



JAYS CARE
FOUNDATION

**SUPPORTING CANADIAN FAMILIES
IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

YOUR SUPPORT HELPED US RESPOND WHEN CANADIAN FAMILIES NEEDED US MOST

In response to the devastating impact COVID-19 has had on our country's under-resourced communities, Jays Care Foundation quickly adapted our youth-centric programming to address the changing needs of Canadian families. It was your support and trust in the impact of our programming that allowed us to reach so many families in 2020 – and we could not have done it without you.

In April, Jays Care staff contacted the families of over 1,000 program participants to better understand the challenges they were facing and how we could best support them. Based on what we learned from those conversations, Jays Care Foundation quickly adapted our programming to focus on four key objectives:

1. Creating virtual programming to address boredom, loneliness and anxiety
2. Addressing food insecurity
3. Providing opportunities for physical activity
4. Developing safe places and practices for return to play

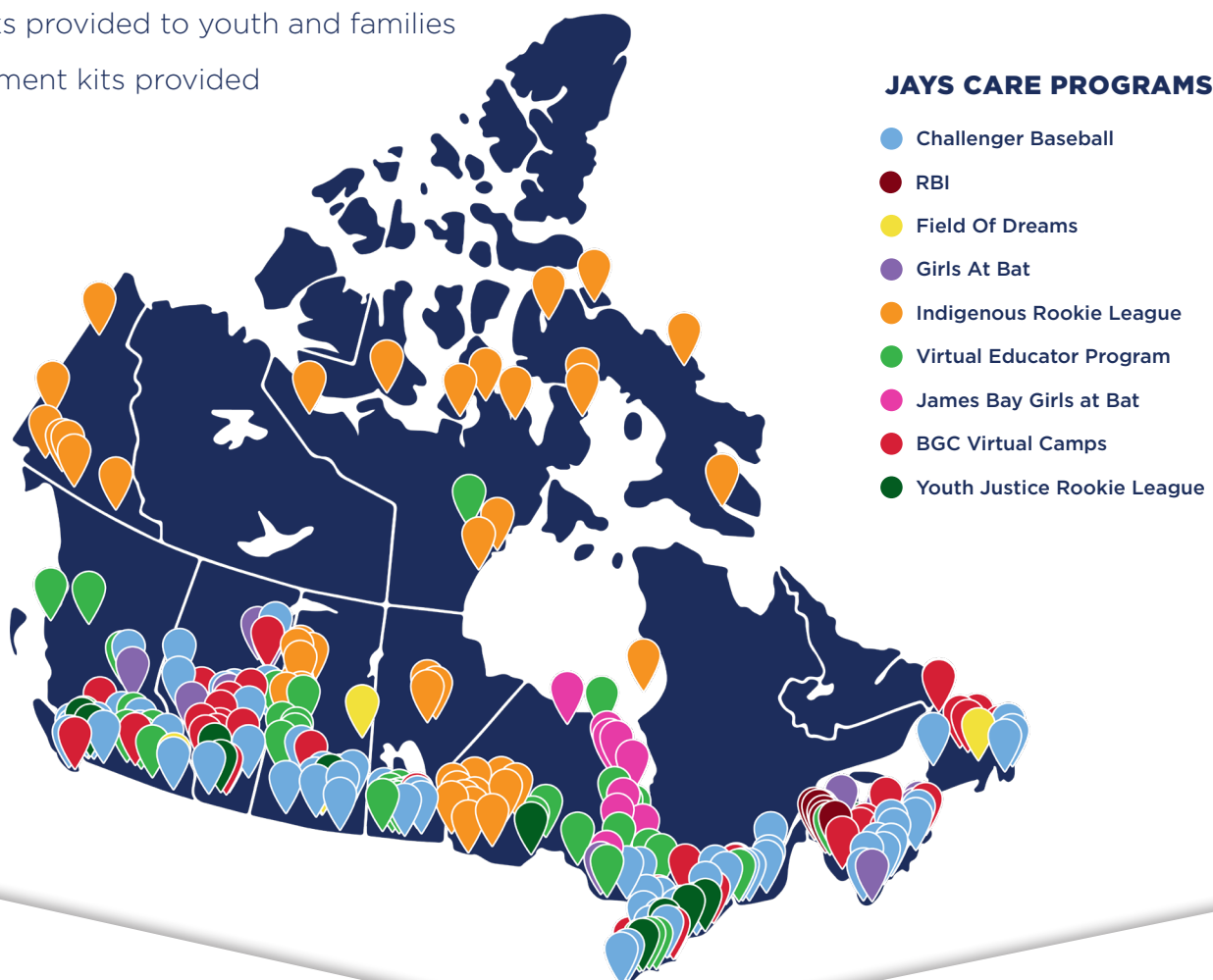
Jays Care COVID response by the numbers:

