

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

FY 7/1/19-6/30/20

SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER





## DEAR FRIENDS OF SNSC,

When COVID-19 swept across the country, lives were put on hold. Businesses and schools closed. Restaurants, stores, and places of worship emptied. And for many people in SNSC's Community, access to necessary support and intervention ground to a halt. Parents and caregivers are balancing working from home with taking over as teachers, therapists and classroom aides. Many families of children with disabilities are concerned about the impact COVID-19 has had on their children's special education program, their health & well-being, and their own well-being as a loving care provider.

The adults with disabilities we serve have experienced higher amounts of social isolation and loneliness due to the loss of care providers who typically provide transportation and access to the community and friends. Also, with increased medical vulnerability, we know many people who have not set foot out of their homes in over 7 months. Mandated closures of residential homes for people with severe and persistent disabilities has caused tremendous stress for entire families in our region. And the list goes on...

Our team remains nimble and flexible in meeting the ever-evolving needs of the SNSC Community. The commitment of our team to be innovators with a depth of skill and capability remains strong. During this year, our leadership team has renewed our focus and passion for developing and implementing premier programs for children and adults with disabilities during these unprecedented times.

With the many unknowns related to school, potential shutdowns, and the ongoing stress related to the virus, SNSC will continue to reevaluate our response to ensure we are well prepared to continue our vital work for our community. The vulnerability of our participants requires a higher than usual amount of support and we are proudly positioned to continue meeting these needs. Thank you so much for your support which means more to us now than ever before.

Sincerely,

*Laura*

Executive  
Director



*JoAnne*

Co-President



*Rose Marie*

Co-President



# #MAKEADIFFERENCE



## Give

Supporting SNSC with an individual gift, a multi-year pledge, or a corporate sponsorship means you are giving opportunities and support to children and adults with disabilities and supporting their goals and aspirations.

## Become an Ambassador

Join us as a champion for people with special needs. Help us grow our SNSC family by introducing our mission and programs to your own community. Share our story at your place of worship, your business, or another social group. For more info email [laura@sns-c-uv.org](mailto:laura@sns-c-uv.org).



## Volunteer

**Thank you to all of volunteers** and partners who support safety, belongingness, and joy for our participants. We have a variety of opportunities to volunteer as an individual, business, or group. Learn more at [www.sns-c-uv.org](http://www.sns-c-uv.org).



