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Annual  
**REPORT** 2016

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Celebrating a Year of Smiles



"Your donation of toys, games and other items make it possible for us to bring joy and comfort to the patients at SickKids. Your gifts and thoughtfulness enhance the hospital environment for the patients here at SickKids and enable us to create opportunities for children to learn, grow and to be a child."

- SickKids Hospital, Toronto

Evan, Starlight Alumnus and Volunteer





**Starlight Children's Foundation Canada aims to brighten the lives of seriously ill children and their families when they need it the most by bringing them a little joy, laughter and relief. We focus on the family as a whole, at a time when they feel most isolated, offering programs and events that can provide an escape from the stress of dealing with a serious illness every day.**



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



What a tremendously uplifting and exciting time to be part of the magic of Starlight Children's Foundation Canada. You're part of the magic, and we're delighted to share with you just a few highlights from our 2016 year.

Our philosophy of being a needs-based organization continued this year, seeing great feedback from our For Us By Us (FUBU) committee which highlighted our excellence in providing programs such as Great Escapes. Made up of Starlight children and parents from across the country, the FUBU committee provides us with periodic report cards on our services and suggests new programs that could benefit their families and others. In 2016, we created over **16,500 smiles and memories** for Starlight children and family members who attended events, while our costs related to delivering the programs decreased, marking excellent results with increased efficiencies.

Our recent work with the Ward + Robes campaign, in partnership with Rethink Marketing, saw our campaign video go viral with over **10 million** views to date. In addition we also saw exponential growth in our social media presence. Our fundraising events, such as our Gala, Drive for Smiles, and the Toys"R"Us Dash, collectively saw over **125 million media impressions**.

Thanks to you, our fundraising revenue grew once again. We welcomed new donors this year, and grew to have a presence in over **1400 retail locations**, becoming a true leader in retail fundraising campaigns.



Lara,  
Age 7



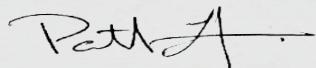
Finally, with your support, we have been able to meet the demand for our programs and services. **Over 384,000 children benefitted** from Starlight in-hospital and out-of-hospital programming in 2016. We have seen a steady increase in the number of referrals to our programs. Like you, our passion to help more and more children cope with the fear and isolation caused by their illness will never waver. And because of donors like you, we know that we will reach our goal of never saying no to a seriously ill child.

With sincere and heartfelt gratitude,

**Brian Bringolf**  
Executive Director



**Patrick Lefrançois**  
President, Board of Directors



## YOUR IMPACT IN 2016



Natalia,  
Age 7

**Over 384,000 children  
benefitted from Starlight  
in-hospital and out-of-hospital  
programming**



Baby  
Sebastian

**100%**  
of hospitals say the Toddler  
Fun Kits are very valuable  
to their patients



Jayla,  
Age 4

**407**  
Day Brighteners  
provided

**603**  
Fun Centers  
in hospitals

Ethan,  
Age 9



Natasha,  
Sarah, Starry,  
Kim, Starlight  
Volunteers



**20,000+**  
Comfort Kits distributed



Toys"R"Us Grant  
Presentation

Created over **16,500**  
smiles and memories for Starlight  
children and family members who  
attended Starlight events

**2,000+**  
Volunteers helped  
deliver programs



Baby  
Carlene

**\$168,000** in  
grants provided to hospitals for  
distractive equipment resources



Bruno,  
Age 7

## YOUR IMPACT IN 2016





## Time together helped Évangéline and her family cope

Évangéline has stars in her eyes, and that's thanks to friends like you.

You see, Évangéline was born prematurely. Her mom, Séverine quickly found out that she had cytomegalovirus – a virus that can cause developmental delays, seizures and hearing loss. Séverine prepared herself and her family for the worst as Évangéline struggled to survive in those early days.

And yet, through multiple surgeries, pain, physical therapy and speech therapy, Évangéline smiled and showed a thirst for life.

"What touches me the most about Starlight is that you understood something that a lot of people won't see," says Séverine. "You understood that, when a member of the family suffers, it's the whole family who suffers."

Severine and her husband gave up their careers to care for Évangéline. But because of donors like you, they were able to get through the hardships, breathe deeply and enjoy magical moments together with Évangéline and their son Aaron.

"You have given us the right to be a true family for a day, an evening or a weekend. You gave us back the gentleness that we had lost at the birth of my daughter," says Severine.

