

Annual Report 2024

technology
for living

Putting People First



Message from the Chair

Technology for Living's origin story began in 2000 with the creation of the Provincial Respiratory Outreach Program (PROP), through a bold ground-up process led by people living with ventilators in the community. To ensure PROP would be a community-based program, people with disabilities proposed merging it with Technology for Independent Living (TIL), a trusted assistive technology program operating for thirty years. After being housed at Spinal Cord BC for a few years, TFL became a standalone non-profit organization in 2006.

Technology for Living is committed to being led by its members, all users of our services. As our members have evolved, the organization has evolved with them. TIL now uses voice-activated environmental controls, and PROP has ventilators that can be monitored remotely. Our peer leaders are introducing

and testing innovations, while students partner with our members to create new customized technology to solve problems. It's an exciting time in the assistive technology world, promising an even better future for people with disabilities.

As we celebrate the end of a successful year, documented in this inaugural annual report, our vision for the future stays true to our origin. Our members will always be a majority on our Board of Directors, our services will always be directed by our members, and our staff will always respect our members' autonomy.

TFL will innovate, cooperate, and collaborate to achieve a world where everyone can control the resources for their health and independence.

Christine Gordon
Chairperson of the Board

From the Executive Director

Technology for Living has made significant strides in 2024, enhancing our services and collaborations.

Our PROP team has improved communication with hospital staff, facilitating faster transitions home for members and collaborating with the At Home Program to ease young adults' transition to PROP. TIL continues to offer preventative maintenance for hospital devices, with our biomedics praised for their quick turnaround. Our strong partnership with the ALS Society remains a cornerstone of our work.

Our Peer Support program has thrived through collaborations with non-profits, notably the Praxis Institute SCI in Vancouver. Together, we distributed cooling vests, enhancing the quality of life for those we support, thanks to funding from the C40 Inclusive

Climate Action (ICA) Cities Fund. I attended several Peer events, including an EcoWisdom event and a gathering in Victoria, witnessing the impact firsthand.

We are grateful for our ongoing partnerships with the Kinsmen Foundation of BC and BC Rehab Foundation, strengthened through various meetings. A highlight was attending Monica Gärtner's 'Courage to Come Back Award' ceremony, showcasing our community's perseverance.

Thanks to our staff, board, and especially our members who continue to shape our programs. Your direction makes this organization what it is today. Together, we're building a community of strength and autonomy.

Ruth Marzetti, Executive Director



Chris Marks, TFL Board Member

Ruth Marzetti

Paul Gauthier, Executive Director IFRC



PROP

PROP empowers people requiring assisted ventilation to live independently at home. Serving over 900 members across British Columbia, PROP ensures a seamless transition from hospital to home by providing essential respiratory support, 24-hour on-call service, caregiver education, and safe equipment. With membership growing annually by 20%, PROP's impact continues to expand.

PROP's innovative model supports people with complex respiratory needs in managing their care. In 2023, PROP's Respiratory Therapists completed over 1,000 in-home appointments, demonstrating their commitment to personalized care.

Members and families express gratitude for PROP's services.

One family shared, "It saved my father's life and extended his time with us while he fought ALS." Someone else share: "Thank you for helping Sam get his caregivers hands-on practice in the hospital."

Born from a grassroots movement, PROP embodies a community-driven approach prioritizing member needs, safety, and autonomy.

Healthcare professionals recognize PROP's value. After a training session, one remarked, "The Tracheostomy and Ventilator Management training was incredibly informative. The knowledge gained will significantly enhance our ability to provide high-quality care."

By offering tailored support and resources, PROP helps people navigate their unique challenges, ensuring they can fully engage with their communities and lead fulfilling lives.



PROP's impact is significant and growing.

The Peer Program

Rooted in the founding principles of Jeanette Anderson, Heather Morrison, and Nancy Lear, our Peer Program empowers individuals through shared experiences and mutual support. Led by Ean Price (Peer Team Lead/ Innovation Strategist), the team includes Nicole Whitford (Community Advisor, Vancouver), Robin Whyte (Community Advisor, Vancouver Island), and Taylor Danielson (Community Coordinator).

We engage peers in healthcare facilities, community events, and online platforms, combining individual support, group activities, and targeted programs.

Our team collaborates through weekly virtual meetings and efficient project management, overcoming geographical challenges.

Looking ahead, we continue adapting our methods to empower peers, enhance independence, and strengthen community connections.

