



Annual Report Sep 2020 to Aug 2021

New Leaf Foundation
Charitable #854956794RR0001
newleaffoundation.com



New Leaf Foundation is a charitable organization that supports the mental, emotional and physical health of young people in marginalized communities.

We offer programs, education and resources that use meditative practices, like mindfulness and yoga, to address the causes and impacts of chronic stress on youth and the adults that care for them.

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Letter from our Director

Over the past many months, we've all been called on to shift on a dime, change what we do and how we do it, with little notice, few resources and while worrying about the health and safety of our communities.

If I'm being honest, there's a part of me that went into this year never wanting to hear the word "pivot" again.

But, recently I was reading a book called *The Four Pivots*, by Shawn Ginwright, and came across a basketball analogy that (admittedly, as a big fan of the game) really spoke to me.

Dr. Ginwright talked about basketball players pivoting in order to advance down the court, and pointed out that when slowed to a snail's pace you can see that the pivot requires 1) stopping and reflecting, 2) awareness of one's relationship to other players, 3) staying focused on the goal, and 4) a calm and confident "flow" into another direction (p.17). If you know the game of basketball, you know all these steps happen in a momentary flash, and, when effective, a player who was perhaps trapped or stuck creates some space, finds an opening. As Ginwright points out, there's a renewed sense of what's possible.

When I think about it like this, I not only like the word "pivot" better, I feel more able to articulate what I've witnessed occur within New Leaf during the pandemic. There's been a "moment"—or more accurately, many moments—of pausing to reflect on who we are and who

we want to be, what we've done and what else we can do... a period of inner growth as much as outer growth. Staying focused on our values and commitments, we've embraced a willingness to try new things, fumble, learn, succeed.

These pauses to reflect and reassess are so valuable but not often permitted or encouraged for grassroots organizations where the hustle is real, grant obligations are looming and we are often measured solely on our output versus the quality of our internal and external organizational relationships, mindsets, or how we take care of each other so we can do our work in a good way for the long term.

This year, we embraced the pivot and created space for new learning and new directions.

Some of that will be reflected in what you read over the course of the report below, and some - like the pausing, questioning, imagining and caring - is more intangible but no less important and no less felt and experienced by our team, our partners and the communities we engage.

I continue to be so proud of our organization and the ways that we stay committed to evolving, especially in these times of flux.

Thank you for your belief in us and your support of our work.

Laura Sygrove
Co-founder & Executive Director

“One thing I learned that I found really useful was being aware of the type of stress I am feeling and whether it is beneficial or not and how to deal with it...”