Through Starlight's programs, Évangéline and her family had much needed time to bond and forget about treatments and surgeries for a while. From a fabulous Halloween party to belly laughs with clowns, these are moments that this family will hold close to their hearts forever.

And Severine knows how much Évangéline looks forward to those magical moments. In fact, they're written in big letters on their calendar at home.



### **Kayla keeps the magic going. This is her story in her own words:**

There are days when the pain of my illness feels like it's swallowing me whole.

I've been living with debilitating health issues, including a rare digestive disorder called Superior Mesenteric Artery Syndrome, and Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, which affects my body's tissue formation, for five years.

I'm now 21 and I still have days when I can't get out of bed. I've spent too many holidays in the hospital and have missed entire semesters of school because of my health issues.

As incredibly difficult and painful as it's been, I refuse to let my pain define me. And part of what's helped me get through it all was being a Starlight teen.

Four years ago, Starlight organized a weekend away for my family at Great Wolf Lodge. That's where I got to meet kids going through the same thing that I was. Since that weekend, I've made so many lifelong friends by going to Starlight events. There's an understanding and connection you have instantly with other kids when you're also going through huge health struggles.

I knew when I graduated from their programs, there was no way I could leave my Starlight family, so I started Team Wishes with my sister Courtney and current Starlight teen, Daniella.

We've been able to raise more than \$54,000 in three years, which has gone to Starlight to help fulfill wishes. And we haven't done it alone. My friend Emily, another Starlight graduate, and current Starlight teens Alexandra and our newest member Stephanie, have all helped. Even when down with pain and in and out of the hospital for treatments, they all put in the hard work and energy in the little spare time they have, so that they can help raise money to donate to Starlight.

I think of it as a magical feedback loop that keeps on giving, and we can only do it thanks to donors like you. To help us meet our goal, please visit [www.teamwishes.org](http://www.teamwishes.org).

From left to right:

Kayla, Starlight Alumna, Alexandra, Age 13, Daniella, Age 13,  
Emily, Starlight Alumna, Courtney, Starlight Sibling





**What makes Starlight Children's Foundation Canada unique is that we are there for the entire journey — from hospital to home.**

**While in-hospital, Starlight provides distraction, entertainment and relief from the stress and boredom of hospitalization in more than 160 healthcare facilities. When out-of-hospital, Starlight children benefit from programs that give them the chance to leave the "sick" behind, create special family memories and return home with a renewed sense of strength and hope.**



## In-Hospital Programs

Being in the hospital is not a lot of fun for anyone, but it's especially tough on kids. While doctors and nurses focus on treatments, Starlight is there to bring a much needed brightness and joy to distract from the seriousness of an illness.

## Comfort Kits

Our Comfort Kits are themed bags designed for babies to teenagers and come packed with a range of age-appropriate entertainment and distraction activities.



Camille, Age 8

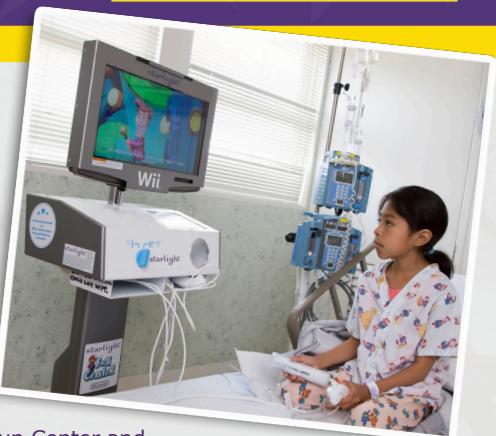
## Treasure Chests

Starlight Treasure Chests are filled with a variety of small puzzles, games and toys that appeal to a variety of age groups.



## Fun Centers®

Starlight Fun Centers® are mobile entertainment units that help kids cope by providing endless hours of fun and distraction. Starlight Fun Centers feature a flat screen monitor and a Nintendo Wii U gaming system, preloaded with a wide variety of games. The units are also internet ready allowing children to stay in touch with friends and family, watch movies and more.



Fun Center and  
Tablet being used in hospital

## Tablet Program

We provide tablets with special protective covers to hospitals so kids can access a variety of apps and stay connected with their friends and family.



Hunter, Age 6

## Hospital Happenings

We work with children's hospitals to bring an afternoon of fun and entertainment to in-patient children and their families, planning everything from the decorations and refreshments, to games and prizes for all to enjoy.



