



2022 Impact Report

What Success Looks Like at Aaron's Acres



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A MESSAGE OF SUCCESS

Dear Friends:

In creating this Impact Report for 2022, our focus is on our success stories. One definition of the word “success” is the following: “It is the positive consequence of one’s achievement.” At Aaron’s Acres, there are quite a number of achievements every time we are with our participants and “success” looks different for each of our participants. Saying “hi” to another participant, or to a staff member for a child who doesn’t usually initiate a conversation, getting on a horse for the very first time, going into the swimming pool and getting his face wet which he has never done before, jumping into the pool for the first time, trying a new food at snack time, touching a reptile, petting a bunny, participating in music therapy by playing the tambourine, or just saying goodbye to their parent in the morning without crying when separating from mom or dad had always been most challenging.

All of our staff celebrate these achievements when they occur at our programs, but also they know that they must share these special moments with the child’s parents or caregivers. Too often, parents report to us that in other settings, the focus is on the difficulties that the child is experiencing (i.e., behavioral challenges or academic challenges). At Aaron’s Acres, we are aware of the challenges, but we focus on personal accomplishments and positive steps each child is taking throughout our programs.

There is nothing better than to see the child’s face light up when she is told that what she just did was an achievement –it was a success! The smile is beautiful and the excitement that she either expresses verbally or just through her physical movements, are all sights that our staff remember for quite some time. Our staff have never taken any positive behavior nor action for granted; we highlight each action through words, give a “high five” or a “thumbs up” and make others aware of these special moments.

One of our parents shared the following: “At Aaron’s Acres, the staff is happy to see my child and celebrate all that she does!” This is an easy thing for the staff to do and one that the staff love to do as it “feeds their souls” and no doubt feeds the souls of the participants!

What a great year 2022 was with so many significant milestones and personal victories...I hope you’ll enjoy reading more about them in this report. Thank you for supporting our participants on their individual journeys towards “success”!

 Executive Director



SUCCESS STORIES



"My son, Reece, has been participating with the Aaron's Acres programs for the past 6 years. He is now 18 years old, and, over the years, I have seen incredible growth and development of his social and communication skills, as a result of his involvement."

"I am relieved and reassured, knowing that my son is happy, thriving and enjoying his experiences with Aaron's Acres while I appreciate the hours of respite which the programming provides to parents and caregivers. It's truly been a blessing to be involved with this phenomenal organization."

Peggy Jo Witmer, Aaron's Acres Parent



"Katie has been attending Aaron's Acres for about five years. From her first camp experience, through all the school year programs, and up to this summer she has been excited to attend events. Although we always appreciated Aaron's Acres, it was not until living through the pandemic did we realize how vital this program is for her. The inability to attend camp left her with too much unstructured time. This led to many extreme behavior problems, which involved tantrums, broken furniture, and increased self injurious behaviors. We saw a remarkable difference this summer, because she was able to attend Aaron's Acres. The structure and activities provided through camp helped decrease her anxieties and increased her ability to self regulate. Through the lens of Autism this has been a perfect summer. We have seen very little tantrums, significantly less self injurious behaviors, and no more broken furniture. Thank you for your love, support, and care for Katie. Aaron's Acres has made a positive life changing impact on our whole family."

Debra McArdle, Aaron's Acres Parent





SUCCESS STORIES



"Our daughter Katie has thoroughly enjoyed the School Year Program sponsored by Aaron's Acres. These wonderful short trips give her the opportunity to socialize with the other participants, which in this environment has become much harder to accomplish. I'm not sure what we would do if these activities were not being offered by Risa and her crew at Aaron's Acres.



"Since Katie has been attending these "excursions", we have seen a very positive (significant) change in the way Katie interacts and socializes with her camp friends and her family at home. She will talk about how much fun she had and that she can't wait to see her camp friends soon. I will just mention something about Aarons Acres and Katie smiles and goes up to her calendar on our refrigerator, then looks to see when the next adventure will take place!! "

Trisha Breidenbaugh, Aaron's Acres Parent



"You taught her so much
-that she can try new things!!!
-that she can decide what she likes and doesn't like
-what it sounds and feels like to be in a safe place
-that she can decide who and when to trust
-to ask when something doesn't seem right
-that she can do incredible things!

"It's learning about deciding when to trust, how to tolerate noise and people in shared spaces, overcoming uncertainty, and knowing the next time that she already did it once before - she can do it again!"

Ange Posey, Aaron's Acres Parent

COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS



"I am working for Penn Manor and I am teaching in a learning support/life skills classroom! I have kiddos with various needs and if it weren't for Aaron's Acres I would not be as successful in this setting as I am today! I have been singing your praises to my parents and I'm hoping that some of my kiddos will get involved with Aaron's Acres this summer."

