Donna is a kind, empathic listener. She is the first one to say she may not have answers – she has a great ear though! Donna is witty, likable and someone people enjoy spending time with, not to mention her fantastic cooking skills—we have all benefitted.

**Sandra White** is the Great Beginnings Coordinator in Kings County. In the bible, the name Sandra means 'defender of mankind' or 'she is brave'. Aptly named, Sandra is a devoted daughter, wife, mother, mentor, caregiver, and staff member. She genuinely cares about people and is a 'mother to all'. Her calm demeanor is soothing in times of crisis and the bond she creates with others is cemented in trust. Sandra is often quiet, though her brain does not stop – ever. She is creative, approachable, dependable, funny, and most of all, she is generous with her time. She is a champion for families.



**Leah Salsman** is a Community Outreach Specialist (Kings). She is an intelligent young woman who is kind, thoughtful and spontaneous; she has a tremendous sense of justice. She has a great ability to assess the needs of a vulnerable individual without judgement. She takes her work and studies seriously, respecting coworkers and classmates. Leah joined Kids Action Program as a temporary staff member. We like her so much we have kept her. Leah has a wonderful sense of humour, is dedicated and is willing to step in at a moment's notice—she is fun, imaginative and willing to step outside her comfort zone. We are fortunate to have her. Best of all, she adores her mother!

**Ashley Boyd** is the Great Beginnings Outreach staff. She is a new/not new staff member. She was a summer student with us a few years ago and we loved her. Alas, she returned to university that fall and then had a beautiful daughter (she already had a son whom we had met during her summer with us). We have missed her and are so happy to have her back. Ashley is kind, compassionate and a pleasure to be around. She never says an unkind word and is a dedicated mom! She is continuously working on herself and she always wants the best for everyone. If you know Ashley, you are blessed!

**Diane Hennigar** is the Children's Programmer in Hants. She is a gentle soul with a kind heart. Her family is the most important part of her life and they are so fortunate to have her. She is a quiet and thoughtful person so when she shares her thoughts, we know it means a great deal to her. Diane appears shy when you first meet her—however, if you see her with the children, you know where she shines. Diane cares deeply about the children and families in and around her community and has a positive impact on the lives of the children she interacts with. She retired once and she has come back...we are not going to let her go easily next time.

There is something for families and/or children every day!

What follows is a number of programs offered throughout the year when we are not in a pandemic—this past year has been complicated; however, we made it!

(this list is not exhaustive):

- ⇒ Circle of Security
- ⇒ Anger Management
- ⇒ Moms in Motion
- ⇒ Mini– and Mystery-trips
- ⇒ Celebrate Mondays
- ⇒ Parent and Child Playgroups
- ⇒ March Break and summer programs
- ⇒ Cooking Workshops
- ⇒ SOUP (Saving Our Unused Produce)
- ⇒ Supper Club
- ⇒ Games Club
- ⇒ Prenatal Classes
- ⇒ Seniors and Kids
- ⇒ For the Love of Kids
- ⇒ Supervised Access and Exchange Program
- ⇒ Support
- ⇒ Clothing Giveaways
- ⇒ Help getting through complicated systems (CPS, Family Court, etc.)



**Here is a glance at the programs KAP offered throughout the year...**

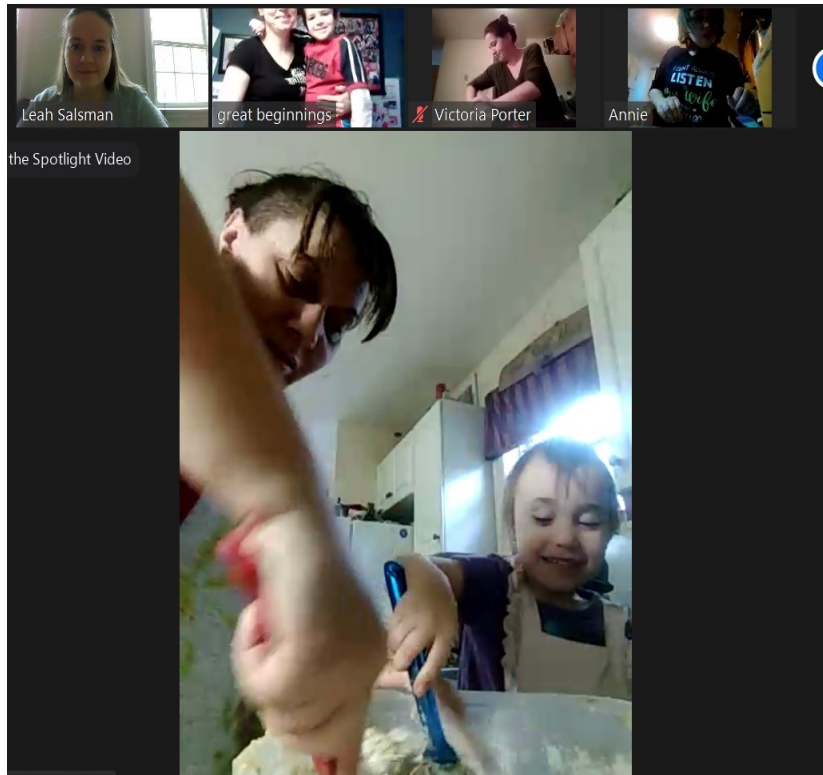
**Children on hikes, or exploring their communities**

