

Gather

by  Grandview Kids

A monthly newsletter for clients, caregivers, families and supporters | October 2026

Table of Contents

- Message from the CEO
- Development at Grandview Kids
- In this issue: Featured Stories
- 2025-26 Annual Report: Grandview Kids' Year in Review
- Evidence does not link vaccines and autism
- Program Spotlight: Extensive Needs Service
- Upcoming programs, workshops and events
- Research and Innovation: World Cerebral Palsy Day & CP-NET
- Community Corner
- Dates of significance
- Share your thoughts on *Gather*

Message from the CEO

October is here! With a new season comes new opportunities to connect, and our sites are buzzing with a spook-tacular month of activities, events and opportunities to network.

As we settled back into our Fall routines, we took time to reflect and remember. On September 30, we honoured the children who never returned home and the Survivors of residential schools on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The residential school system, a tool of colonization, caused harm that Indigenous communities continue to feel across generations. Through a flag-raising ceremony, we came together to remember, learn and support reconciliation.

Throughout this month, our Family Engagement Team is excited to offer a fun Fall event lineup for families. Grandview Kids' Pumpkin Palooza is back at Willowtree Farms, featuring pumpkin patch, wagon ride and corn maze. Our annual Accessible Trick or Treat event is also returning on October 25, with an inclusive Halloween experience for Grandview Kids clients and families. Come dressed in your favourite costume and get ready for some spooky fun! See the "Upcoming programs, workshops and events" section below for more details.

At Grandview Kids, we support children, youth and their families to reach their full potential and, most importantly, celebrate them for who they are. In recognition of Down Syndrome Awareness Month, I'm pleased to share [Clara's story](#). Clara's mom and Family Advisory Council (FAC) member, Tanya, shares how a simple mantra can be a powerful expression of confidence, strength and pride in who you are. Clara's story reminds us of the importance of embracing who we are and sharing our joy, kindness and determination with the world.

This month, we also recognize World Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Day by sharing the story of Mitchell Daniels, our Ability Acceptance Presenter and Archivist. Drawing on his own lived experience with hydrocephalus, Mitchell helps raise awareness about disability and inclusion



Team Grandview gathers for the Every Child Matters flag raising ceremony.

through our [Ability Acceptance Program](#), encouraging others to become Inclusion Allies. Learn more about [Mitchell's story](#) and our Ability Acceptance Program below.

Families play an important role in improving care and shaping research for future generations. This month, we share the story of a Grandview Kids family whose journey with cerebral palsy (CP) led them to take part in the CP Integrated Neuroscience Discovery Network (CP-NET) research project. Their experience highlights the value of sharing stories, contributing to research, and connecting with others in the CP community. I encourage you to read their story and join this year's virtual CP-NET Science and Family Day.

As we move into the later part of the year, I've been reflecting on all we have accomplished together. The past year has been one of growth, connection and possibility at Grandview Kids. Across Durham Region, children and youth have made progress toward their goals, families have received supports to thrive and Team Grandview has continued to achieve great things by working and learning together. I'm proud of the progress we've made and grateful to everyone who has helped make it possible.

Through our [Powering Potential](#) Strategic Plan, we have continued to focus on improving experiences for clients and caregivers, supporting a strong and empowered Team Grandview and building partnerships across Durham Region. Our 2025-26 [Annual Report](#) brings this work to life, celebrating the people, stories and progress that have shaped our year.

Part of *Powering Potential* is making sure our families have access to clear, trusted information, especially when misinformation can create uncertainty. Our Medical, Research and Communications teams joined forces to create an evidence-based resource about vaccine safety. I encourage you to check out [this](#) resource for answers to common questions and support informed health-care decisions.

Our October Program Spotlight celebrates the third anniversary of our [Extensive Needs Service](#) (ENS), an important milestone for Grandview Kids. Since launching in 2023 with more than 30 community partners, ENS has grown to support over 1,100 children and youth with urgent and complex needs across Ontario each year. To mark three years of making a difference, Grandview Kids caregiver, Kerry, and her triplet boys, share their family's story, along with Leigh S., one of our Clinical Managers.