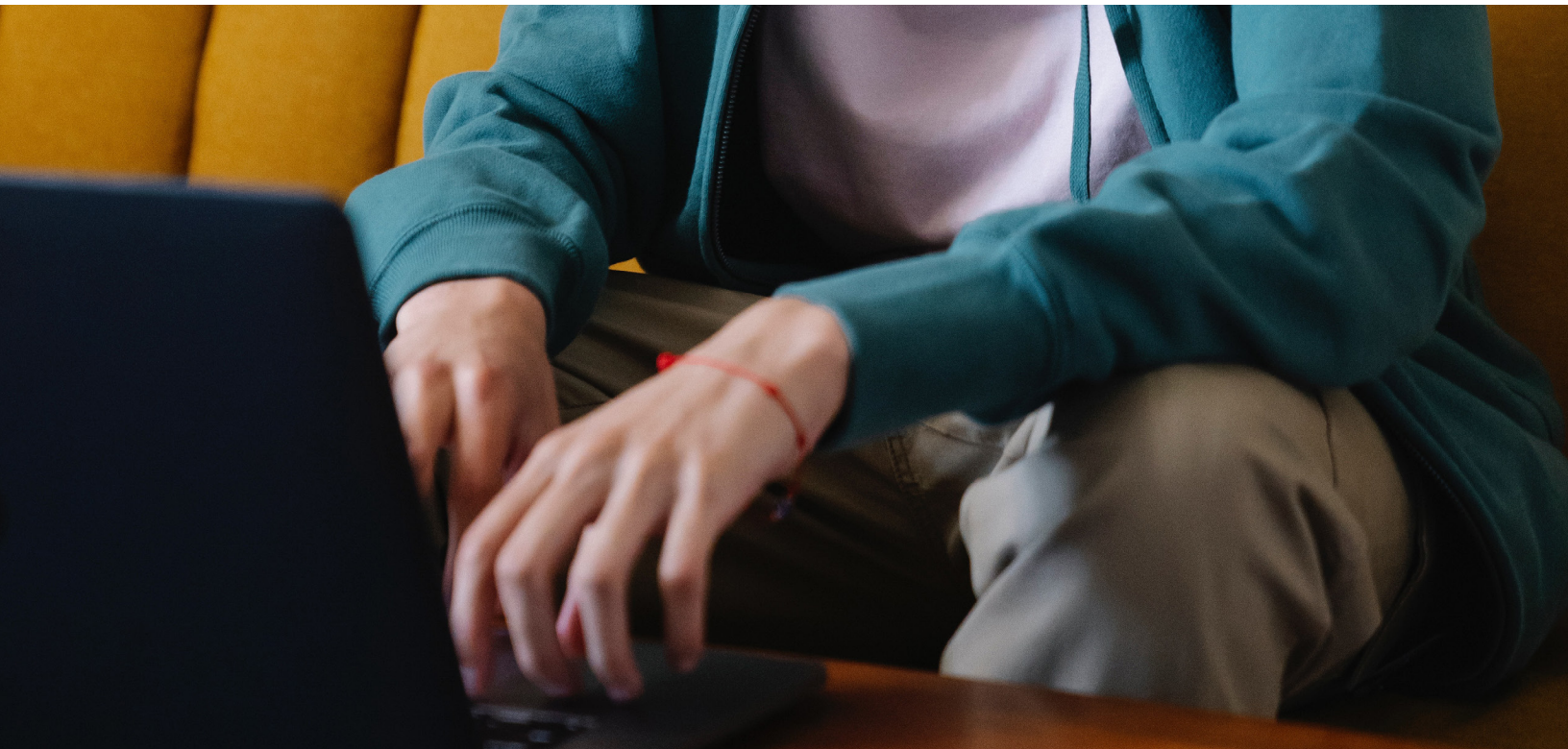
- Youth Participant

Programs

This year, New Leaf Foundation was again faced with the inability to hold in-person programming because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to the resourcefulness of our incredible staff and facilitators, we were able to adapt and expand our offerings to include virtual learning experiences, online curriculum packages, workshops and training, and a library of digital mindfulness resources. Each of these measures was developed to support the mental health and well-being of youth in underserved communities.

Some of the highlights included:

- strengthening partnerships with organizations like Rexdale Community Health Centre, Pathways to Education, and Peacebuilders Canada
- implementing workshop opportunities for youth
- rebuilding frontline youth programs virtually in youth justice settings
- piloting our toolkit of online mindfulness activities designed for classrooms (recordings, simple lesson plans, and printable worksheets) in elementary and secondary schools in three school boards
- leading our workshop on stress and mindfulness for 40 Pathways to Education staff from across the province
- hosting 2 panel discussions and trainings on anti-oppression practices and the impacts of racism on youth wellbeing
- continuing to build our library of digital mindfulness resources
- developing mental health handouts including a Stress Self-Assessment and Self-Care Plan
- Carrying out a survey with close to 200 young people to better understand their vision of individual and community wellness




Vital Conversations About Anti-Racism

Anti-Black racism received more attention in the mainstream following the summer of 2020 and worldwide protests against police violence. In an effort to keep these vital conversations going, New Leaf hosted a series of events that focused on anti-oppression.

We hosted an online workshop with a long-time team member, Jamilah Malika Abu-Bakare, called *Anti-Oppression & Your Wellness Practice* that reached over 130 yoga and mindfulness practitioners.

We also organized and hosted two panel discussions that explored the impacts of racism and oppression on young people and how we can affect change within harmful systems. The panels featured a range of community leaders, activists, and educators and reached over 160 attendees.



“The solution that can come from community programming is letting young people know that they are valued, that they matter, that their voice matters...someone in community programming could be the first voice that tells them that they are special, that their voice matters.”

