

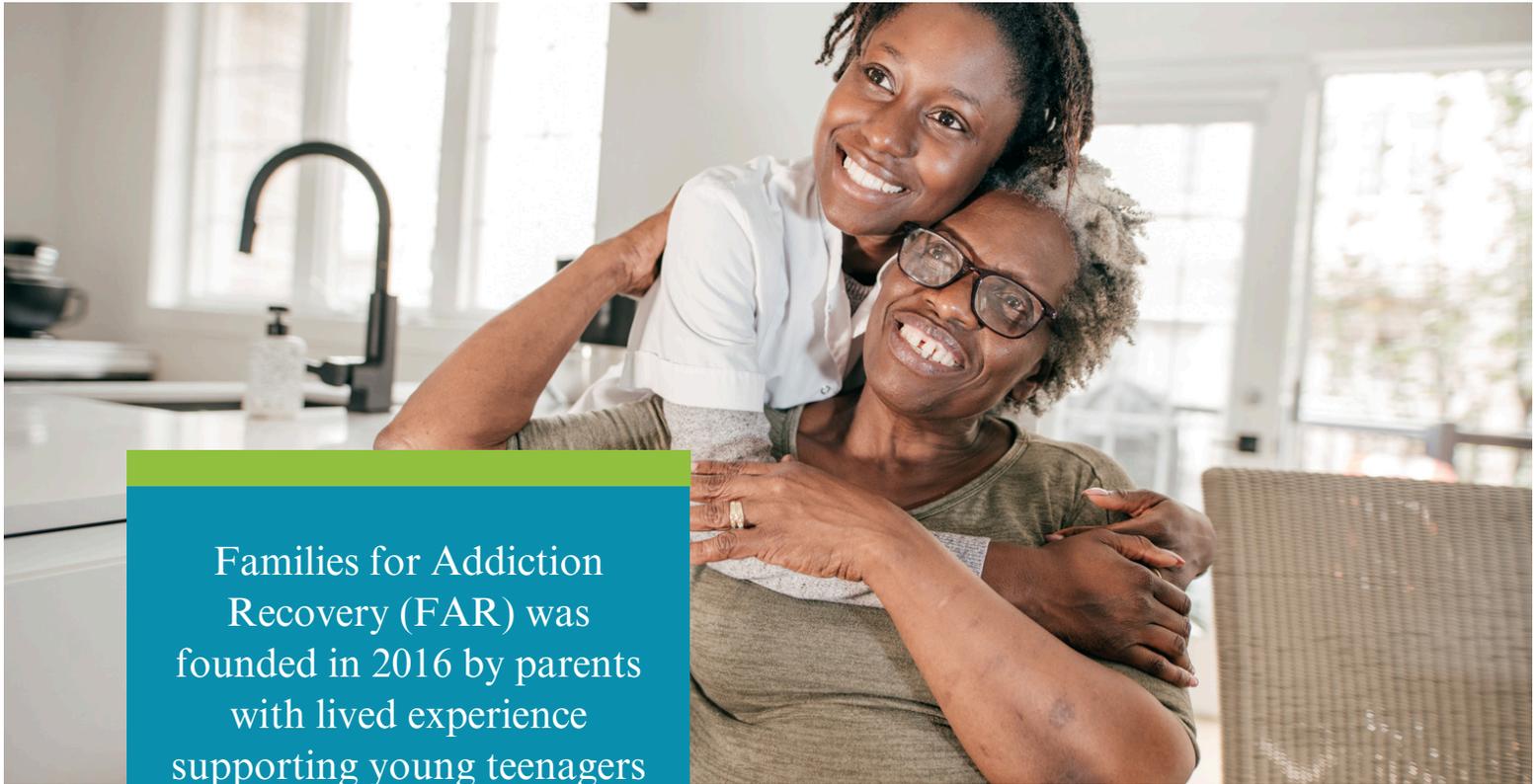


Families for  
Addiction Recovery

**Annual Report**  
**2024-2025**

# Who We Are

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Families for Addiction Recovery (FAR) was founded in 2016 by parents with lived experience supporting young teenagers with substance use disorders (SUD).