Before I go, I wanted to share that Grandview Kids will be taking part in this year's Durham Regional Police Service Children's Games on Saturday, October 24, 2026. This fun and inclusive event is for children and youth ages 5 to 18 with physical disabilities. The activities are adapted so everyone can join in. We look forward to seeing you there!

As we head into a season of gratitude and Fall fun, thank you for your continued support. We look forward to another month of connection and community.

Warm regards,

Tom McHugh
CEO, Grandview Kids



Development at Grandview Kids



GrandviewKids

**Every gift
powers
potential.**

***Become a monthly
donor today!***

When you become a monthly donor to Grandview Kids, you're helping children and families access essential programs, therapies and support close to home. Your ongoing support provides reliable funding that makes a meaningful difference, helping young people build confidence, develop new skills and achieve important milestones.

This October, our goal is to welcome 10 new monthly donors, and we need your help to get there. Every new monthly gift, no matter the size, helps create lasting impact for local children and families.

[Donate now](#) and become one of our 10 new monthly donors this month. Together, we can help more children and youth reach their full potential while ensuring families have access to the support they need, when they need it most.

Become a monthly donor!



 **In this issue** 

"I am Clara" - Honouring Down Syndrome Awareness Month!



Watch as Grandview Kids mom and [Family Advisory Council](#) (FAC) member, Tanya, shares her daughter Clara's story in honour of Down Syndrome Awareness Month. Through Clara's journey, Tanya shares a heartfelt reminder of the importance of embracing who we are and sharing our joy, kindness and determination with the world.

[Read more on our blog >](#)

Mitchell's journey with Hydrocephalus



October 25 marks World Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Day, a day to raise awareness and understanding of spina bifida and hydrocephalus while promoting the rights and inclusion of people living with these conditions. It also highlights the importance of support, accessibility and dignity at every stage of life. Watch as Grandview Kids' [Ability Acceptance](#) Presenter and archivist, Mitchell Daniels, shares his experience with hydrocephalus and how it impacts his everyday life.

[Read more on our blog >](#)



2025-26 Annual Report: Grandview Kids' Year in Review



[Read our 2025-26 Annual Report](#)

We are proud to share our 2025-26 Annual Report. The past year has been defined by growth, connection and possibility. Across Durham Region, children and youth took important steps toward their goals, families found support when they needed it most and Team Grandview continued to demonstrate what is possible when purpose and passion come together.

At Grandview Kids, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to thrive. That belief continues to shape our work and guide the decisions we make every day. Through [Powering Potential](#), our strategic plan, we are building on our strengths while responding to the evolving needs of the communities we serve. The Plan provides clear direction for advancing care, strengthening our culture, and creating lasting impact for children, youth and families.

Throughout 2025-2026, we made meaningful progress toward this vision by focusing on three strategic priorities:

1. Enhancing outcomes and experiences for clients and caregivers
2. Investing in a thriving and empowered Team Grandview
3. Strengthening the partnerships that help us extend our reach and deepen our impact across Durham Region

These priorities were brought to life through the collective efforts of our staff, physicians, volunteers, partners, donors and supporters. Together, we delivered more than 166,000 hours of care through nearly 95,000 visits, supporting over 10,000 children, youth and families. While these numbers demonstrate the scope of our work, they tell only part of the story.

The clients and community we serve

2025-26 Key Statistics



10,000* clients served

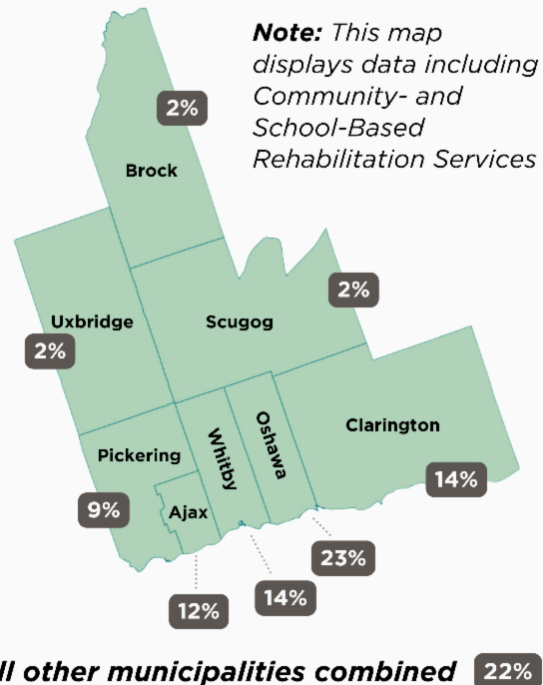
95,000* total visits



166,000+ total client care time (hours)

