



**CREATE
CONNECT
&
HAVE FUN**

AT THE

SANDBOX

BEACHES
SANDBOX
ANNUAL REPORT

2025

Sep 1 2024 - Aug 31 2025

Charitable Registration Number: 789360500 RR 0001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	1
ABOUT BEACHES SANDBOX	2
REMOVING BARRIERS	3
IMPACT AT A GLANCE	4
OUR PROGRAMS	5
ANCHOR PROGRAMS	6
COMMUNITY EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS	10
FINANCIAL SUMMARY	11
PLAN FOR 2025-2026	12
SANDBOXERS	13
THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS	14
HELP US BUILD TOGETHER	15





A Message From Our Executive Director

This year, the Sandbox felt more alive than ever — full of creativity, connection, and the kind of community spirit that makes this place truly special. As I step into the role of Executive Director, I want to acknowledge and thank Jordan Safer for his leadership and the strong foundation he helped build. It's an honour to collaborate with this amazing team and carry this work forward.

We marked our third anniversary with renewed energy, new programs, and a continued commitment to inclusion and accessibility. What inspires me most is how this community shows up for one another —families, seniors, volunteers, partners—all shaping the Sandbox into a place where everyone can play, grow, and belong.

As we look to the year ahead, I feel immense gratitude for the trust and support we receive every day. There is so much possibility in front of us, and I'm excited to continue building a Sandbox that reflects the heart of our neighbourhood. The best is still to come.

Ara Cruz
Executive Director



ABOUT

Beaches Sandbox is a

13,000 sq ft.

community hub in the heart of Toronto's Beaches neighbourhood. As a registered charity, we bring people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities together through accessible, high-quality experiences that inspire creativity, connection, and well-being.

Our vision is simple:

To build a happier, more connected community for all.



Vision

A happier and better-connected society



Mission

To create high-quality experiences for healthy, meaningful connections.



Values

Fun
Inclusive
Sustainable



REMOVING BARRIERS



We believe everyone should be able to walk through our doors and feel a true sense of belonging. That's why our facility includes accessible features like an elevator, braille signage, and automatic doors— small details that make a meaningful difference in people's daily experience.

But accessibility for us goes far beyond the physical space.

When a camper needs

One-on-One Support,

we provide it at no cost.

When a senior struggles with online registration, we sit beside them and help them navigate technology with confidence. And when a family needs financial assistance, we offer it so that cost is never a barrier to participation.



Every day, we work to remove barriers
**One person, one moment, one
story at a time.**



IMPACT

At a Glance



25+

Weekly
Programming and
Events



20,000+

Annual Visits to the
Sandbox, a 25%
increase from last year



50%

Of our programming
is low cost or free



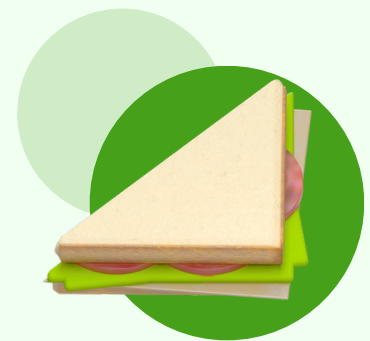
\$25,000

In financial assistance for
all programs and camps,
eliminating barriers to
participation



150+

Campers in 2025,
30% of whom
benefited from
financial assistance



25,000+

Sandwiches made to
date by 450 Club
Sandwich Jr
volunteers and
donated to fight
food insecurity



OUR PROGRAMS



Seniors

55+ years

Cooking, Fitness, Music, Art, Workshops

Adults

19-55 years

Workshops, Events



Kids

5-10 years

Free Play, Sensory, Cooking, Dance, Music, Gymnastics

Babies and Tots

0-4 years

Free Play, Sensory, Cooking, Dance, Music, Gymnastics



Youth and Teens

11-18 years

Camp, Science Club, Music, Visual Arts, Cooking, Club Sandwich Jr.

Adaptive and Inclusive Programming

Any Age

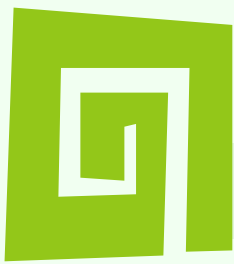
Art, Cooking, Music, Parallel Play, Autism Ontario

Legacy Art for Seniors

In February and March 2025, Beaches Sandbox partnered with Mural Routes to deliver **Piece by Piece: Mosaic Workshops for Seniors**, a 10-week creative program for 15 local older adults. Guided by artist Cristina Delago, participants used recycled and up-cycled materials to create mosaic panels—an environmentally mindful process that now lives on as a permanent mural at Beaches Sandbox.