## Our Programs

FAR provides 3 free peer support services for family caregivers across Canada: the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Program, online family support groups, and a live telephone support line. All FAR volunteers receive extensive training in The Invitation to Change Approach developed by CMC: Foundation for Change. It is a non-confrontational, compassionate and evidence-based approach that combines Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT), Motivational Interviewing, and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.

## Our Mission and Vision

The mission of Families for Addiction Recovery is to support families affected by SUD, educate about SUD, advocate for protective health laws and protective drug policies, research the impact of SUD on families, protect our families from the legal and illegal drug trades and end stigma. Our vision is long term recovery for those with SUD and their families.

## Our Research

FAR partners with educational institutions and others to advance research to raise awareness of the plight of families affected by addiction and how to remove barriers to improving outcomes for those with SUD and their families.

## Our Education/Awareness

FAR engages in many education and training initiatives focused primarily on health care providers and family caregivers, but also for the broader community. These conference presentations, webinars and workshops cover a range of topics relevant to families affected by SUD. These topics include raising awareness of SUD as a preventable and treatable illness and of systemic barriers, including policies and practices, to improving outcomes for those with SUD and their families. FAR champions family-centred care to ensure that caregivers are respected and supported in these roles within the healthcare system and that their needs are met.



FAR also creates public service announcements that play on conventional and specialty television stations across Canada to millions of viewers to raise awareness of SUD as a treatable illness that can affect any family, to reduce stigma and raise awareness of our free services to support families.

## Our Advocacy

FAR meets with all levels of government to discuss barriers to improving outcomes for those with SUD and their families. These barriers include the lack of compassionate, evidence-based treatment on demand, current drug policies regarding illegal drugs as well as the regulation of legal drugs, and health laws relating to consent/capacity, privacy and involuntary treatment.

FAR has been on several panels and workgroups of Toronto Public Health with respect to the Toronto Drug Strategy and its implementation, as well as to develop a model of decriminalization of drugs for personal use for the City of Toronto.



# What We Achieved

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291

Caregivers Supported in  
Our P2P Program

Calls to Our Live Phone  
Line Answered

708

2,300

Hours of P2P Support  
Provided to Caregivers

Caregivers Attended Our  
Bi-Weekly Online  
Support Group

260

## Our Service Impact in Numbers

During our 2024-2025 fiscal year ended March 31, 2025, our trained peers supported 291 caregivers in our P2P program, answered 708 calls to our live phone line, and 260 caregivers attended one of our bi-weekly online support groups. Each caregiver in our P2P program receives 8 hours of support, generally over a three-month period. This means that FAR's P2P Program provided over 2,300 hours of support to caregivers.

## Our Service Impact in Words

In the words of family members we have supported:

“ I am extremely grateful for the amazing support, compassion and encouragement received from the P2P program. The knowledge and resources shared helped me to better understand what my son has been experiencing and to feel less guilt regarding his situation. To regain moments of my happy self when I did not think that was possible was a gift. The understanding and compassion from a peer who has lived my experiences provided a sense of encouragement and commitment to move forward in supporting and loving my son, and myself ”

“ Peer to Peer support helped set my family on a journey toward healing. My peer support person checked in with me consistently to make sure that I was taking care of myself while trying to help my son. I felt like someone was in my corner while I looked out for my son. At times when I felt helpless and couldn't find a way forward, my support person was there to gently guide me toward the next step of encouraging my son and finding support. ”

“ P2P provided a significantly powerful layer to my therapy, one that was unlike what I receive from group therapy. I feel it is a necessary component to better understanding our struggles as caregivers. I will be eternally grateful for the care that was provided. ”

## 2024 - 2025 Research

FAR continued our collaboration on a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) funded partnership grant with Dr. Toula Kourgiantakis from Université Laval on youth and young adult cannabis use. The aim of this study is to better understand how cannabis is affecting youth and young adults from the perspectives of young people under 25, parents and service providers.