Makaila Campo, Former Aaron's Acres Intern



"I wanted to tell you how impressive it was to see you guys handle some of the challenges you had today, with patience and compassion and perseverance. I imagine days like that must be very draining. And yet you and your staff knew just what to do, kept your cool, kept your patience, and showed what great professionals look like in these types of situations. The kids are so lucky to have you and your team at Aaron's Acres. Glad we could be a small part of it."

Jesse Rothacker, Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary



"I enjoyed watching these young folks engage in several activities throughout the day and am so grateful to Aaron's Acres for everything they do for them."

"Aaron's Acres is 'life-changing'."

"My experience at Aaron's Acres was deeply rewarding and impactful!"

"Thanks to your remarkable staff in putting together a great program that has far reaching effects in our community."

Collection from employees at Heller Capital Group



ABOUT AARON'S ACRES

Mission

Aaron's Acres provides individuals with disabilities ages 5-21 year-round therapeutically based age-appropriate recreational programs directed by specially trained and certified staff in a supportive environment that enhances socialization and communication skills. Emotional, educational, and recreational support is offered for the entire family.

What makes Aaron's Acres unique:

1:1 or 1:2 staff-to-child ratio
Supervisory staff comprised of professionals
Nurse on staff at all times

New at Aaron's Acres

A new site location for summer camp! In 2022, summer camp was held at New Holland Community Pool & Park, where Aaron's Acres was welcomed by a new community.

Aaron's Acres introduced its first adult program! The Chuckie Magee Flag Football & Cheerleading League held its first season at Manheim Brethren in Christ Church for participants ages 21-40.

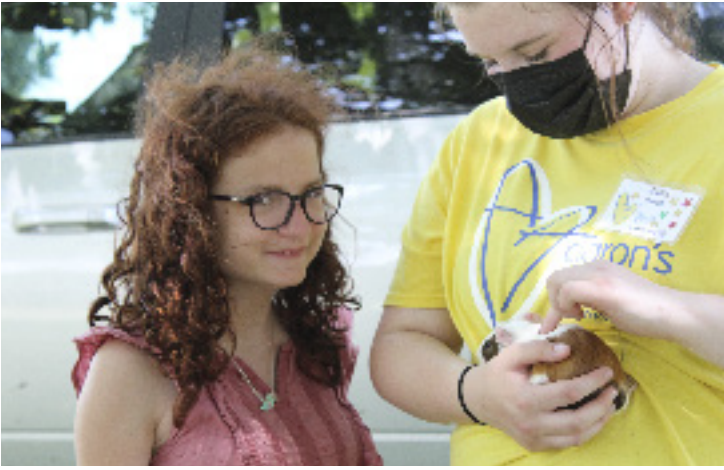
NUMBERS

In 2022, Aaron's Acres served 96 individuals through its children and young adult programs (ages 5-21) and 26 individuals through its adult sports programs (ages 21-40). Of the participating children and young adults, 45 were younger participants, ages 5-12 and 51 were older participants, ages 13-21.

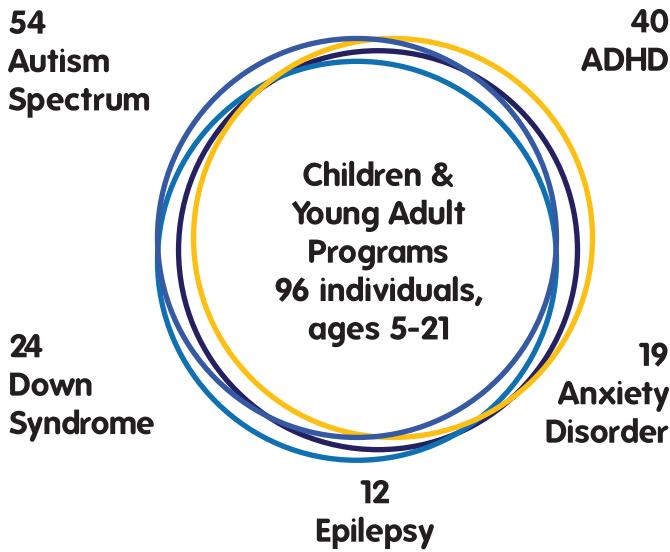
Aaron's Acres supports children and adults across 7 counties in Central Pennsylvania - Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Perry and York. In 2022, Aaron's Acres also had a summer camp participant from England!