– Arabi Rajeswaran, Panelist

Mindfulness Resource for Schools

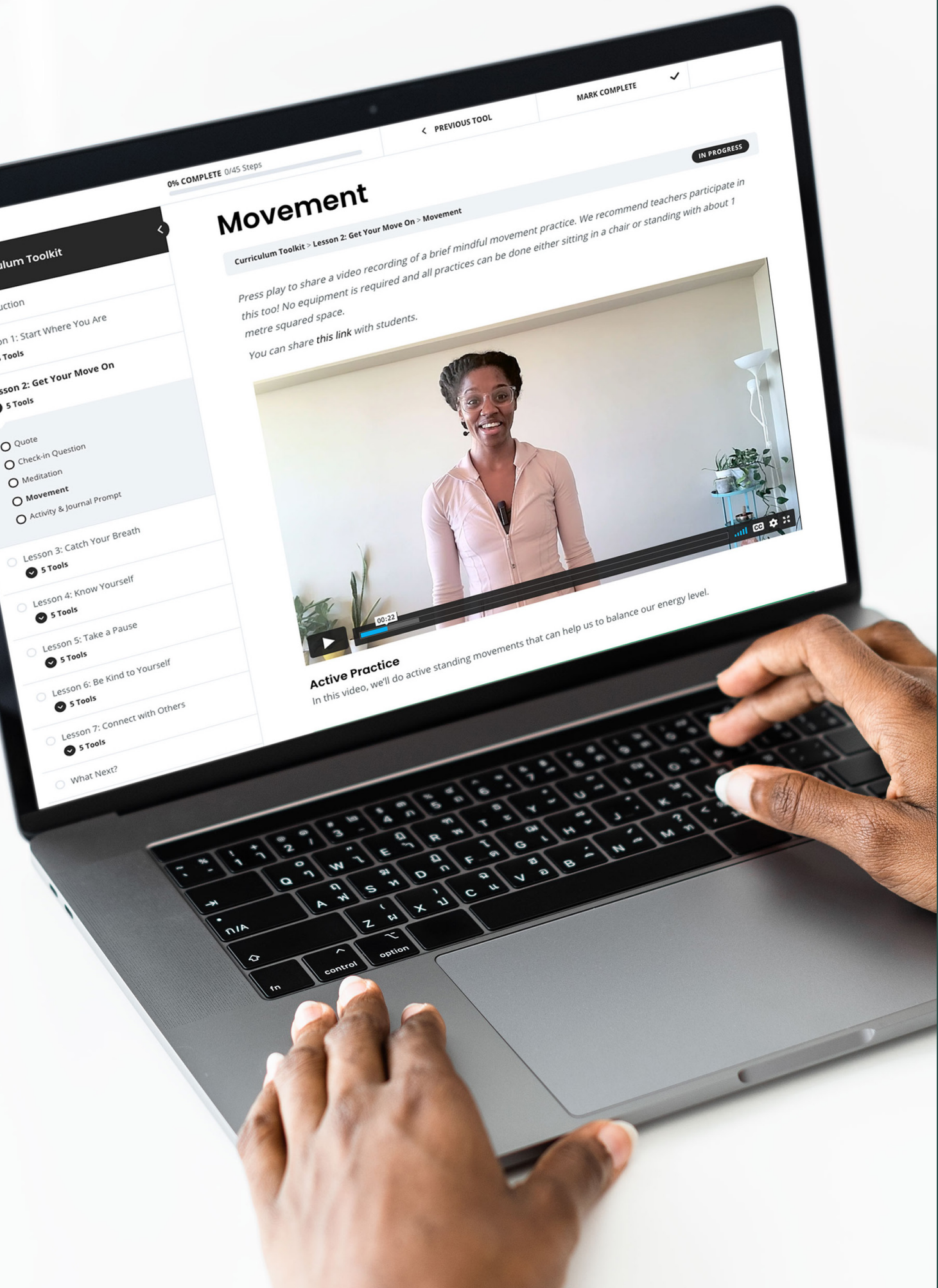
With the goal of making resilience-building resources more available to schools, New Leaf packaged up our programming model into an easy-to-use online curriculum toolkit (recordings, simple lesson plans, and printable worksheets). Over Quads 3 and 4, we piloted the toolkit with 31 educators across 3 school boards in Southern Ontario—Toronto District School Board, Durham District School Board, and Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board. The majority of classes contained between 10 to 30 students meaning the pilot reached approximately 800 students.