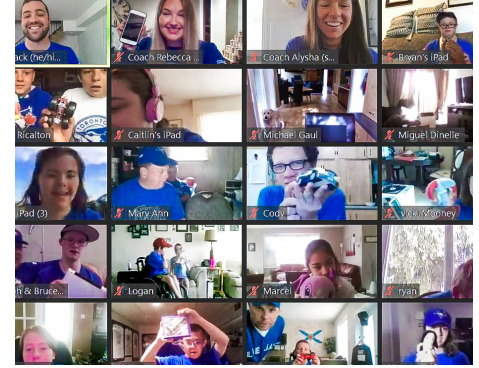
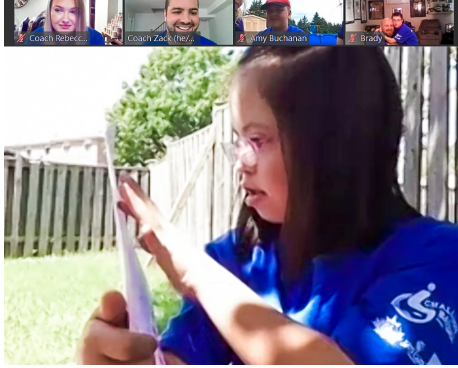
1,432 teachers, programmers and volunteers trained

13,475 children and youth in regular, virtual programs

12,928 books provided to youth and families

3,027 equipment kits provided





CREATING VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING

To ensure the youth in our programs continued to have access to high-quality programming, Jays Care Foundation developed a virtual adaptation of existing programs. In partnership with Toronto Community Housing, Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada and Indigenous communities across the country, these programs were designed to keep children and youth active, support their mental health and continue to build life skills. At a time when sport programs across the country were suspend or canceled outright, your support allowed us to fill that need.

VIRTUAL ROOKIE LEAGUE

In partnership with Toronto Community Housing, Jays Care hired and trained dozens of staff, the majority of whom live in Toronto Community Housing buildings, to lead engaging virtual programming for youth living at or below the poverty line. Staff led a full day of virtual programming focused on fun and connection and designed with four outcomes in mind: allowing youth to connect with peers; to connect with caring adults; to identify their strengths; and to have fun.

600

Children and youth were provided with books, courtesy of the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation.

85

Program facilitators trained remotely.

541

Children and youth living at or below the poverty line took part in virtual programming.

At the conclusion of the program, **96%** of staff reported feeling more confident in their ability to plan and lead fun and engaging virtual programming as a result of the training they received.

TESTIMONIALS

"I am so grateful that my kids were able to participate in this! I'm hoping I can enrol the both of them to Jays summer camp next year! Thank you for everything! You guys are great and did an amazing job!" - Rookie League participant parent

"The kids, before launching the program, were bored and sad, but now they have something to do, something to wait for everyday and they are making new friends and connecting with other kids." - Rookie League participant parent

GIRLS AT BAT

Jays Care Foundation's Girls At Bat (GAB) program supports girls with limited access to sport to develop life skills, physical literacy, self-esteem and self-awareness. In response to COVID-19, Jays Care Foundation reimagined the Girls At Bat program in order to deliver it virtually while still delivering the desired outcomes. By hosting virtual workshops that trained leaders on best practices for leading girls-centered programming, we continued to develop more opportunities to enhance connection, courage, leadership and love of sport for girls across Canada.