4

Staff

35

Volunteers

208

Individual  
Donors

35

Businesses &  
Foundations

470

Individuals  
Served

3,715

Times people  
were served

5,738

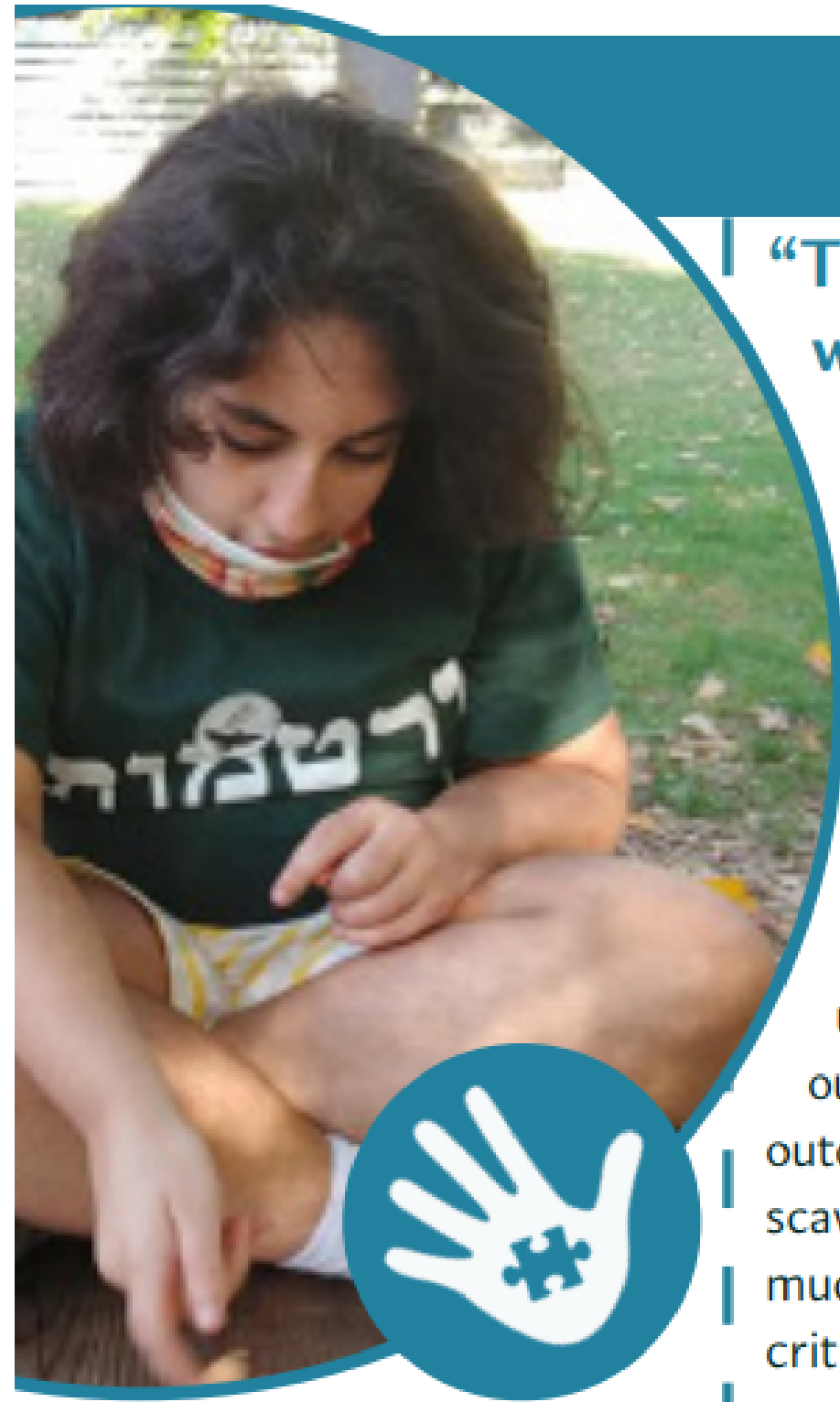
Hours of Service

## program highlight: aspire

“The Special Needs Support Center is like a family - a community where we can identify with others that can understand what we are going through. They say only someone going through similar things can understand the struggles, the successes and the joy that comes with being an autism parent. We are not alone on this journey and we can share our experiences and learn from others experiences through SNSC.” ~A parent of a child with autism

While we have all been hit hard during these times, the autism community has been especially affected. Routine is sacred to those on the spectrum, while the fear of the unknown can cause debilitating anxiety and depression. To support the needs of children in our Aspire program, we launched a series of summer and fall small group, in person, weekly outdoor activities. Activities included visiting VINS, art and theater in the park, yoga, karate, scavenger hunts, bubble making, drumming, nature walk & rolls, and more. In addition to the much-needed social connection for participants, these opportunities also provide short but critical respite for parents and care providers who have been so overtaxed during the pandemic.

**1,031 hours of Aspire were enjoyed by 33 children with autism in FY20**



# program highlight: happenings

Typically, Happenings is a monthly, large group social activities program for adults with special needs. Even before COVID-19, adults with disabilities in our community were prone to isolation, loneliness, and social difficulties which have significant impacts on their happiness, health, and overall well-being. **During the shutdown, we created a weekly check-in system with all of our families and program participants. Through this contact, we provided positivity, emotional connection, and were a valuable resource to connect participants with other support agencies.** We continue to work with partners to deliver critical messages regarding safety, health, and food access for adults with special needs.

Additionally, we have provided weekly, small group activities outdoors while taking the highest level of caution to protect the health and safety of participants and staff. We have enjoyed fun, enriching social activities including yoga, bingo, a sensory friendly theater production, nature walk & rolls, and drumming.