“The Peer Program has been a lifeline for me. It’s not just about the practical support; it’s about feeling understood and connected. I’ve gained confidence and independence I never thought possible.” - Sarah M.

This year’s key achievements include providing 140 hours of support, with Nicole offering vital assistance at Cambie Gardens to aid transitions to community living. We delivered 18 presentations, including Ean’s keynote at the “Spectrum of Innovation” Conference, and organized 6 community events to foster peer engagement and program awareness. We distributed 125 cooling vests to vulnerable Vancouver residents. This year’s initiatives encompassed weekly support at Cambie Gardens, completion of the New Horizons for Seniors grant project, revitalization of the Peers on Pages program, and the introduction of a Peer page in Balance magazine.



We remain committed to our vision of supporting peers to live independently and engage fully in their communities by building meaningful connections.



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TIL

The Technology for Living (TIL) program continues to expand its reach and impact, growing in membership and the variety of barriers we can help our members overcome through technology.

WE Talk Tech, our monthly podcast, brings inspiring guests to discuss technology and local resources. Highlights this year included episodes on adaptive skiing, meeting the incredible *Mat the Alien*, and our own Taylor Danielson exploring local service providers at the Rehab Equipment Expo.

Our Youth Assistive Technology (YAT) program has broadened our offerings, including adaptive gaming controls that allow all our members to enjoy gaming on their preferred platforms.

TIL actively participates in professional education events to raise awareness about our program and reach more people seeking independence. We regularly attend Fraser Health's OT Education Day, the Equipment Rehab Expo, and UBC's Student OT Education Day. The Abilities Expo remains a favorite, allowing us to connect directly with current and future members.

Our commitment to assistive technology and universal design extends to community projects. While supporting members transitioning from George Pearson to Cambie Gardens, we seek opportunities to create accessible homes and spaces throughout British Columbia.

TIL is dedicated to empowering people through technology and fostering inclusive communities across the province.

"The TIL team is exceptional. From the first meeting, they understood the challenges I faced and were so supportive."

YAT

As YAT (Youth Assistive Technology) enters its final year as a pilot project, it continues to empower youth aged 9-18 with limited mobility through assistive technologies that foster independence and enhance quality of life. By August 2024, YAT has supported 52 youth members, reflecting a growth of 54% this year with 28 new members joining.

In November 2023, Lekha Jhalawat joined as the new coordinator, contributing fresh ideas to the program's ongoing development.

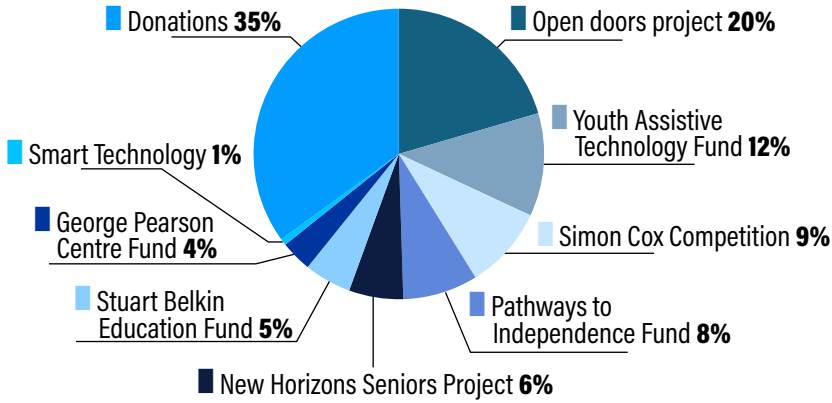
This year, YAT has updated its application process and webpage, strengthened community connections, and increased its social media presence with 15 social media posts. The program has expanded its services to support younger youth, now serving ages 9-18, and has provided 8 automatic door openers since September 2023. The newly offered adaptive gaming equipment has quickly gained popularity among members.

Community engagement has been a highlight, with YAT participating in the Leisure Fair and hosting four virtual presentations. The Adaptive Gaming Tournament in August attracted 30 applications and saw 7 youth participants. The two-day event featured project showcases, an inspiring talk by disabled gamer Alex Carey, and a Rocket League Tournament with prizes for all participants.