**Includes data from our School-Based Rehabilitation Services and Service Provider Organizations.*

**Watch our
2025-26 Video
Annual Report**



Infographic showing how many clients, visits and total care time (in hours) Grandview Kids delivered in 2025-26.

Behind every appointment, program and service is a family navigating challenges with courage, a child building new skills and confidence and a team committed to providing exceptional care and support. These are the moments that inspire us and remind us why our work matters.

As you explore our [2025-26 Annual Report](#), you will see how our Strategic Plan is more than a roadmap. It is a commitment to continuous improvement, meaningful collaboration and a future where every child and youth has the opportunity to reach their full potential. The progress we share reflects what we can achieve together and the possibilities that lie ahead.

This is *Powering Potential* in action.



Evidence does not link vaccines and autism

The best available scientific evidence shows that vaccines do not cause autism.

However, it is reasonable to have questions about the benefits, risks and uncertainties of health care decisions for your family, including vaccination.

Our Research and Communications teams joined forces to create our new client and family resource, "Evidence does not link vaccines and autism." The resource, reviewed by our Medical Services team, gives you clear answers to questions like "What does the evidence tell us?" and "Do vaccines affect children with autism differently than those without?"

Evidence does not link vaccines and autism

The research, explained

The best available scientific evidence shows that vaccines do not cause autism. However, it is reasonable to have questions about the benefits, risks and uncertainties of health care decisions for your family, including vaccination.

The key takeaway: evidence does not link vaccines and autism.

- Large population studies involving hundreds of thousands of children have not found that vaccination increases the risk of autism. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses have reached the same conclusion across multiple studies.
- Research has considered whether children with autism or other factors associated with autism have different vaccine safety outcomes, with no evidence.
- Recent international evidence reviews continue to find no causal relationship between vaccines and autism. Canadian public health guidance is consistent with this evidence.¹

What does the research tell us?

No single study answers scientific questions about vaccine safety.

Researchers look at all the evidence:

- Large population studies can compare health outcomes among vaccinated and unvaccinated children and consider factors that could influence the results.
- Systematic reviews and meta-analyses bring together findings from multiple studies and assess their quality to help researchers determine whether an apparent association is consistent and supported by reliable evidence.

A Danish study followed 657,461 children nationwide and found **no increased risk of autism following the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine**. The researchers also examined children with factors associated with a higher likelihood of autism and did not find an increased risk following vaccination.²

A 2021 systematic review and meta-analysis of vaccine safety found high-strength evidence that MMR vaccines do not increase the risk of autism.³ A Cochrane review similarly found no evidence of an association between MMR vaccination and autism, based on **evidence involving approximately 1.2 million children**.⁴ Together, these studies deliver stronger evidence than an individual report.

Read the resource on our website

Program Spotlight: Extensive Needs Service



Grandview Kids celebrates three years of its transformative [Extensive Needs Service \(ENS\)](#), which supports over 1,100 children and youth with urgent and complex needs across Ontario each year. Launched in 2023, ENS brings hospitals, families and community partners together to deliver personalized, trauma-informed care close to home.

The program provides access to evidence-based and trauma-informed care to meet the unique needs of some of the most vulnerable children in the province. The aim is to reduce barriers families may face in navigating a complex health care system and accessing the right care their children need when they need it.

In our ENS Program Spotlight video, we feature one family's journey with triplets with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and sensory challenges. The video features Grandview Kids parent Kerry, her triplet boys and Leigh S., our Clinical Manager, Extensive



Upcoming events in October

Family Engagement

Join Grandview Kids' [Family Engagement team](#), comprised of peers with lived experience, for engaging events in May. If you have any questions about the events shared below, please email familyengagement@grandviewkids.ca for more information. See our [Events](#) page for more.