**1,660 hours of support were provided to 127**

**Happenings' participants in FY20**



## program highlight: art lab

**“The art teachers are friendly, considerate, and, most importantly, they have the hearts to help people with special needs to discover their talents.”**

**~A parent with an adult child with special needs**

Art Lab is a weekly art program for adults with special needs. During the pandemic we have continued to work collaboratively with AVA to host Art Lab at Home and Art in the Park. Art Lab at Home is a virtual artmaking opportunity with friends. Our staff and volunteers deliver art supplies to participants and host weekly virtual art lessons. Following all social distancing guidelines, we have also hosted weekly Art in the Park for outdoor artmaking lessons.

People with disabilities are more likely than their neurotypical peers to experience social isolation and loneliness. Research has linked social isolation and loneliness to higher risks for a variety of physical and mental conditions: high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, and more. **Programs like Art Lab decrease loneliness and isolation and increase belonging, happiness, and health.**

**2,587 hours of Art Lab was enjoyed by 85 participants in FY20**

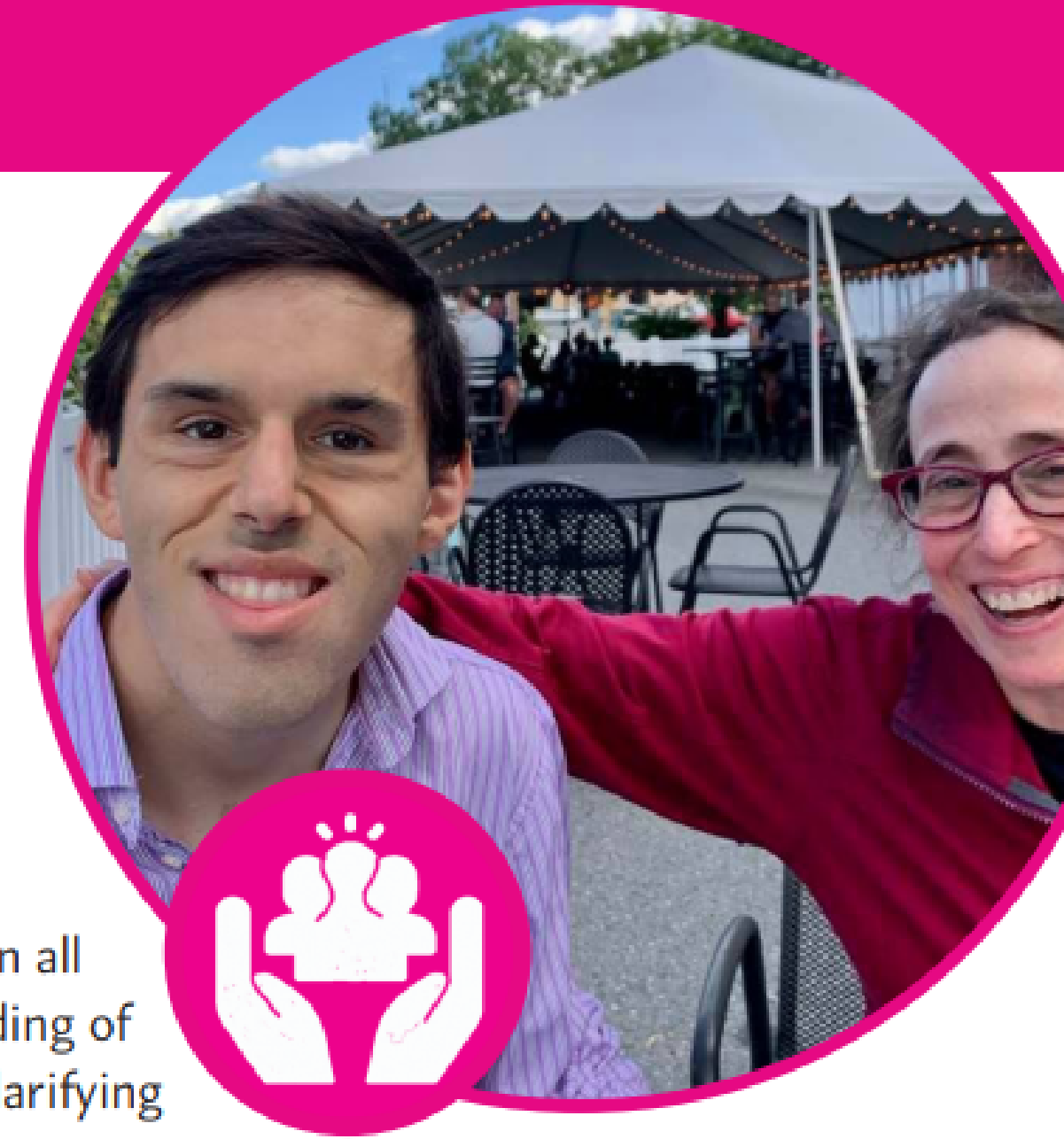


## program highlight: pesap

**“SNSC is the central hub for everything you need when it comes to special needs and related services, especially for helping parents, grandparents, and care providers through the entire process. We all need support – not just the child with special needs.” ~A parent from PESAP**

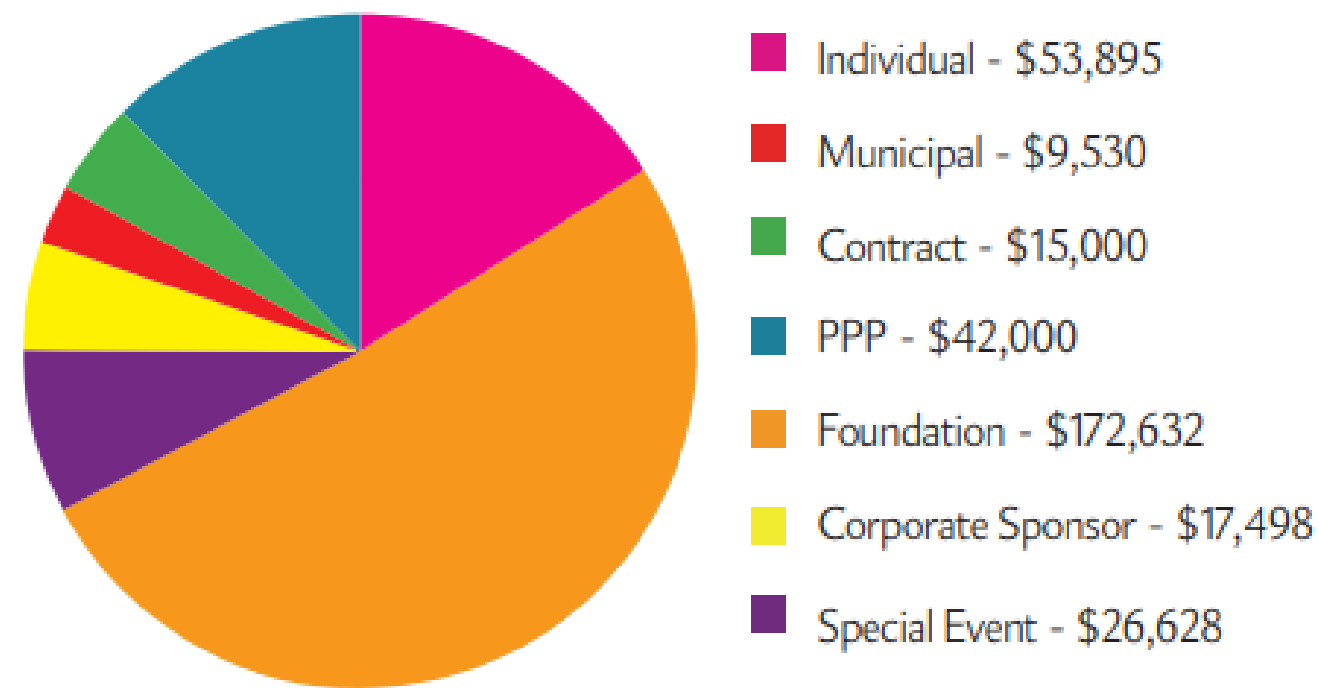
During the pandemic, Dr. Miriam Osofsky, a licensed psychologist, joined SNSC in launching a virtual Parent to Parent Peer Support Group for care providers who are under increased pressure due to the lack of support and services related to the pandemic. This forum provides a welcoming, safe, and open space for parents to share struggles and triumphs, form relationships, and gain resources.