FAR is engaged in ongoing research through a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) funded study with Dr. Oona St-Amant from Toronto Metropolitan University, along with co-investigators from CAMH, Western University, and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. It is called “Families Responding to Substance Use Disorders: A Community-Engagement Study to Promote Family-Centred Public Health Policy and Health Service Delivery”, and aims to identify policies, practices, and health laws that affect family caregivers. Using participatory action research, the study will develop family-centred recommendations to promote social change and better support families affected by SUD through innovative policies and practices.

## 2024 - 2025 Education / Awareness

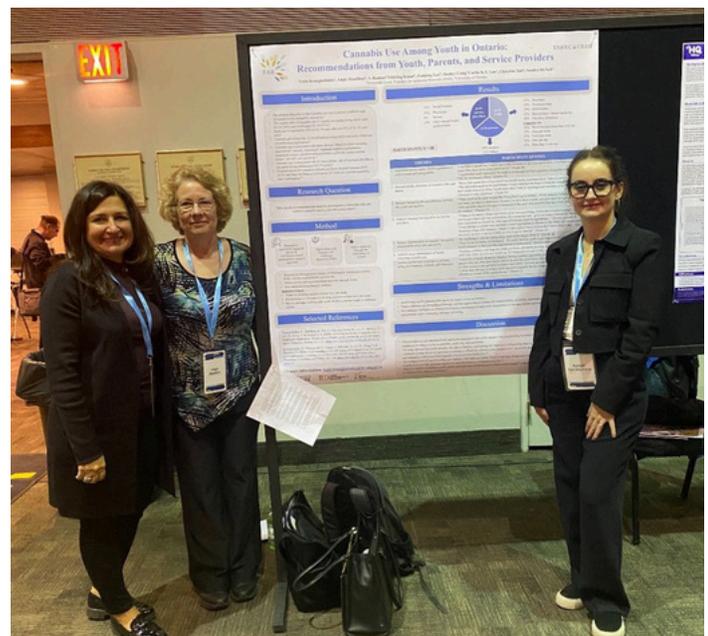
Board Member, Oona St. Amant, presented Family Counterculture and Addiction in Canada at the **Addiction and the Family International Network (AFINet)** Conference in September, 2024. It is the first of many themes from our CIHR funded research into caregiver perspectives of laws, policies and practices in the treatment of SUD. We are currently finalizing that manuscript for publication.

FAR's Executive Director, Angie Hamilton, spoke at the first annual conference of the newly formed **Canadian Academy of Addiction Psychiatry (CAAP)**, on a panel discussing Involuntary Treatment of High-Risk Substance Users and in another session on Family Involvement in the Treatment and Recovery of Individuals with Concurrent Disorders. FAR is grateful to have been part of these critical conversations, advocating for families and better support systems. A special thank you to volunteer Sue Tait who occupied our information booth and to everyone who joined us and contributed to this meaningful dialogue!



FAR's position on involuntary treatment was published in a joint op-ed with Dr. Rob Tanguay in the *Globe and Mail*: [Involuntary treatment for severe addiction is better than doing nothing](#).

Kumsal Tekirdag-Kosar and Toula Kourgiantakis presented our poster titled "Recommendations from Ontario Youth, Parents/Caregivers, and Service Providers on Cannabis Use in Youth and Young Adults" at the **Canadian Society of Addiction Medicine (CSAM) 2024 Scientific Conference**.



Our research paper, Reducing the harms of cannabis use in youth post-legalization: insights from Ontario youth, parents, and service providers, was published in the Harm Reduction Journal and other papers are on the way!

FAR Canada was honored to have Doug Hunter, Louise Lemieux White, and Suzanne Grether present to medical and nursing students at Ottawa University. Doug led the English session, “Problematic Substance Use - Leveraging Families,” while Louise and Suzanne led the French session, “L’Utilization des Substances - Impliquer les Familles.” These impactful presentations, hosted by Ottawa Public Health, highlighted the vital role families play in addressing substance use. A big thank you to Ottawa Public Health and everyone involved for giving us the opportunity to participate and share our lived experience!