Siblings by Siblings

Led by Peer Navigators who are Grandview siblings, this event offers a fun, supportive space to share, connect and build community, sibling-style. The evening is all about connection, laughter and being surrounded by people who understand the unique experience of growing up as a sibling of a Grandview Kids client.

[Click here to register >](#)

Date: Thursday, October 8

Time: 5 to 7 p.m.

Location: [The Jerry Coughlan Building \(1461 Harwood Ave N, Ajax, L1T 0R3\)](#)

Grandview Kids Pumpkin Palooza

Join the Family Engagement Team for a fun fall day at Willowtree Farms! Enjoy the pumpkin patch, wagon rides, corn mazes, spooky story forest, straw jump and more!

[Click here to register >](#)

Date: Saturday, October 17

Time: 10 a.m. to noon

Location: [Willowtree Farms \(975 Regional Rd. 21, Port Perry, Ont. L9L 1B5\)](#)

Admission: \$10 per person

One caregiver per family is free. Children under two are free.

Fall Fest: Fun & Dance (Adolescent Transition Program)

Join us for music, dancing, Makey Makey and lots of fun and laughter as we come together to celebrate the spooky season. Come dressed as your favourite character or as your wonderful self!

This event is for youth aged 15+.

[Click here to register >](#)

Date: Monday, October 21, 2026

Time: 6 to 8 p.m.

Location: [The Jerry Coughlan Building \(1461 Harwood Ave N, Ajax, L1T 0R3\)](#)

Goal-Setting Workshop

Join us for a supportive and engaging virtual workshop designed to help caregivers set meaningful goals for their child. Learn practical strategies, hear real-life experiences and gain tools you can use right away to support your child's growth and development. Join us to connect, reflect and get tools you can use right away.

[Click here to register >](#)

Date: Thursday, October 22

Time: 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual

Annual Accessible Trick-or-Treat event

Join us for a fun and accessible trick-or-treating experience for Grandview Kids clients and their immediate families! Come dressed in your favourite Halloween costume and get ready for some spooky-season fun.



Date: Sunday, October 25, 2026

Time: 5 to 7 p.m. (entry times vary based on the ticket you select)

Location: [Kids Safety Village](#) (1129 Athol St, Whitby, ON)

All Trick-or-Treaters will require a ticket. Tickets will determine what time you may start trick-or-treating and if you require edible or non-edible treats. Please bring a small treat bag or bucket to collect your goodies along the way!

Note: Parents and caregivers do not need a ticket to attend. The time on your ticket indicates the **earliest** time that you can arrive. The event will end promptly at 7 p.m. Costumes are encouraged but not required.

[Register now!](#)

These events are only the start!

View the [Calendar](#) on our website to see all the events, workshops and purchased services we host each month. This month, we're hosting **seven free events** for Grandview Kids clients and caregivers.

Hover over each event to learn more and click a link to register (if applicable). Check this page regularly to stay on top of all our exciting activities at Grandview Kids!



Research and Innovation

World Cerebral Palsy Day 2026

Families are not just recipients of research; they are partners in building knowledge that can support future generations.

For one Grandview Kids family, their journey with cerebral palsy (CP) began with questions, uncertainty and a desire to understand how best to support their daughter. Born prematurely at seven months as the younger twin, she showed developmental delays as her sister met age-appropriate milestones. Though her parents worked in healthcare and technology, they knew little about cerebral palsy and did not initially expect a diagnosis. As the months passed and milestones continued to be delayed, the family sought answers.

[Visit our blog](#) to read about this family's experience in participating in the CP Integrated Neuroscience Discovery Network (CP-NET) research project. CP-NET aims to store a lot of information about children with all subtypes of CP. This way, researchers and clinicians can try to better understand what causes CP and develop treatments and therapies that work in the future.

Connect with others in the CP community: CP-NET Science and Family Day



REGISTER NOW!