Parent Educational Support and Advocacy Program (PESAP) supports parents in all aspects of the special education and Section 504 process to promote understanding of the relevant state and federal rules and regulations while supporting parents in clarifying their ideas and concerns regarding their child’s education.

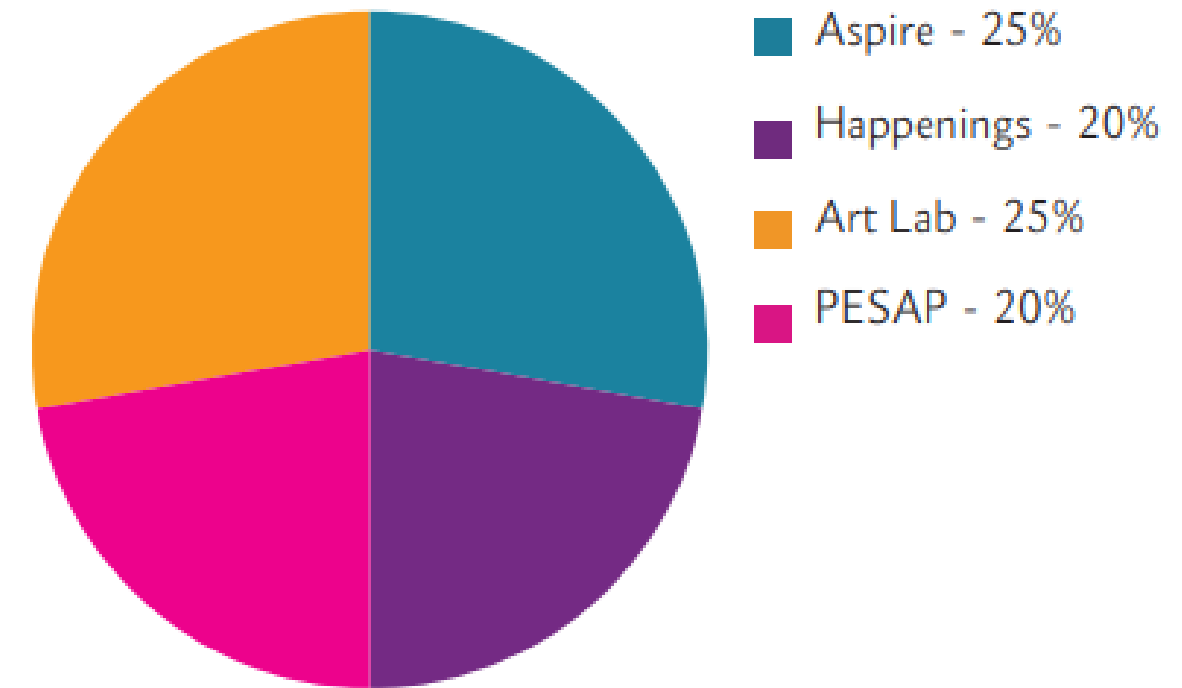


**25 families received 460 hours of advocacy and support in FY20**

## Operating Revenue by Source



## Operating Expenses by Program



**Board:** Jo-Anne Unruh, *Co-President*, Rose Marie McCullough, *Co-President*, Meg Seely, *Secretary*, Allen Abendroth, Kathy Aldriedge, Alexis Alston, Paula Fernandes, Sue Hagerman, Vince Mennona, Barbara van Hoff

**Staff:** Laura Perez, *Executive Director*, Nicki Thrall, *Administrative Coordinator*, Jayne Hufferdine, *Youth Services Coordinator*, Emma Woloshin, *Interim Adult Services Coordinator*



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