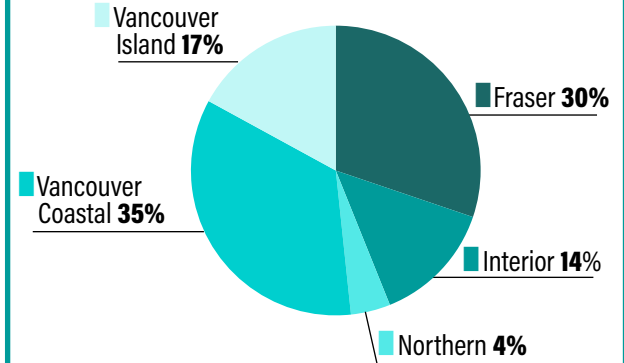
Participants and parents have expressed their appreciation, with one parent saying, "Thanks for planning the tournament!" and another noting, "This was a great opportunity to show his skills." As YAT looks to the future, it remains dedicated to empowering youth through technology and fostering a sense of community and inclusion.



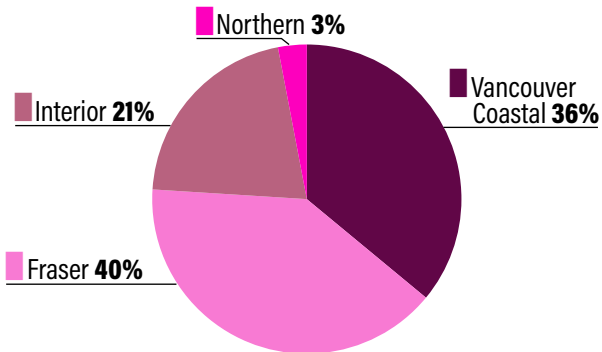
TFL Donations & Grants



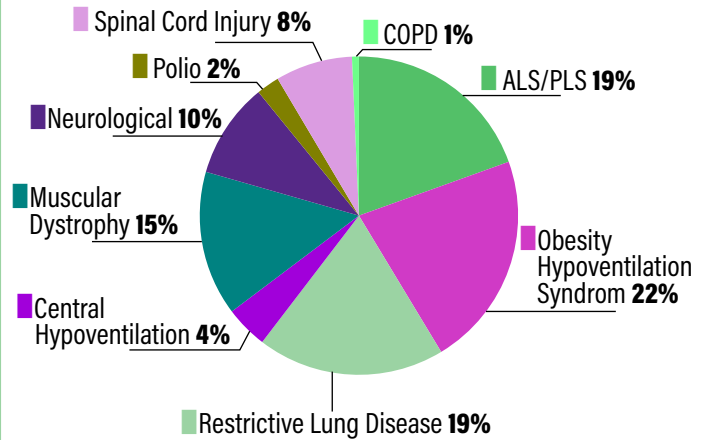
PROP Members by Health Authority




TIL Members by Health Authority



PROP Members by Diagnosis



For comprehensive financial statements please visit our website <https://tinyurl.com/TFL-FinancialStatements>



*On behalf of the
Technology for Living
Board of Directors,
Staff, and Volunteers,
thank you for supporting
People with Disabilities
in British Columbia.*

Thanks to our supporters, Technology for Living (TfL) continues to empower people with physical disabilities across British Columbia. Your generous contributions sustain our efforts to engage and educate peers and their families, spark innovation, and provide assistive technology solutions that increase autonomy.

Your gifts propel us forward, and we're deeply grateful for your shared commitment to our vision. Together, we've made a significant impact:

- ★ Provided home-environmental controls, and unique solutions to 1,959 people with physical disabilities
- ★ Supported 24 student teams in the Simon Cox Student Design Competition
- ★ Installed 25 Automatic Door Openers
- ★ Enabled 927 people to access Technology for Independent Living services

Our supporters understand the importance of our work:

- ★ *I donate because I know how hard it can be to give physically and emotionally everything your family needs. TfL can lighten that load a bit.*
- ★ *TfL not only advocates for the needs of people with disabilities but takes action and makes a concrete difference in their lives.*
- ★ *I use a BIPAP and Nebulizer TfL provided. I'm enormously grateful for this equipment and the superb assistance from your RTs.*

Together, we're creating a more inclusive and accessible community for all.

TECHNOLOGY FOR LIVING
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Vancouver BC, V5X 4N6
604-326-0175 info@technologyforliving.org

The SIMON COX

10th STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION

As a person with a disability, do you have an idea for a device to help improve your independence at home?



WE WANT PEER IDEAS!

Every peer idea that is accepted as a project by a student team has a chance at 1 of 5 \$100 gift cards. Assistive technology ideas around sports, clothing, pets, gaming, household solutions and others are welcome!

Showcase and judging of winning entries:
April 26, 2025

VISIT simoncoxcompetition.com/peers
OR EMAIL info@technologyforliving.org

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