More than an art project, it fostered **connection, confidence, and joy.**





SENIORS' SOCIAL

Anchor Program



For the past 3 years, the Beaches Sandbox has proudly hosted our **Seniors' Social** — a complimentary weekly gathering that brings seniors from near and far together over coffee, conversation, laughter, and friendly board-game fun.

Each week,

15-20 seniors

join us to connect, unwind, and keep their minds active through games and meaningful social interaction — activities that support cognitive and emotional well-being.



It's a welcoming space filled with warmth, belonging, and joy.





CLUB SANDWICH JR.

Anchor Program



Every Wednesday after school, Club Sandwich Jr. brings **12 to 15 young volunteers** together to

make sandwiches

for neighbours facing food insecurities

Setup to sandwich-making to cleanup, the kids take part in every step — and their efforts help supply food banks and missions across East Toronto.

Along the way, children build kitchen confidence, practice teamwork, and experience the joy of giving back — all while having fun with friends.



“

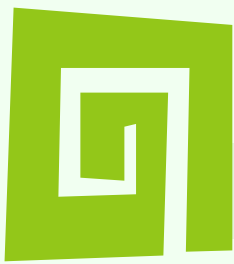
What I love about Club Sandwich Jr. is coming from school and knowing I'm making sandwiches for other people and helping them.

”

- Isla

(12 year old volunteer)





CAMPS

Anchor Program

In 2025, Beaches Sandbox welcomed over

120 campers

across **8 weeks of Summer Camp**, offering themed weekly programs, hands-on crafts, outdoor play, and signature field trips—all led by our fully trained, High Five Certified counsellors.

Our **March Break Camp** also saw **30+ children** join us for a week of creativity, exploration, and active play during the school break.

Together, these programs provided local families with **high-quality, reliable care while creating joyful, memorable experiences.**



“

This is by far our kid's favourite place to go, not just because of the incredible curriculum that is offered (from cooking classes, trips to Fox Theatre and Skyzone) but also because of the fun and loving staff.

”

- Shah Ruby





CAREGIVER & TOT FREE PLAY

Anchor Program



Our Caregiver & Tot Free Play program welcomes families **Monday to Saturday**, offering a complimentary drop-in space for little ones (ages 0-4) to explore, play, and grow. With toys, activities, and plenty of room to move, toddlers build confidence and social skills while caregivers connect and find community.

With **30-35 active**   **families**

joining regularly, it remains a cornerstone of our commitment to offering accessible, inclusive early-years experiences for all.



This program continues to be a joyful, welcoming hub for early childhood development.



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Day of the Dead

On November 1 and 2, 2024, we hosted a vibrant Día de los Muertos celebration curated by Silvia Sanchez. The weekend opened with a presentation from Christian Clay, Trade Commissioner with the Mexican Consulate, followed by activities, performances, and cultural displays from local artists and businesses. It was a colourful celebration of tradition, remembrance, and Mexican culture.

Comedy and Jazz Nights

In 2025, the Sandbox hosted two live events celebrating comedy and music. Comedy Night on April 6 featured host Kris Siddiqi with JUNO-nominated comedian Courtney Gilmour, alongside Clif Knight, Ryan Dillon, and Karen Mitches. Jazz Night on June 7 showcased local talent with the Alison Young Quartet and the Evan Porter Quartet, hosted by Ryan Dillon. These events brought arts and community together.



Filipino Independence Day

On June 12, 2025, we celebrated Filipino Independence Day with a joyful morning of art, culture, and community. Families created Filipino-inspired crafts, enjoyed delicious dishes from Lakay Kusina, and welcomed a special visit from Trade Commissioner Mario C. Tani. It was a meaningful celebration of connection and the richness of Filipino heritage.