## Ward + Robes

Teens in-hospital often feel like they are not in control of what's happening to them and Starlight wanted to give them some of that control back. With our Ward + Robes program, teens can pick a hospital gown that reflects their personality, allowing them to feel more like themselves during a stressful time.

Samantha,  
Age 15



Emily,  
Age 16

Selena,  
Age 14



## Out-of-Hospital Programs

The journey for a seriously ill child does not end when they are released from the hospital. Starlight is there to support the child and family through every step of the journey. We are proud to offer out-of-hospital programs that give children and their families the opportunity to laugh, play and enjoy time together where illness does not interfere.

## Starlight Wishes

When a child is seriously ill and the treatment is stressful, tiring and painful, the idea and anticipation of a Starlight Wish can often be the best medicine. A Starlight Wish provides a unique once-in-a-lifetime experience to children between the ages of 4 to 18 years (up until their 19th birthday) who are seriously ill. In this happy place of dreams come true, there are no doctors or social workers - just a little stardust!



Kaitlyn, Age 14

## Great Escapes™

We give families the chance to relax and enjoy fun events, create priceless memories and then return home with a renewed sense of strength and hope. At any of our Great Escapes events, family members can meet and bond with others who are facing similar challenges and who can relate to their circumstances. The variety of activities offered through Great Escapes is endless: movie screenings, harbour cruises, holiday parties, sporting events, picnics and more.



William,  
Age 10

## Day Brighteners

Day Brighteners give seriously ill children the chance to experience a fun outing and to create positive memories away from the hospital, treatments and therapies. These fun experiences include tickets to concerts, sporting events, museums, attractions and more.



Allison,  
Age 12

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2016 DONORS

**We gratefully acknowledge every donor contribution regardless of size. Listed are those who contributed \$2,500 or more in 2016.**



**Diamond**



### **19 years of partnership with Toys“R”Us and Babies“R”Us**

Toys“R”Us and Babies“R”Us knows that when a child is seriously ill, their whole family is affected. That’s why, 19 years ago, they came to Starlight with an idea – they wanted to launch a new initiative that would have a direct impact on the lives of these children and their families.

A natural fit, both partners were excited about the potential they could achieve together. A special plush toy was created whose sale proceeds would be donated directly to the Starlight Children’s Foundation. The campaign was a huge success and the program flourished over the next four years into what was only the beginning of a wonderful partnership.

Over the years, the plush was reimagined several times and in 2009, the Collectible Bear was launched – a special plush designed by Starlight children. This fall, 2017 will see the Sloan Bear hit shelves, the ninth edition of the collectible bear.

Now, years later, Toys“R”Us and Babies“R”Us continues to be one of Starlight’s most involved and valuable partners. Through in-store and online campaigns, 3 Minute Dashes, Gala event sponsorship and donations to in-hospital, neonatal care and outpatient programs, they have donated an incredible \$17 million to Starlight and have been extraordinary advocates in the community about Starlight’s work.

"Hope and laughter, entertainment and distraction, comfort and support are an integral part of the circle of care and make a real difference to the quality of a seriously ill child's life," says Mary Hewton, VP Human Resources and Customer Relations for Toys"R"Us Canada.

And they're not only philanthropic. Toys"R"Us recognizes the power of play, so they work directly with Starlight to create innovative new programs using their knowledge of the children's market, coupled with Starlight's experience with distractive entertainment.

"Our team members are proud to see the true and tangible results of our efforts benefitting our communities where we live and work," says Hewton.

On behalf of the thousands of seriously ill and hospitalized children Starlight serves, thank you to Toys"R"Us and Babies"R"Us, their customers, vendors and staff for their ongoing generosity and support.

John, Age 6  
Recipient of the  
Edmonton Dash



Madeline &  
Constance, Age 5  
Recipients of the  
Montreal Dash

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2016 DONORS



We began flying with the Air Canada over 20 years ago and since then, our partnership has taken off to new heights. Air Canada is Starlight's official Airline Sponsor, and the Air Canada Foundation provides airline tickets that are used in our Wish Program - flying Starlight families to their 'wish' destinations. Air Canada is a shining example of the difference a corporation can make when they give back to their community. In addition to this amazing support, the Air Canada Foundation is also a major contributor to Starlight fundraising events across the country and annually provides hundreds of volunteer hours for numerous initiatives.