SUPPORT

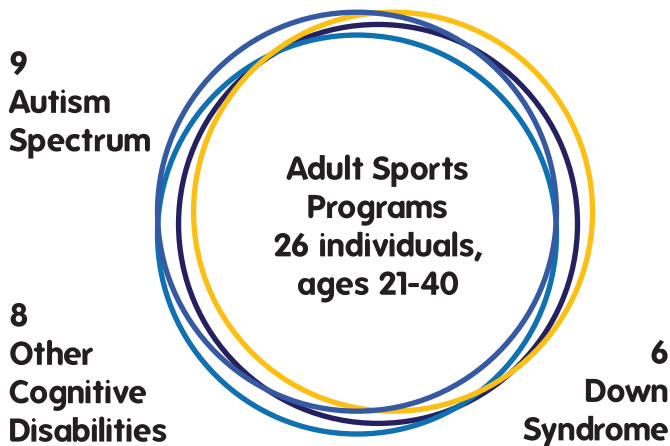
For an Aaron's Acres participant, programs offer communication, socialization and physical activity. But the impact does not stop there. Programs also offer respite for caregivers, volunteer experience for high school students, education for future professionals in related fields, opportunities for networking, community engagement and increased general awareness, and improved mental health for the entire family. Aaron's Acres' support of the entire family offers a community of like-minded individuals who support one another.



PROGRAM IMPACT



*Aaron's Acres serves individuals with complex needs and dual diagnoses.



GOALS

Goals are an important part of Aaron's Acres' children and young adult programs, focusing on the areas of socialization and communication. During the application process, caregivers are asked to select a goal from the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that they wish for our staff to work on during our programs. These goals are then monitored while the child attends Aaron's Acres. This provides ongoing support and reinforcement on goals previously acquired or assistance with newly acquired skills. Below are the goals that families can select from during the application process.

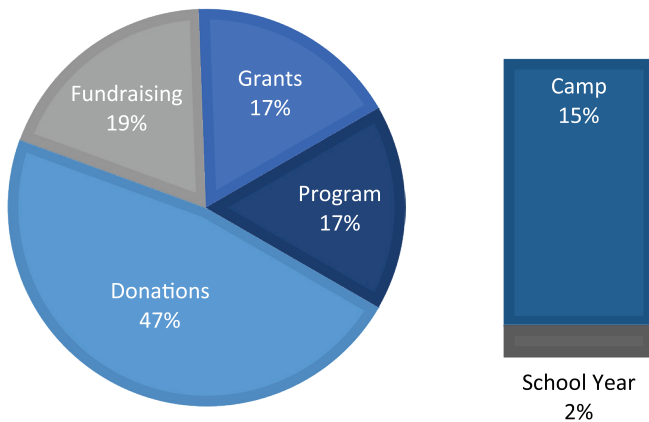
- Share with others (materials/toys/space)
- Take turns with others
- Ask permission
- Follow directions
- Begin a conversation
- End a conversation
- Take turns in conversation
- Engage in activities with others
- Ask for help
- Wait for needs to be met
- Express anger or frustrations appropriately (using words or gestures)
- Express feelings appropriately



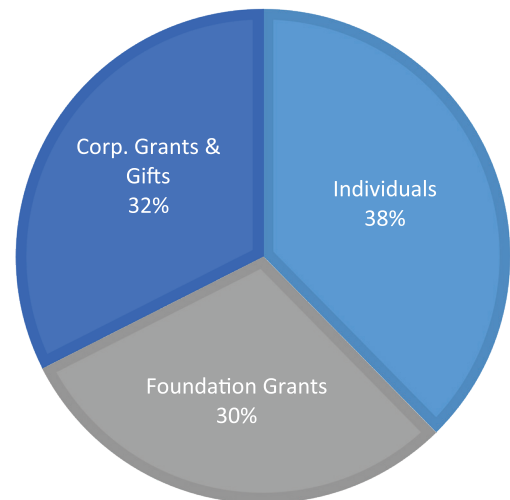
FINANCIAL REVIEW

REVENUE

Revenues by Type



Gifts & Grants by Source



Third Party Fundraisers **\$35.4K**

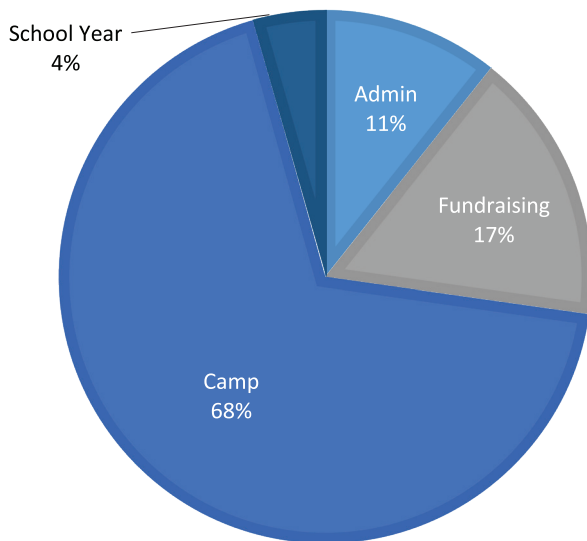
Third Party Fundraisers, which are events and initiatives hosted by community members and businesses, were also thriving again this year! We were fortunate enough to be selected by several individuals and organizations as the beneficiary of their fundraising efforts, resulting in a total of **\$35,400 raised in 2022!**