13th Annual

**CP-NET
Science
& Family Day**

Exploring independence and interdependence!

 **October 5, 2026**

 **Online via Zoom**

 **CP-NET**
Cerebral Palsy Rehabilitation
Discovery Network

 **ONTARIO
BRAIN
INSTITUTE**

 **CanChild**

 **Holland Bloorview**
Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

The banner features a green and white color scheme with a stylized leaf logo. Two circular images are included: one showing a statue of a person with arms raised in a park, and another showing a family (a man, a woman, and a child) sitting together indoors.

Join the CP-NET virtually on Monday, October 5, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. for its annual Science and Family Day!

This year's theme, **Independence & Interdependence**, will bring together researchers and people with lived experience to explore topics including technology, transition to adulthood, advocacy, and more.

The full-day event will feature engaging presentations, discussions and opportunities to connect with others in the CP community.

Register today for a day of learning, connection, and community!

Try an exciting new technology called “Brain Computer Interface” at Grandview Kids!



Grandview Kids is exploring an exciting new technology called Brain Computer Interface (BCI)! BCI uses an Emotiv Headset to pick up brain activity and turn it into simple commands that can control technology. This can provide another way for kids to interact with technology and participate in activities such as gaming, art and music.

We are looking for Grandview Kids clients (current or past) who are interested in trying BCI and helping us explore how this technology could be used in our programming. This is outside the scope of our regular clinical services, although a trained Grandview Kids team member will administer the sessions.

If your child is interested in gaming, music, art, technology or exploring new ways to participate, we'd love to meet you!

Interested in learning more or trying BCI?

Book a BCI session [here](#)! Participants can sign up for multiple sessions, with spots available on a first-come, first-served basis.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact Shantel Mangroo, Program Manager of Research and Innovation, at research@grandviewkids.ca.



Community Corner

Fundraisers supporting Grandview Kids this month

Community fundraisers build awareness and foster a shared sense of purpose. By organizing or supporting a Grandview Kids fundraiser, you make a meaningful difference in the lives of Durham Region families.



Little Smiles Day
Thursday, October 29

From 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., families can explore haunted dental rooms, make



6th Annual Hot Dog Halloween Fundraiser
Saturday, October 31

potions, decorate pumpkins, meet some friendly monsters and enjoy a kid-friendly smile check, all designed to make going to the dentist a little less scary and a LOT more fun.

Admission is free, but this special community event is also a fundraiser for Grandview Kids. We hope you'll consider making a donation to help support children and youth with physical, communication and developmental needs and their families.

For more information, visit @DiscoveryDentalAjax on social media.

Come out for a night of smiles, scares and giving back!

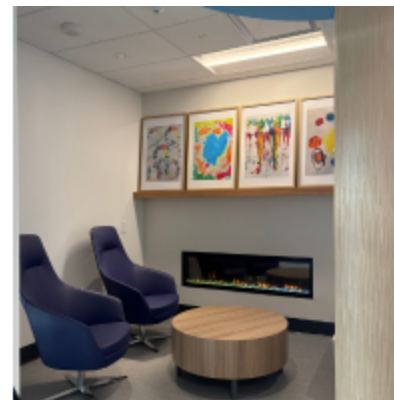
BOO! It's scary to think, but Halloween is around the corner! If you're in the Liberty/Longworth area of Bowmanville, please consider stopping by the sixth annual *Hot Dog Halloween Fundraiser* in support of Grandview Kids.

The Hot Dog Halloween fundraiser takes place on Halloween night. While you and your family are out trick-or-treating, stop by and pick up a hot dog (vegetarian options available) and a non-alcoholic drink. A suggested donation of \$3 per hot dog is appreciated, and all proceeds will be donated to Grandview Kids.

For more information, please contact development@grandviewkids.ca.