Ardene is one of Canada's premier fashion retailers with over 400 stores nationwide. From its start as a fashion accessory and jewelry store, Ardene has grown to become a truly unique one-stop shopping destination. Since our partnership with the Ardene Foundation began in 2014, they have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to Starlight through their holiday campaign. Ardene locations across Canada collect \$1 donations at the cash and online to help brighten the lives of seriously ill children and their families. Thanks to donations from generous customers, the money raised from recent campaigns has supported the Fun Center and Great Escapes Programs, and the newly opened Ardene Room at the Montreal Children's Hospital in Quebec.



Founded by Stéphan Tétrault in 1998, Imports Dragon is a Canadian-based global toy manufacturer and distributor and has become one of the fastest growing toy companies in Canada. A supporter since 2013, Imports Dragon is one of Starlight's newest partners. Their sponsorship of Starlight's Annual Gala has blossomed into increased support of both Starlight events and our Wish Program. In 2016, in addition to their growing financial contributions, Imports Dragon donated more than \$200,000 in toys to benefit hospitalized children across the country. Thank you to Stéphan and his team at Imports Dragon. Starlight is very thankful for your amazing support.

Mia, Age 5  
Ethan, Age 8



## THANK YOU TO OUR 2016 DONORS



Platinum



Michaels is North America's largest specialty retailer of arts and crafts that provide countless hours of fun and entertainment to millions of people. That's why we knew we had a winning partnership when we first started working together more than six years ago. In 2014, Starlight became Michaels' exclusive charity partner and we have been crafting fun and entertainment for seriously ill children ever since! We are thrilled to be the beneficiary of Michaels in-store campaigns like \$1 Be a Star, Starlight Totes and Make-It-Merry Events that rally their devoted customers to help Starlight reach even more seriously ill and hospitalized kids. Through their amazing support, Michaels has been able to sponsor Starlight Programs like Fun Centers and Great Escapes and they have participated at fundraising events across the country. These campaigns have been an ongoing success and we are extremely grateful to have Michaels and their employees as partners.

Colby, Age 6  
and his siblings



## Starlight Insurance Gala



In 1994, the Toronto Society of Fellows had a vision: to unite the insurance community with compassion and commitment to fulfill the dreams and wishes of seriously ill and hospitalized children. The Annual Starlight Insurance Gala is a formal affair that invites industry professionals to enjoy an elegantly themed evening of dinner and dance in support of Starlight Children's Foundation. The dedication of the individuals who make up the organizing committee is the reason why an event like this continues to be so successful, as they work feverishly to host this spectacular evening. Unquestionably one of the industry's greatest nights out, the event continues to unite the brightest stars of the insurance world. Over the past 22 years, this event has raised over \$4 million. Starlight is honoured to be associated with such giving volunteers, donors and sponsors from this big-hearted community.

"On behalf of the Child Life Department, we wanted to take the time to thank you for your generous donation. The children at the Janeway love the kits you provided. It makes their stay much easier."

- Janeway Children's Health and Rehabilitation Centre, Newfoundland





# Brookfield

Properties Annual Holiday Lighting Ceremony

This spectacular event is open to the Toronto community and is a true celebration of the season of giving. Brookfield Place, their tenants and suppliers join forces to create a colourful evening of food and entertainment in anticipation of the lighting of the holiday light curtains in the Allen Lambert Galleria. Brookfield Place is situated on a 5-1/2 acre site in the heart of the financial district, bounded by Bay, Wellington, Yonge and Front Streets. In addition to kicking off the holiday season, the festivities raise much-needed funds and awareness of the important work done by Starlight Children's Foundation. Every year, Brookfield Place in Toronto lights up holiday spirits and puts the spotlight on Starlight at this amazing event. In 2016, Brookfield celebrated its 19th year of giving, and broke through an impressive milestone – the event alone has now raised over \$3 million dollars for Starlight. We are incredibly grateful to Brookfield and their dedicated and passionate staff, tenants and suppliers who work tirelessly to make the event a huge success every year.



"Our little princess, Emilee (aka Princess Elsa), was on cloud nine while enjoying all of the fun activities and little touches that made the weekend extra special. And we all felt extra special while walking the red carpet on our way to dinner on Saturday evening. Everything about our weekend was perfect thanks to your generosity and hard work."

- Carmen and Trevor

## **Games For Hope Foundation**

The Games for Hope Foundation was created to raise funds and awareness for children's charities using a dynamic event: a Corporate Sports Benefit Tournament. This event brings together the corporate community in a daylong entertaining and team building event. We are thrilled to say that our friends from Games For Hope came through for us again in 2016, raising over \$130,000 for Starlight. This brings their cumulative total to over \$740,000 since our partnership began. We would like to extend a special thank you and congratulations to this dedicated group of volunteers that do so much for Starlight and many other charities.