- Benefits experienced by educators included: stress reduction, increased focus, increased normalization around mental health, reduction in anxiety, opportunity to self reflect, greater ability to be in the present moment; notably, educators stated the benefit of connecting with students in a different way than they typically do in the classroom
- Benefits experienced by students included: boosted energy, reduced stress, increased calm, kept them active, increased focus, provided an opportunity to connect with themselves, and notice their thoughts without getting caught up in them, improved sleep quality, increased self-esteem and patience, increase happiness and positivity
- 97% of students said they'd use the mindfulness activities in the future and 73% said they gained new tools to support their health and wellbeing

Toolkit Pilot Participants

Ajax High School
CW Jefferys CI
Downsview SS
Emery CI
Golf Road Junior PS
L'Amoreaux CI
Pathways to Education Regent Park

RexPride
Rexdale Community Health Centre
School of Experiential Education
St. Cecilia Catholic School
Thistletown CI
Westview Centennial SS



Centering Youth Voices

In the spring of 2021, New Leaf Foundation created a Youth Wellness Survey with the goal of engaging young people in sharing their vision of individual and community wellness. The survey was developed in consultation with YouthREX, a research and evaluation initiative based at the School of Social Work at York University. Youth were recruited in partnership with Peacebuilders Canada, Pathways to Education Regent Park, MLSE

LaunchPad, NpowerCanada, Rexdale Community Health Centre, RexPride, and various TDSB secondary schools. New Leaf surpassed our goal to engage 100 youth, receiving 187 completed surveys for the report. A summary of the survey findings will be shared with the public in 2022 and be utilized to strengthen New Leaf's programming and approach.

“I define wellness as making the active effort to take care of my mental, physical, and social health. Not being “sick” does not equate to my [optimum] wellness. Wellness affects every aspect of my health, not just my physical wellbeing.”

– Youth Wellness Survey Respondent

Program Breakdown

Curriculum Toolkit

A mindfulness resource (recordings, lesson plans, and worksheets) designed for classrooms.

Users (Educators & Service Providers)	31
Youth Reached (Approx.)	800

Panel Discussions

Panels exploring how racism and oppression impact youth and how we can effect positive change.

Number of Panel Discussions	2
Attendees	162

Workshops

Introductory workshops on the impacts of stress and the positive effects of mindfulness on the stress cycle.

Number of Workshops	15
Youth Reached	106
Service Providers Reached	40

Community Sessions

Single and multi-session programs run in partnership with other organizations and community partners.

Number of Sessions	70
Youth Reached	256

Custody

Multi-session programs in open and closed custody facilities and alternative sentencing programs.

Number of Sessions	75
Youth Reached	40

Program Partners

- Central Technical School
- FYOU Project
- Golf Road Public School
- L'Amoreaux CI
- MLSE Launchpad
- Pathways to Education
- Peacebuilders Canada
- Rexdale Community Health Centre
- RexPride
- Roy McMurtry Youth Centre
- Seneca College
- Sprucedale Youth Centre
- Syl Apps Youth Centre
- Victoria Park CI

“I’ve gained a better understanding of stress and mental health issues, and how taking care of myself can help me take care of others better.”

- Youth Participant

Team

Board of Directors

Shaka Licorish, Chair

Cherilyn Scobie, Secretary

Balaji Swaminath, Treasurer

Billy Lourakis

Felicia Ross

Jasmin Pirani

Michelle Corbeil

Staff

Laura Sygrove, Executive Director

Nicole Madison, Director of Operations

Amanda Nicholls, Program Manager

Rochelle Miller, Teaching Coordinator

Faith Jones, Communications Coordinator

Program Facilitators

Amanda Nicholls

Faith Jones

Imesia Ewan

Karen Gnat

Martha Atkins

Rochelle Miller

Training Faculty

Julia Gibran

Laura Sygrove

jamilah malika abu-bakare

Andre Talbot

Rochelle Miller

Advisors

Bernice Mcleod

Donna Armstrong

Jess Robertson

Kate Love

Katie Anderson

Rebeckah Price



Grants & Funders

Foundations & Grants

McCall MacBain Foundation
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Sporos Foundation
Bruce Blackadar Last Call Fund
Theine Foundation

Corporate Donors

Leede, Jones, Gable Inc.

Donors \$5,000-\$3,500

Geoff Horton
Raised 80s Inc.