FINANCIAL REVIEW

EXPENSES

Functional Expenses



A Note About Expenses:

For the summer of 2022, our camp program was much smaller than what we have done in the past, pre-covid. This reduction in the number of children accepted into our programs was a result of us experiencing a staff shortage. It should be pointed out that this is impacting direct care agencies nationally. At Aaron's Acres, we are committed to providing a 1:1 or 1:2 staff to child ratio in order to meet each child's needs appropriately and immediately. Unfortunately, due to this challenge (of not having enough staff), the number of children accepted was much lower. As a result, our overall expenses related to camp was reduced. The organization's expenses shifted again, similar to 2021, with an increase in the percentage of fundraising and administrative expenses. We have introduced several incentives in our staff recruitment process for 2023, which we hope will address this issue and will allow us to accept more children for the summer component.



NEWS & EVENTS



In 2022 we were fortunate to have many dedicated community partners contribute to our mission! We held our **12th Annual Aaron's Acres Golf Tournament** on May 16, 2022 and welcomed a full field of golfers to Bent Creek Country Club. With the support of our event donors, many who join us at this event year after year, we successfully raised a record-breaking \$105,510! Our Golf Event Sponsor, **Patrick Trimble and Team Trimble**, once again extended their outstanding partnership later in the year by hosting their annual movie event and Wish List supply drive in December!



During the **ExtraGive** event held on November 18, 2022, Aaron's Acres received an astounding \$77,500 in donations during this highly-anticipated annual day of giving in our community! This year we had two matching donors who helped to generate extra excitement during the day. Thank you to **The 2 B's – Brittany Garner and Beth Ann Bradshaw Life Changes Realty Group** and **Miller's Twist** for supporting us in this way!



In the fall of 2022 we added a new program under our umbrella, the **Chuckie Magee Flag Football & Cheerleading League!** We appreciated having the support of sponsors: 4 Cole's Kids, Lanco Federal Credit Union, Executive Printing, Bomberger's, Eden Park Pediatric Associates, Ward Chiropractic and Costanzo Wealth Management of Janney Montgomery Scott LLC. Costanzo Wealth Management also featured Aaron's Acres along with firm leadership in the Winter 2022 issue of Fig Lancaster Magazine and included us as part of their firm's community engagement project in December.

Aaron's Acres was once again a recipient of funds raised during the **Members 1st Federal Credit Union's** annual golf outing and we were most grateful to receive a donation of \$26,650 from this event!



2022 RECAP

At Aaron's Acres, we strive to create a supportive community that is safe and welcoming to all. It's our donors and partners that make this possible. Your contributions of time and treasure are enabling our participants to accomplish their own personal goals, as well as helping us continue to make progress toward our organization's goals. Without dedicated supporters like you, our programs – and the supportive environment that fosters the growth and development of our participants – would not exist. This is what success looks like to us in everything we do – strong relationships that allow for continued progress towards individual and collective goals.

2022 Overview/Recap

Jersey Mike's Subs partnered with us once again by raising funds during the grand opening of their new location in Lebanon and sponsoring an Aaron's Acres tree during the Christmas Tree Lane event at Clipper Magazine Stadium!

Our **Dream Makers** are a group of 87 community-minded leaders who make an annual donation of \$100 and actively create the change that they'd like to see in the world! This group meets three times during the year and at the fall meeting members decided that they would support participant scholarships with their collective donations in 2022! We appreciate their continued commitment to helping to provide access to our programs in this way!

The **Aaron's Acres Angels** is an active group of teens from school districts throughout our local community, all committed to learning about and supporting those with differing abilities. They gathered several times throughout the year, including a visit to camp in the summer. They also organized a bake sale, raising over \$350 to benefit Aaron's Acres!

We were thrilled to welcome **125 volunteer photographers** and nearly **100 visitors** during our 2022 summer camp sessions! We are grateful to these community members for coming to learn about us and for helping us with taking photos of our campers.

And finally, a special THANK YOU goes out to the **New Holland Community Memorial Park & Pool**, as well as the entire **New Holland community**, for accepting us with open arms this past summer! Your partnership means the world to us.

We feel fortunate that so many people believe in the work we are doing here at Aaron's Acres. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who supports our participants and families. Thank you for making a life-changing difference for young people with disabilities! We have many ways to get involved with our organization and we hope you'll be in touch with us to learn more about what we can accomplish together!

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