**GREAT BLUE HERON**  
• CASINO •

Since 2009, Starlight has been a partner of the Great Blue Heron Casino as a recipient of their phenomenal charity golf tournament. During the event, their team brings themes and dreams to life with extravagant entertainment, décor and giveaways. They make every golfer feel like a kid again, perfectly capturing the vision of Starlight in making children and families smile. Over the past eight years, Great Blue Heron has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars, with all funds going towards Starlight programming within the Durham Region. Great Blue Heron Casino has also been a committed Starlight Gala Diamond Sponsor for the past five years. We thank Great Blue Heron Casino, their team, partners and suppliers for their outstanding support.



## DYNAMITE GARAGE

Supporting the Starlight Children's Foundation is an important part of Groupe Dynamite's corporate culture, and engaging customers is their way to get the community involved. Since 2008, the company's fashion retail brands, Garage and Dynamite, have partnered with Starlight to help to improve the lives and health of Canadian kids and families. One of the ways that the international retailers have achieved success in engaging their customers is through a holiday gift box and bag campaign. Every holiday season, Dynamite and Garage shoppers are encouraged to purchase decorative giftwrapping sold at more than 300 stores in Canada. Net proceeds go directly to the Starlight Children's Foundation to help support pediatric patients and their families from hospital to home. Thank you Groupe Dynamite, for your tireless commitment to kids and families, especially during the busy holiday shopping season.

Starlight Mascot,  
Starry





## **Silver**

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## **Bronze**

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BFL Canada  
Block Bindings

"Just a little note of appreciation to you and Starlight for planning such a wonderful event. I can't believe how beautiful our family artwork turned out. We will find a special place in our home to hang it. We really enjoyed the event. As always Starlight has provided us with a positive experience amidst our usual stressful routine."

- A Starlight Family

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Bocar  
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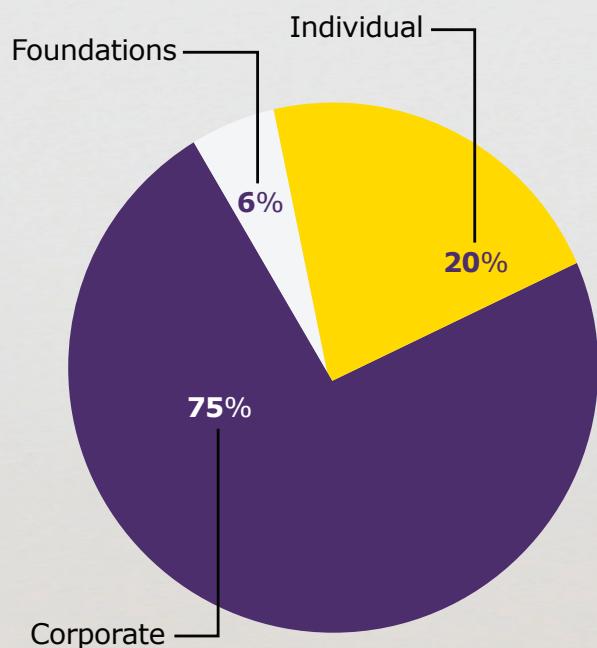
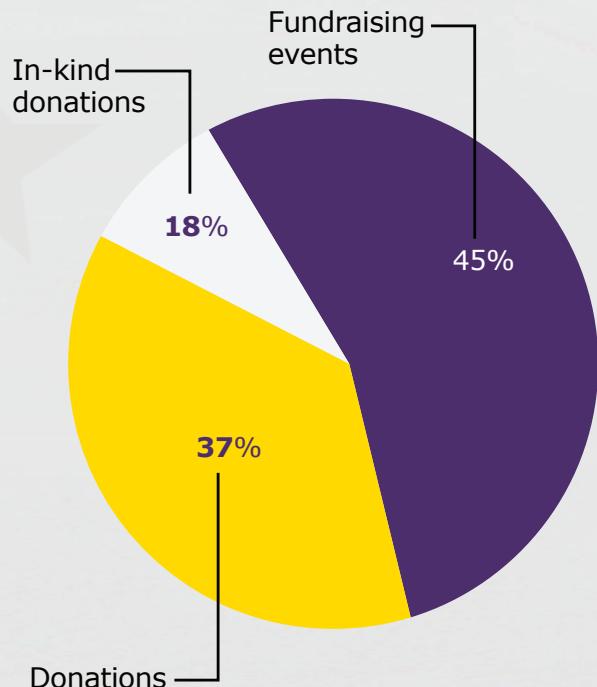
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Insurance Group  
The Guarantee Company  
of North America  
The Jesslin Group  
The Rossy Family Foundation  
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The Walt Disney Company Canada  
Thinkway Toys  
Third Eye Capital Corporation  
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Trisura Guarantee  
Insurance Company  
Umberto Bonfa  
United CAMC Auto International  
Viscofan Canada  
Visions Display Inc.  
Wallcover Painting  
Walter Ventura  
Warner Brothers  
Entertainment Canada Inc.  
Wasteco  
Wawanese Insurance  
West Point Grey Academy  
Westbury National Show Systems  
Winmar Hamilton/Burlington  
Yogesh Wadera





