

KIDSTART ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A life-changing mentorship program that provides vulnerable children with a nurturing relationship, a chance to have fun and a sense of belonging.

The latest...

My name is Julia, and I am the Program Manager for the KidStart program. I am so happy to be writing this because it seems like the light at the end of the tunnel is finally here. It's no lie to say the past 18 months have been some of the most challenging we've faced as a program.

WE RAISED \$348,000 DURING THE PANDEMIC!

But I can now say, without a shadow of doubt, that resiliency is what KidStart is all about. Over the past

year, we've managed to not only survive, but thrive.

I want to share our top ten accomplishments with you because they are not only amazing... they happened thanks to our dedicated supporters and friends – you! So here they are (in no particular order)...

10: The brand-new KidStart website launched!

This easy-to-use, all-new website allows for KidStart to receive referrals, recruit volunteers, receive donations and grow our mailing list! Check it out!

9: 126 Holiday Hampers brightened the season for families!

Our Holiday Hamper drive provides food, toys and holiday cheer to families in need. Community members like [Advantage Box](#), [Eddies Hang Up Display](#), [Sprott Shaw College](#), [Walmart](#), [Safeway](#), and [Vancity](#) all contributed donations and volunteers to help make them extra special this year.

8: KidStart raised over \$348,000 during the pandemic!

One of the biggest concerns throughout the non-profit world was the pandemic causing donors to give less. But you came through and didn't give up supporting our vital program!

7: We have (generous) secret admirers!

We raised \$75,000 from anonymous donors! To those who wish to remain out of the limelight, we say thank you!

6: KidStart's new Policy and Procedure Manual

A big undertaking was to develop new internal policies for KidStart, updating and enhancing our program. This includes more clearly outlining how we screen and assess our mentors, how we make matches, and how we manage our waitlist.



KidStart



5: Breaking the Physical Distancing Barrier

Our KidStart Coordinators worked hard to help our mentors and mentees find ways to still have those important interactions despite the necessities of physical distancing. They even produced a video on the topic! Thanks to supporters like you, no child is left behind.



4: Virtual Events were the talk of the town!

Speaking of physical distancing, KidStart would normally host several events for mentors and mentees throughout the year, however, with the health restrictions, KidStart instead hosted 6 virtual group activities with games and crafts for our matches. We also hosted a physical distanced scavenger hunt which was a big success!

3: Volunteer Training on Demand!

It wasn't just Netflix and Disney that had big years for streaming. KidStart provided 5 different volunteer training opportunities that mentors could watch in their homes at their own pace. Here's one you might find enlightening as well!



2: Became even better at finding volunteers

Our Volunteer Coordinators are the secret to KidStart's success at finding the right volunteer for the right mentee. This year, the coordinators attended training by the Justice Institute of BC to give them additional skills to utilize when interviewing potential mentors.

1: 113 KidStart volunteers supported 113 KidStart kids

As one example I'd like you to meet Tina. Tina wanted to become a mentor to help out her community and has ambitions to work with kids in health care in the future.

Tina was matched with six-year-old Hailey in September 2020. They were able to meet a few times in person, but then in-person meetings were paused for six months due to Provincial Health Orders.

During that time, Hailey and Tina continued to meet, only now it was virtually. They rarely missed a week. They would chat, play games, listen to music, and watch videos together over Zoom. They would often end their meetings by giving each other a task, something to watch or a book to read, so they could discuss it the following week.

Their relationship has grown strong, and now that they can safely meet in person again, they are back to weekly outings whether that means going to the local Farmer's Market or doing different craft projects.

To close, I'd like to say a big thank you to Tina, and to all of our volunteers for the dedication they have shown to their mentees this past year, and to you for supporting them and our program.

You're all awesome!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julia Harris', located below the thank you message.

Julia Harris
KidStart Program Manager