National Indigenous Peoples Day

On June 21, 2025, we proudly hosted a community celebration in honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day. In partnership with HOPES Indigenous Training Network and curated by Dawn T. Maracle, the event brought people together through workshops, teachings from Elder Cat Criger, live music, and food — creating a welcoming space to learn, reflect, and connect.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Building a Strong Foundation

For the Financial Year ending August 31, 2025, the Sandbox benefited from strong foundational operating support from Paul W. O’Leary Foundation, providing stability for core operations. Government funding, grants, and partner support were directed fully toward programs and events, ensuring that external funding translated directly into community-facing impact. This approach reflects thoughtful stewardship and creates meaningful opportunities to grow accessible programming.

Revenue

Paul W. O’Leary Foundation	715,000
Donations	91,147
Program Fees	147,458
Rental Revenue	43,791
Government Grants	129,387
Events	19,170
C-Gaming	27,908
\$ 1,173,861	

Expenses

Program Expenditures	372,671
Marketing and Development	99,866
Office Administration	395,127
Rent	145,640
Property Taxes and Utilities	168,856
Amortization	10,268
\$ 1,192,428	



PLANS FOR 2025/26

As we look ahead, the Beaches Sandbox is focused on

strengthening community connection, improving access, and expanding programs that make our space welcoming to all.

Our priorities for the coming year include:



Enhancing Access & Participation:

We will introduce a new, user-friendly registration system to make program sign-ups faster and easier for all participants. In the year ahead, we will continue improving access so everyone can engage with the centre more seamlessly.

Empowering Seniors Through Technology:

Recognizing the increasing need for digital confidence among older adults, we introduced our Seniors Tech Workshops. These sessions support seniors in staying connected, navigating the digital world safely, and reducing vulnerability to online scams. In the year ahead, we plan to expand these workshops to reach more participants and strengthen social connections.

Improving the Centre Experience:

We are enhancing the visitor experience by welcoming a dedicated Experience Coordinator to support participants and elevate service quality. We will also make targeted facility improvements to ensure the centre remains warm, welcoming, and accessible to all.

Expanding Adaptive & Inclusive Programming:

We will grow our adaptive programming to offer more supportive, flexible, and inclusive activities for individuals and families. Our goal is to ensure everyone feels welcomed, represented, and supported.

Celebrating Multiculturalism & Community Diversity:

We will increase our multicultural events to celebrate the cultures that make our community vibrant—through food, art, storytelling, and shared experiences.



Strengthening Partnerships & Community Support:

We will introduce a focused partnership and support strategy to build new relationships with local businesses and community supporters. This will help us expand resources and strengthen the programs for our community.



SANDBOXERS



Our Team

Aracely Cruz, Executive Director
Samantha Little, Sr. Manager, Programming
Sarah Thompson, Manager, Operations
Alia Lamoca, Experience and Progr. Coord.
Daniella Dasilva, Communications Coordinator
Braedan Hill, Guest Relations Coordinator
Anne Borkowski, Guest Relations Coordinator
Theresa Anderson, Guest Relations Coord.
Christine Eady, Volunteer Coordinator

Our Board

Jason Schuy, Chair
Kate Zaparanuik, Secretary
Earl Sinclair, Director
Peter Tsimikalis, Director

Honorary

Paulette O'Leary
Rob Lang
Frances Anderson
Danielle Robinson
Marc Hull-Jacquín
Natalie Johnson
Deniese Masters-McKenney

Our Founders



Paulette O'Leary
Jason Schuy

Created during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sandbox began as a simple idea: to help people feel connected again. With the support of the community, it has grown into a welcoming place where people come together to share joy and belonging.



OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank You!

Founding Benefactors



Government Funders

Funded by the Government of
Canada's New Horizons for
Seniors Program



Foundations and Corporate Sponsors



The Morrison Foundation

J.P. BICKELL FOUNDATION
THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA TRUST COMPANY, TRUSTEE

TURNER
FLEISCHER

Community Partners



BUILD TOGETHER

Collaborate with Us!

Like a sandbox, our community grows stronger when **everyone plays a part**. Your time, energy, and partnership help us shape programs that support connection, creativity, and belonging for people of all ages.

Volunteer

Every volunteer adds a new piece to our shared sandcastle. Your time helps us grow programs, welcome more families, and strengthen community bonds.