In December, 2024 FAR participated in a panel presentation through **Homewood Research Institute (HRI)** on the topic Is Involuntary Treatment an Answer?

On March, 2025 FAR’s Executive Director, Angie Hamilton, joined as a panelist at the **Human Services and Justice Coordination Committee (HSJCC) Summit 2025** on Involuntary Treatment for Addiction.

## Other

FAR’s public service announcement, “When I Grow Up,” addresses stigma and brings hope by raising awareness that SUD is a treatable illness which can affect anyone and that no one wants to struggle with addiction. It has been seen by millions of viewers across Canada on conventional and specialty television stations thanks to the generosity of broadcasters who donate air time to our cause.



FAR joined with community partners for International Overdose Awareness Day at Toronto City Hall and shared stories of personal loss. The “Toronto” sign at City Hall as well as the CN Tower were illuminated in purple.



FAR Board Members, David Addison, Peter McCarter and Hamish White



Flags of Hope at the Base of the CN Tower for IOAD 2024 with Irene Reilly (Roger’s Mom) and Angie Hamilton, FAR

The Chair of FAR’s Education Committee, Doug Hunter, and FAR Volunteer Suzanne Grether, represented FAR at the Working on Wellness (WOW) Festival in Ottawa.

FAR received the Proclamation of the Mayor of Toronto declaring September 30<sup>th</sup> as Recovery Day for the City of Toronto and arranged for the “Toronto” sign at City Hall to be illuminated in purple.

## 2024-2025 Advocacy

FAR submitted a Brief on the Opioid Epidemic and Toxic Drug Crisis to the Federal Standing Committee on Health (HESA) in which we endorsed the recommendations in Briefs submitted by The Canadian Society of Addiction Medicine and Children's Healthcare Canada and added further recommendations of our own.

FAR also joined community partners to request that the Ontario government develop a provincial alcohol strategy to mitigate the harms of alcohol particularly given the expedited expansion of retail sales in Ontario.

# Our Financials

Our revenue and expenses for the last two years are set out below. Our revenue from donations is approximately the same as for our previous fiscal year.

The fair market value of the airplay of our public service announcements, recorded as gifts-in-kind, increased by \$673,000 (51%) to over \$1,975,000. Administrative expenses remain low at \$5,160.

## Statement of Revenue and Expenses and Net Assets

Page 4

	Note	Year ended March 31	
		2025	2024
<b>Revenue</b>			
Donations			
Foundations		\$ 26,496	\$ 20,249
Individuals		38,041	45,327
		<u>64,537</u>	<u>65,576</u>
Gift-in-kind - Public Service Announcements	2	1,978,620	1,305,886
Interest and investment income		2,982	3,316
		<u>2,046,139</u>	<u>1,374,778</u>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Program</b>			
Education and awareness	2	2,016,014	1,327,545
Family support services		33,136	22,893
Telephone support line		18,553	15,220
Professional development		1,580	545
		<u>2,069,283</u>	<u>1,366,203</u>
<b>Non-program</b>			
Administration		5,159	6,801
Professional fees		6,055	5,189
		<u>11,214</u>	<u>11,990</u>
Total expenses		<u>2,080,497</u>	<u>1,378,193</u>
Excess of expenses over revenue for the year		(34,358)	(3,415)
Net assets, beginning of year		117,686	121,101
Net assets, end of year		<u>\$ 83,328</u>	<u>\$ 117,686</u>

# What We Envision

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As we look to the future, we are excited to prepare additional papers for publication and presentation on the learnings from our studies on youth and young adult cannabis use, as well as our research on laws, policies, and practices in the treatment of SUD and how they impact family caregivers to those with SUD.

We will continue to support caregivers for those affected by SUD in every way possible to the best of our abilities and as our resources allow.

# Contact Us

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For further information, please reach out to us



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