- Hosted **3** virtual training workshops with **45** participants
- Provided **95** girls with limited access to sport with virtual programming during COVID-19
- Provided books to **2,660** girls courtesy of the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation

TESTIMONIALS

"Girls at Bat has made a difference in my child by opening her eyes to try new things (and a new sport), even when she was initially apprehensive about joining when she may not know anyone else!" - GAB Parent

"I am so happy I got to practice baseball online. I didn't think it was possible to do it online, but I learned so much." - GAB Athlete

"During Girls At Bat I discovered my strength is 'my brain'" - GAB Athlete

JAMES BAY GIRLS AT BAT

The James Bay Girls at Bat program works with Indigenous females in communities that have been struggling with increasing rates of suicidal ideations and completions among their youth populations. Program participants build connections to caring youth and adults through mentorship and community programming designed to foster life skills, confidence and resilience. In response to COVID-19, Jays Care Foundation provided Indigenous youth without access to technology with the means to stay connected during physical distancing and led tailored online sessions with communities across Ontario.

- Provided **105** Indigenous girls with access to in-person programming before COVID-19
- Hosted over **30** virtual programming sessions for **50** Indigenous girls with access to virtual programming during COVID-19

TESTIMONIALS

"It's amazing what can be done, with social distancing... I am so honoured to be a part of an amazing group. This program is life changing for our youth, everyone should be proud of the inspiration you have all given our youth ... Meegwetch from the bottom of my heart"
- Parent/Guardian

"Thank you for making such amazing opportunities for us, it is truly appreciated"
- Youth Champion



SPOTLIGHT: VIRTUAL CHALLENGER BASEBALL NATIONAL JAMBOREE

On Saturday, August 8th, the Inclusive Programs Team at Jays Care Foundation hosted a Virtual National Jamboree for over 2,000 Canadian athletes, family members and volunteers across Canada in the Challenger Baseball program. Virtual programming included opening ceremonies, dance sessions, baseball trivia, Challenger Baseball sessions, and special guests including Buck Martinez, Ross Atkins, Ken Giles, Trent Thornton, Ace, J-Force and more. In addition to the online program, each athlete received a t-shirt, a Jamboree themed lanyard, a create your own medal template, and a healthy menu plan.

500
ATHLETES

1,500
FAMILY MEMBERS

12
VOLUNTEERS

- 95% of athletes felt celebrated and 82% of families felt connected to other Challenger Baseball families from across Canada during the Virtual Challenger Baseball National Jamboree

"The Jamboree rejuvenated the fun and energy in our household! We have been enjoying the activities we've learned through Challenger Baseball @ home, but this Jamboree brought back the fun! The best was the Jambo, Jambo 1, 2, 3!" - Challenger Baseball parent



ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY

FAMILY NIGHT AT HOME

To help bring families together, Jays Care provided 318 families living in Toronto Community Housing with a meal delivered from a local restaurant, as well as board games for after dinner entertainment. Meals were sourced from independent, local restaurants who have also been severely impacted by the pandemic. The objective of the initiative was to create a stress-free evening for families to reconnect, have fun and focus on their children while supporting struggling small businesses.

- Partnered with 12 local restaurants to provide 318 families with delicious meals
- Included family-friendly games and entertainment graciously donated by Mattel & Vtech

FOOD DRIVES

Though COVID-19 has impacted all Canadians, the pandemic has disproportionately affected those already facing significant barriers in their everyday lives, including those facing food insecurity. Jays Care, in partnership with the Toronto Blue Jays, Rogers and Food Banks Canada, addressed this head-on by transforming Rogers Centre into a food distribution site to pack and ship millions of meals to food banks across the country.

- More than 170,000 food hampers were filled by volunteers in the Rogers Centre
- 750,000 Canadians received access to meals

SPOTLIGHT: EMERGENCY FOOD RELIEF

In addition, Jays Care Foundation partnered with Sobeys and the Sprott Foundation to provide emergency relief to families in Jays Care programs who were most in need of support. Hundreds of families across multiple Jays Care programs received gift cards which were used to purchase groceries from their local Sobeys.

- \$100,000 in gift cards distributed to 412 families involved in Challenger Baseball Program and 588 families involved in TCHC Rookie League Program
- Delivery of 600 food and activity hampers to families in 6 First Nations across northern Saskatchewan supporting children who participate in the Indigenous Rookie League program
- \$100 gift cards to their local food co-op for 250 families in southern Saskatchewan whose children participate in the Indigenous Rookie League Program

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

CHALLENGER BASEBALL

As life was altered for all families across Canada, the strain on many families of children living with disabilities has been extraordinary. Limited child care options, lost wages and the extended closure of accessible programming meant that families were left with limited safe options to help their children continue to socialize, play and develop. Jays Care Foundation addressed this need by distributing adaptive home baseball kits and creating virtual Challenger Baseball @ Home activities to help youth enrolled in Challenger Baseball stay active.