Ajax Public Library



In October, Ajax Public Library plan many engaging activities, including:

- [Islamic Heritage Month Storytime](#) on Saturday, October 3. Drop in from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Audley Branch.
- [Sensory Storytime](#) on Thursday, October 8 & 22. Drop in from 10 to 10:30 a.m. at the Ajax Public Library Grandview Kids Express Branch
- [Family Storytime & Ajax Reading Circle](#) on Saturday, October 17. Drop in from 10 a.m. to noon the Audley Branch.
- [PA Day: Craft & Movie: Minions & Monsters \(rated PG\)](#) on Monday, October 26. Drop in from 1:30 to 4 p.m. at the Ajax Public Library Grandview Kids Express Branch.
- [Design A Bookmark Contest!](#) Submissions due on Monday, October 5. Ajax kids in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8.

Play and Learn Kits created in collaboration with Grandview Kids!

Play and Learn Kits help develop fine motor, tactile and awareness skills.

Borrow one today with your Ajax Public Library card.



For a complete listing of Ajax Public Library-hosted programs and services in August, visit: ajaxlibrary.ca.

Regional Municipality of Durham

The Region of Durham is hosting a [Disability Employment Conference](#) that brings together employers, community organizations, educators and accessibility advocates to explore strategies for building more inclusive workplaces. Durham Region, in partnership with Ontario Tech University and Ready, Willing and Able, is hosting the one-day event to highlight inclusive practices, emerging trends in accessibility and collaborative approaches that support employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The conference features a keynote and a panel discussion focused on inclusive recruitment, workplace accessibility, employee retention and fostering inclusive workplace cultures. Attendees will also have opportunities to connect through an interactive resource village showcasing programs, services and resources that support disability inclusion in the workforce. The conference will also feature a hiring event for persons with disabilities seeking employment.

- **Date:** Friday, October 16, 2026
- **Time:** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Location:** Ontario Tech University Science Building, 2000 Simcoe Street North, Oshawa
- **Click [here](#) to register.** Registration is required.



Durham Region Disability Employment Conference 2026
Ability in Action: Connecting Talent with Opportunity

Date and time: Friday October 16, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Location: Ontario Tech University Science Building (formerly known as UA) 2000 Simcoe Street North, Oshawa ON

Keynote Speaker – Dr. Mahadeo Sukhai, the world's first congenitally blind geneticist and nationally recognized leader advancing equitable employment across Canada.

What to expect:

- Panel discussion with disability and employment professionals
- Recruiters seeking talent from people with disabilities
- Interactive vendor expo

Vendor and participant registration is required.
Scan the QR code or visit durham.ca/DisabilityEmploymentConference



If you require this information in an alternate accessible format, please contact 311 or the Accessibility Coordinator at accessibility@durham.ca or 1-800-372-1102, extension 2009.

Durham Regional Police Service Children's Games

Registration is now open for the Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) Children's Games!

- **Date:** Saturday, October 24, 2026
- **Time:** In-person registration begins at 9:30 a.m.
- **Location:** Durham College, 2000 Simcoe St N, Oshawa

[Click here to register >](#)

About the Games

The Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) Children's Games is a fun, inclusive and empowering event for children and youth ages 5 to 18 with physical disabilities. The Games



bring families from across Durham Region and the GTA together for a variety of adapted, participation-based activities such as basketball, wheelchair rugby, parachute games and more.

Children receive a team T-shirt, connect with peers, police members and community volunteers, and enjoy a supportive environment designed to celebrate ability, build confidence and foster friendships. All activities are adapted to ensure every participant can engage fully. [Learn more >](#)

October Dates of Significance

Every month, members of Team Grandview's Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Committee research and share blog posts about holidays, cultural celebrations, awareness days and other dates of significance that are meaningful to staff, clients, caregivers, partners and the community.



This October, we acknowledge National Disability Employment Month, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Awareness Month, Canadian Islamic History Month, Global Diversity Awareness Month, World Cerebral Palsy Day, World Mental Health Day and the International Day of the Girl Child and more.

[Read more on our blog >](#)



How did you like this issue of *Gather*?

Share your feedback and suggestions via [this survey](#) to help us make the newsletter better for everyone.

Content in *Gather* is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Always consult your doctor. Views expressed in posts and resources listed do not signify endorsement by Grandview Kids.



[Website](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)



Grandview Kids | 1461 Harwood Ave N Building A | Ajax, ON L1T 0R3 CA

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)