[BEACHESSANDBOX.COM/VOLUNTEER](https://beachessandbox.com/volunteer)

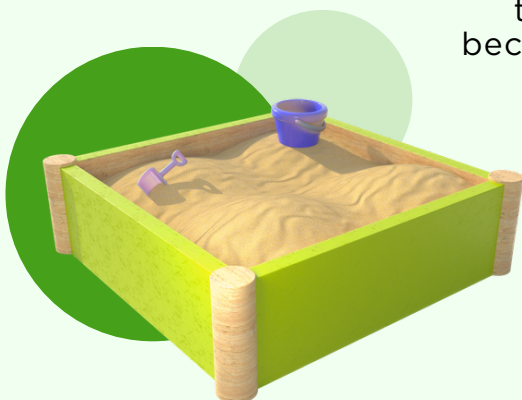
Participate

Join us for programs, workshops, and events that bring our community together.

[BEACHESSANDBOX.COM/ALL-PROGRAMS](https://beachessandbox.com/all-programs)

Become a Sandbox Partner

Partnerships—financial or in-kind—help us build spaces that foster connection and care. Your support becomes part of the foundation we create together.



Supports a child's full summer at camp

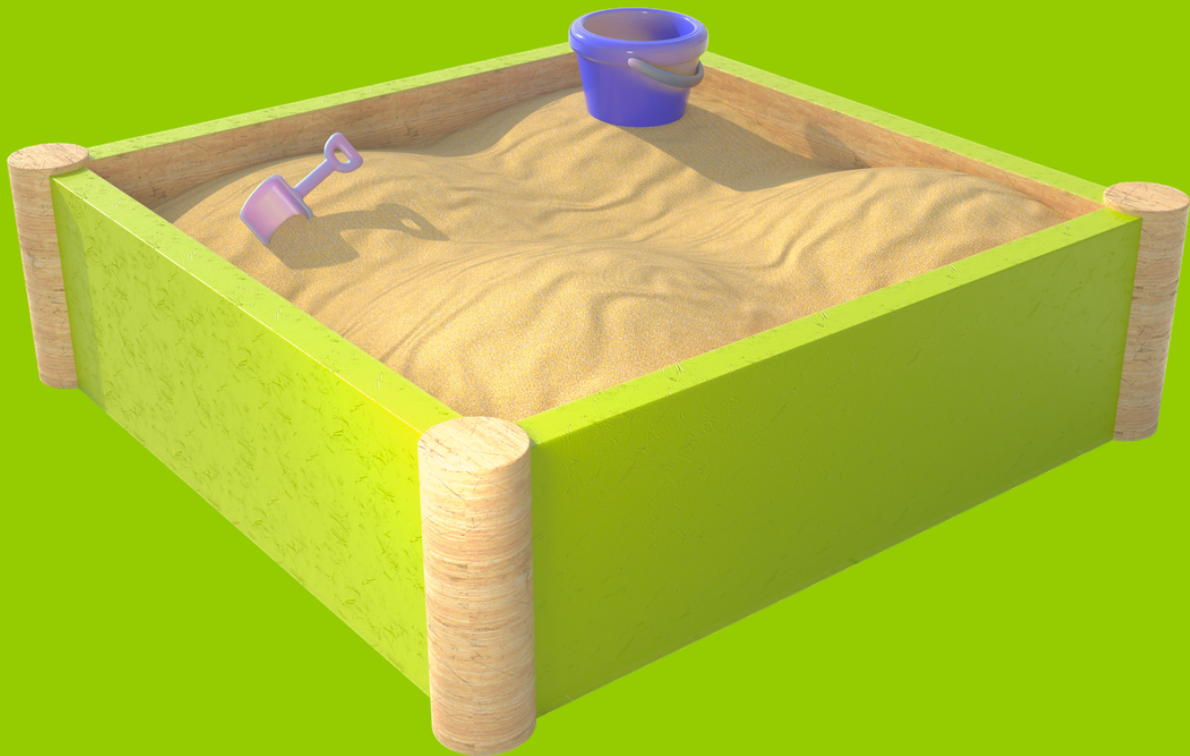
Brings a community event to life

Funds a full year of a Seniors Programs

Partnership inquiries:
info@beachessandbox.com



Create. Connect. Have Fun.



Beaches Sandbox is a vibrant community hub in the heart of the Beaches. As a registered charity, we offer creative, inclusive programs, workshops, camps, and events for all ages and abilities. Our mission is simple: to build a happier, more connected community through creativity, well-being, and fun.



**Scan to
discover
what's next.**

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