- 1,262 children and youth living with cognitive or physical disabilities participated in virtual programming during COVID-19
- Over 1000 adaptive equipment kits and baseball-at-home resource manuals were distributed to children and youth living with cognitive or physical disabilities

TESTIMONIAL

"Thank you so much! I filled in the feedback form and want to thank you both for giving your time to allow them to stay connected. So many are having a hard time not seeing friends or playing in their leagues so these events mean the world to us. We really enjoyed tonight."

- CB parent commenting on Virtual Super Camps

SPOTLIGHT: SUMMER DAY CAMPS

To ensure youth across Canada continued to have access to summer day camp programming, Jays Care Foundation worked with organizations across the country to create a tailored approach that met local physical distancing requirements.

Where physical distancing measures remained in place, Jays Care trained local staff to lead physically-active virtual programming for an hour and a half per day. The virtual camps were led in partnership with 80 staff from Toronto Community Housing and 600 staff from Boys and Girls Clubs, reaching over 7,000 youth across Canada. Jays Care created this virtual program from scratch, funded the hiring of staff and trained hundreds of managers and front-line youth workers across the country to deliver safe and fun virtual activities.

In areas where physical distancing restrictions allowed for outdoor play, Jays Care Foundation supported local organizations running Girls At Bat and Rookie League programs across the country to open safe and accessible summer camps that offered modified activities, allowing youth to stay safe, yet active.



"I like that Girls At Bat does social distancing and not sharing equipment. It made me feel safe sending my kids to the program. I worry about the virus and I am glad that Jays Care and the Wellness Center put these activities together so my kids can finally have fun at a program instead of being stuck in the house all day. If it wasn't for Girls At Bat and all the new safety policies, my kids would be staying at home. This is amazing and I am so thankful you guys are doing this."

- Parent of a youth in the Girls At Bat program in Fort McKay First Nation, Alberta



DEVELOPING SAFE PLACES AND PRACTICES FOR RETURN TO PLAY

SAFE PLACES THROUGH FIELD OF DREAMS

Despite the restrictions imposed on organized sports during the pandemic, Jays Care felt it was important to maintain its Field of Dreams grant program which helps communities across Canada build or refurbish safe places for children and youth to play. We believe that to play is to learn and we invested over \$1.1 million to build or refurbish 13 baseball diamonds in communities across the country. Construction adhered to applicable guidelines set out by local health authorities and these diamonds will provide spaces for communities to reconnect once it is deemed safe to do so.

SAFE PRACTICES

To support leagues and organizations across the country who were able to return to in-person play, Jays Care created two comprehensive user-friendly guides to help them ensure their plans met local health and safety guidelines. Many volunteers with whom we work were anxious to get back to play when conditions allowed yet they were very apprehensive due to the pandemic and the lack of support available to help them do so safely. The resources created by Jays Care were provided to organizations across the country and helped many overcome the anxiety of returning to play.

SPOTLIGHT: RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION OF NUNAVUT (RPAN)

By the end of May, restrictions in Nunavut had lifted enough for our longstanding partner RPAN to begin delivering in-person summer camp. To support, Jays Care maintained its funding and staff facilitated virtual training sessions for more than 70 youth staff from 18 hamlets. In-person camp began the first week of July, reaching over 1,200 children with regular play-based programming.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

We are incredibly grateful for the donors and sponsors who enabled Jays Care Foundation's COVID relief efforts. Your donations allowed us to reach over over 13,000 youth and 1,400 educators, coaches and camp staff with adaptive virtual programming and training during a uniquely challenging time.

As we look ahead to 2021, the challenges facing many Canadians are worsening and Jays Care Foundation is stepping up its efforts. We are building new, innovative virtual programs to engage youth under strict physical distancing requirements and finding new ways to develop safe outdoor activities to keep under-resourced Canadian children and youth engaged and active.

Your continued support allows us to change the lives of those hardest hit by the pandemic across Canada. Thank you.




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THANK YOU