Donors \$1,500-\$500

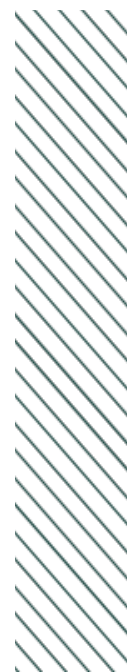
Modo Yoga Bloor West
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Donors Up to \$499

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Jenn Johnson
Laura Ngai
Praveen Muruganandan
Powerfull Juices & Smoothies
Gryphon Group
Aleksandra Jassem
Cait Ryan
Katie Serensits
Stacey Kline
Ann Speers
Helen Barbalias
Meghan Grzeslo
Michelle Simpson
Niki Wong
Rachel Gold
Stephanie Hill
Talea Zuk
Seana Dwyer
Celine Lamarre
Hendrie Wallace
Sarrah Francis
Sonya Obara
Julie Cardoni
Sarah Burriss
Amaan Giga
Pilar Albisu Ardigo



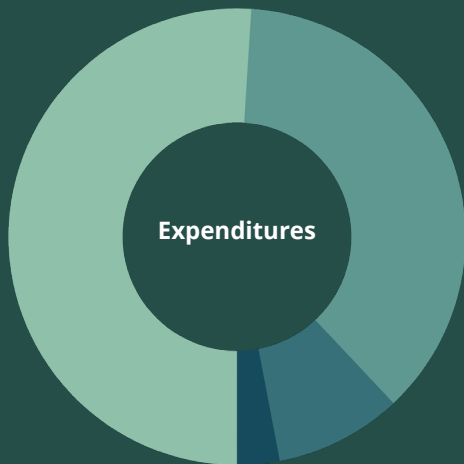
“It was very rewarding to connect with a group of young people in a healing way.”

- Educator, Toolkit User

Finances



- Grants 53%
- Donations 20%
- Fee for Service 8%
- Other 19%



- Programs 51%
- Wages 37%
- Operations 9%
- Fundraising 3%

Total Annual Budget \$ 218,109



Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant

New Leaf Foundation was a recipient of the *Resilient Communities Fund* grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. This important funding was designed to help community organizations rebuild and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. It allowed New Leaf to build in the processes and procedures needed to support a hybrid model of programming. We were able to redesign our website, create operational processes and communications materials, develop an online version of our *Building Blocks for Resilience* training, and more.

Statement of Operations

For the Year Ending August 31, 2021

	2021	2020
Revenues		
Donations	\$ 51,549	\$ 100,041
Grants	\$ 141,422	\$ 61,808
Fundraising	\$ 4,655	\$ -
Interest Income	\$ 290	\$ -
Fee for Service	\$ 21,061	\$ 33,641
Government Grants & Subsidies	\$ 45,953	\$ 28,067
Total Revenues	\$ 264,930	\$ 223,557
Expenditures		
Programs	\$ 110,887	\$ 144,722
Wages	\$ 81,526	\$ 63,701
Fundraising	\$ 5,643	\$ 1,136
Rent & Utilities	\$ 3,700	\$ 7,958
Office & General	\$ 5,757	\$ 7,121
Insurance	\$ 3,877	\$ 3,786
Professional & Consulting Fees	\$ 3,066	\$ 3,066
Bank Charges & Interest	\$ 1,326	\$ 1,218
Telephone	\$ 1,448	\$ 1,415
Amortization	\$ 879	\$ 272
Total Expenditures	\$ 218,109	\$ 234,395
Excess of Revenues Over Expenditures	\$ 46,821	\$ (10,838)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$ 104,615	\$ 115,453
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 151,436	\$ 104,615

Financial Position

As At August 31, 2021

	2021	2020
Assets		
Cash	\$ 222,008	\$ 216,238
Accounts Receivable	\$ 4,402	\$ 9,554
Prepaid Expenditures	\$ -	\$ 1,300
Property & Equipment	\$2,494	\$1,359
Total Assets	\$ 228,904	\$ 228,451
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	\$ 12,468	\$ 6,194
Deferred Revenue	\$ 25,000	\$ 77,642
Canada Emergency Business Loan	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
Total Liabilities	\$ 77,468	\$ 123,836
Net Assets	\$ 151,436	\$ 104,615
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 228,904	\$ 228,451