...the children are so excited when they are able to spend time with Mark and Leah! The day is so packed with adventure that they do not even miss the electronics. The children have fun and, the parents appreciate the break!



## Moms in Motion

Moms cooked 'together' virtually when they weren't able to get together physically. Parents had a blast and the children were involved. Ingredients and recipes were delivered to homes the day before the cooking took place. The next morning, families went on Zoom and put the recipes together...yum!



There was a great deal of positive feedback regarding this program; families had fun cooking together, enjoyed seeing one another and liked the comradery (the food was great too).



Children exploring their community  
and the benefits of nature!





**KAP partnered with Flying Squirrel to offer an outdoor experience as well.**







When **Moms in Motion** couldn't meet outdoors, the Soccer Dome came in handy. And when they could go outside, it was great!







When it was possible we facilitated picnics or popsicles in Oakdene Park or a day at a splash pad or outdoor games or a day out....





And then there were the meals that were prepared each week for families in need, those living alone, seniors...it allowed us to check on people and to feed them.





And then there was the food that was donated or secured locally and through Second Harvest.





The Department of Community Services recognized the struggle families were having. In May 2021, FRCs were contacted and offered the opportunity to purchase and provide food for our clients and be reimburse. We were able to provide food to 135 families



Special thanks to DCS for the funds and Giant Tiger for the help we received packing the food!!





We delivered school supplies in partnership with the Dept. of Ed, made up snack bags for 100 families (kids eat a lot!) and gave out things to do. As well, Rotary provided numerous masks to give out...it has been a year!





Lots of things went on in Hants County as well. For example, KAP was instrumental in finding a new home for the foodbank in North Hants. After much work by Kim, they not only have a new home, it did not cost anything. And, it is a shopping model!





KAP is always concerned about food for families we work with; this has been especially true during the pandemic. We have provided food to hundreds of families throughout COVID-19.





There were lots of outdoor programs so everyone could get together safely! On July 1, a group got together at the Court House Hill where they blew bubbles and could see five counties.





Great Beginnings was in operation and KAP was involved with creating a garden box program in Findley Park.





There were lots of trips to the park...everyone enjoyed, even the 'adults'.





Fun in the puddles and at the splash pad (it is new).





# Food for Christmas!



## **SUMMARY OF THE YEAR**

We have worked extremely hard during this entire pandemic. We saw our role as filling gaps in services and, to the best of our ability, providing supports for the families we work with; frankly, it is a highly vulnerable population. Through partnerships and donations, we have fed a tremendous number of families. Donations included items such as diapers, formula, personal items, and food. We obtained \$15,000 worth of gift cards for food, we worked with food-banks to get food to families, we provided snack and activity bags for 100 families, and we worked with the Department of Education to pack and distribute school supplies. And, most importantly, we calmed fears, reduced isolation, checked on families, we made a multitude of calls each day to participants, we provided child and family programs outdoors when the restrictions loosened, and ensured families had correct information. COVID-19 has been going on for a long time. The fact that we have remained connected to participants is a testament to the work we all do. Included in this is the strengthening of partnerships in the community.



## **BRAVO**

I have the privilege of working with a dedicated, caring and incredible group of individuals. The KAP staff members have stepped up since the first positive covid diagnosis in the province and have worked tirelessly to ensure families know they are cared about. Snack bags, activity bags, postcards, provision of food and other essentials are only a sample of what they have done during this pandemic to support our communities and participants. If that was not enough, AVH-CAPC has secured an office location in Kings that is in the heart of where we need to be Suann). And, Kids Action Program (Kim) in Hants managed to secure a new home for the Foodbank *for free*! It is important to me that the Board know how amazing the Kids Action Staff is and how fortunate the organization is to have them – it is an honour to work with them every, single, day.

***Thank you for taking the time to read this!***