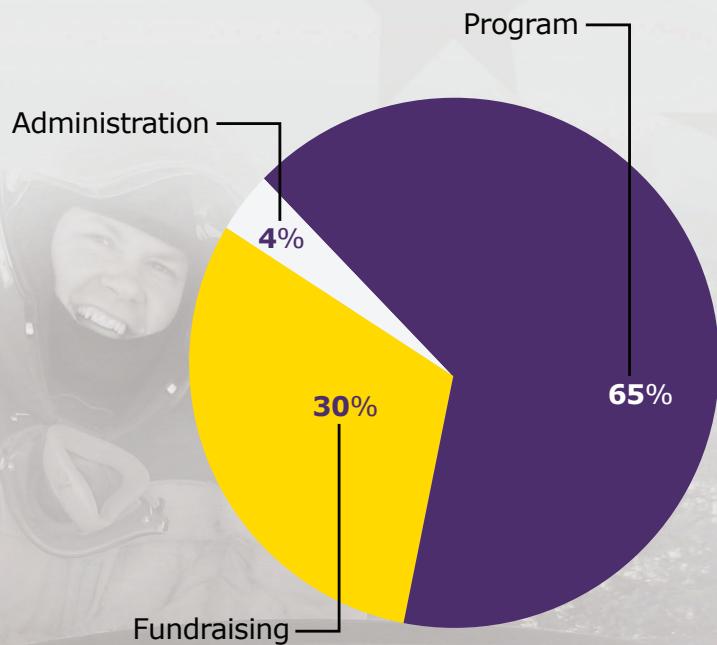
## REVENUE



\* Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Full audited statements are available here: [www.stalightcanada.org/financials](http://www.stalightcanada.org/financials)

## EXPENSES



Tiffany, Age 8  
and family



## **Board of Directors**

**Patrick Lefrançois**

**Board President and Secretary**

Senior Vice-President - CI Investments / Placements CI

**Phil Caplan**

**Immediate Past President**

President - PC Packaging

**Edward Prorok CPA, CA**

**Treasurer**

Partner - Fuller Landau

**Sheldon Davis**

**Director**

Senior Vice-President, Sales & Marketing - Regal Confections

**Lennie Ryer CPA, CA, CFE**

**Director**

Chief Financial Officer - Power Survey International



## **Executive Team**

**Brian Bringolf**

Executive Director

**Trevor Dicaire**

Senior Vice-President, Development

**Ghyslain Gagné**

Vice-President, Children's Services

**Jeannie O'Regan, CMP**

Vice-President, Special Events & Operations

**Linda Stroude CPA, CA**

Chief Financial Officer



## Starlight Children's Foundation Canada

### Quebec Office:

1805 Transcanada, Dorval, QC H9P 1J1

**Toll Free:** 1-888-782-7947

**Email:** info@starlightcanada.org

### Ontario Office:

200 Consumers Road, Suite 809, Toronto, ON M2J 4R4

### Regional Offices Toll Free:

**Alberta | British Columbia | Ontario**

1-800-880-1004



"A nurse brought Ian one of your Emergency Admit Kits. As Ian was still in very bad shape, on oxygen and hooked up to IV, I went through the kit and couldn't believe how thoughtful and useful each and every item was. Receiving that kit was a bright spot in a very dark time."

- Gail

"We cannot thank Starlight Children's Foundation enough for having this opportunity to be together as a family and trying to remember what it is like to not worry about doctor's appointments and hospital trips."

- Mom of Starlight child Kaity



[www.starlightcanada.org](http://www.starlightcanada.org)



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