

You're Guiding The Way

2025 CNIB Guide Dogs Impact Report



Message from Robert Gaunt

President, CNIB Guide Dogs

Dear CNIB Guide Dogs Supporters,

I am honoured to share this year's CNIB Guide Dogs Impact Report with you. It's a privilege to lead this program, and I am deeply grateful for your continued generosity and partnership.

This has been a year of growth for CNIB Guide Dogs. Thanks to your support, we have made important investments to strengthen our program for the future while maintaining the highest standards of care and training for both our guide dogs and handlers.

Your generosity has enabled us to expand our breeding program and make important investments in our Canine Campus, supporting future guide dogs throughout their development and formal training.

Some of the 2025 key milestones include:

- **15** guide dogs, **two** ambassador dogs, and **one** buddy dog graduated alongside their partners.
- We also welcomed **47 CNIB-bred puppies** into the program, along with six new brood dogs, strengthening the future of our program and supporting its sustainability for years to come.
- At the Canine Campus, we expanded our indoor training city with the addition of an elevator and a plane fuselage. These simulated environments help prepare our dogs in training to confidently navigate new and complex spaces in a controlled setting.



None of this happens without an extraordinary community of supporters like you.

While these program milestones reflect meaningful progress, the true measure of your generosity is found in the lives of people whose independence, safety, confidence and mobility are transformed through a guide dog partnership.

That impact begins long before a guide dog is partnered with its handler and continues throughout its life. From expert training to veterinary care, every stage of a guide dog's journey is made possible by your support. Because of your generosity, people who are blind, Deafblind or have low vision can receive a guide dog at no cost through a program tailored to their unique needs, preferences, and lifestyle.

Thank you for being such an important part of this journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Gaunt'.

Robert Gaunt
President, CNIB Guide Dogs



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Before having a guide dog, I would avoid going out by myself whenever possible, but the world has opened up to me since I've been matched with Tara. She has such amazing intuition. She seems to know if I'm uncomfortable and 'steps up' her focus even more. We love going for walks and exploring the city together.”

— Denise, Guide Dog Handler

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Meet the CNIB Guide Dogs: Class of 2026

The class of 2026 includes 24 incredible dogs that have been partnered with a client or placed in the best suited career path with CNIB Guide Dogs.

15 Guide Dogs

A guide dog is partnered with an adult who is blind, Deafblind or has low vision.

1 Buddy Dog

A buddy dog is partnered with a child or youth who is blind, Deafblind or has low vision.

2 Ambassador Dogs

A buddy dog is partnered with a volunteer or staff member to promote CNIB Guide Dogs in public.

6 Brood Dogs

A brood or stud dog is a part of our puppy development program.



As of March 2026, we have:

- 88** Working guide dogs
- 33** Working buddy dogs
- 7** Working ambassador dogs

Currently there are:

- 24** Dogs in formal training
- 102** Puppies in puppy raising
- 10** Dogs in the CNIB Guide Dogs Breeding Program

Meet Zach and Kai

This year marked a major milestone for CNIB Guide Dogs, with two former buddy dog partners graduating as first-time guide dog handlers. One of those graduates was Zach, who was partnered with CNIB guide dog, Kai, in the fall of 2025.

A student at the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business, Zach says Kai has “helped him to be more independent because it's easier to adapt to new situations and environments much more comfortably.”

Before becoming a guide dog handler, Zach was partnered with a buddy dog named Elsie in 2019. Through that experience, he learned how to care for and handle a dog, gaining the skills and confidence that, he says, helped him feel more prepared for life with a guide dog.

With Kai by his side, Zach hopes to finish his degree, travel more, and attend a Magic: The Gathering fan convention.

“Navigating big crowds and noise in those environments can feel daunting. Having Kai makes me feel more comfortable and confident in looking to take part in that type of environment.”

Thanks to your generosity Zach and Kai can navigate life, safely, together.

“

Having a buddy dog first made the transition to working with a guide dog feel much less overwhelming.”

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Zach and his (retired) buddy dog, Elsie

2025 CNIB Buddy Dog Camp at CNIB Lake Joe

Now in its fourth year, the buddy dog camp at CNIB Lake Joe brought families together from across the country for a memorable week of connection and growth.

Designed for children who are blind or have low vision, the camp welcomed both current buddy dog users and families on the waitlist, offering a unique opportunity to connect, learn, and build confidence alongside peers with shared lived experiences.

Throughout the week, children strengthened their bond with their dogs, practiced hands-on skills and discovered what they were capable of.



“

She's so much more willing to try things because she sees other kids doing things she thought she'd never be able to do.

— Parent of a buddy dog camp participant.

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By the Numbers

Buddy Dog Camp 2025 welcomed:

12

campers who are blind or low vision from six provinces, ready to learn, explore, and build new friendships

12

parents, who found comfort among families who understand their journey

10

buddy dogs, who enjoyed long walks and providing plenty of tail wags

CNIB Guide Dogs at Lake Joe

Guide Dog AdvoCamp

Because of you, Guide Dog AdvoCamp 2025 expanded its reach through a virtual format, **allowing more guide dog handlers from across Canada to build advocacy skills, gain confidence, and connect with a national community.** Looking ahead, we're excited to bring AdvoCamp back in person at CNIB Lake Joe in 2026, where participants will take part in hands-on learning and deeper connection as they continue to grow as advocates.



Jason and Midas at the
2026 Guide Dog Graduation

O&M Immersion Camp

In its fifth year, the 2025 O&M Immersion Camp brought together **14** future guide dog handlers from across Canada for a week of hands-on learning. Participants worked closely with Orientation and Mobility Instructors (O&M's) and Guide Dog Mobility Instructors, building the skills needed for successful partnerships.

The camp strengthens cane skills and overall mobility while also giving participants the opportunity to walk with a guide dog in harness with support from an instructor, helping them understand what life with a guide dog could be like.

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Attending CNIB Lake Joe for O&M Immersion Camp in September 2025 was a life-changing experience, giving me the chance to build confidence, connect with others who are blind or have low vision, and learn more about myself. While I was there, I met my now guide dog, Midas, and we formed an instant bond, making it one of the most memorable and impactful experiences of my life.

— Jason, O&M Immersion
Camp attendee

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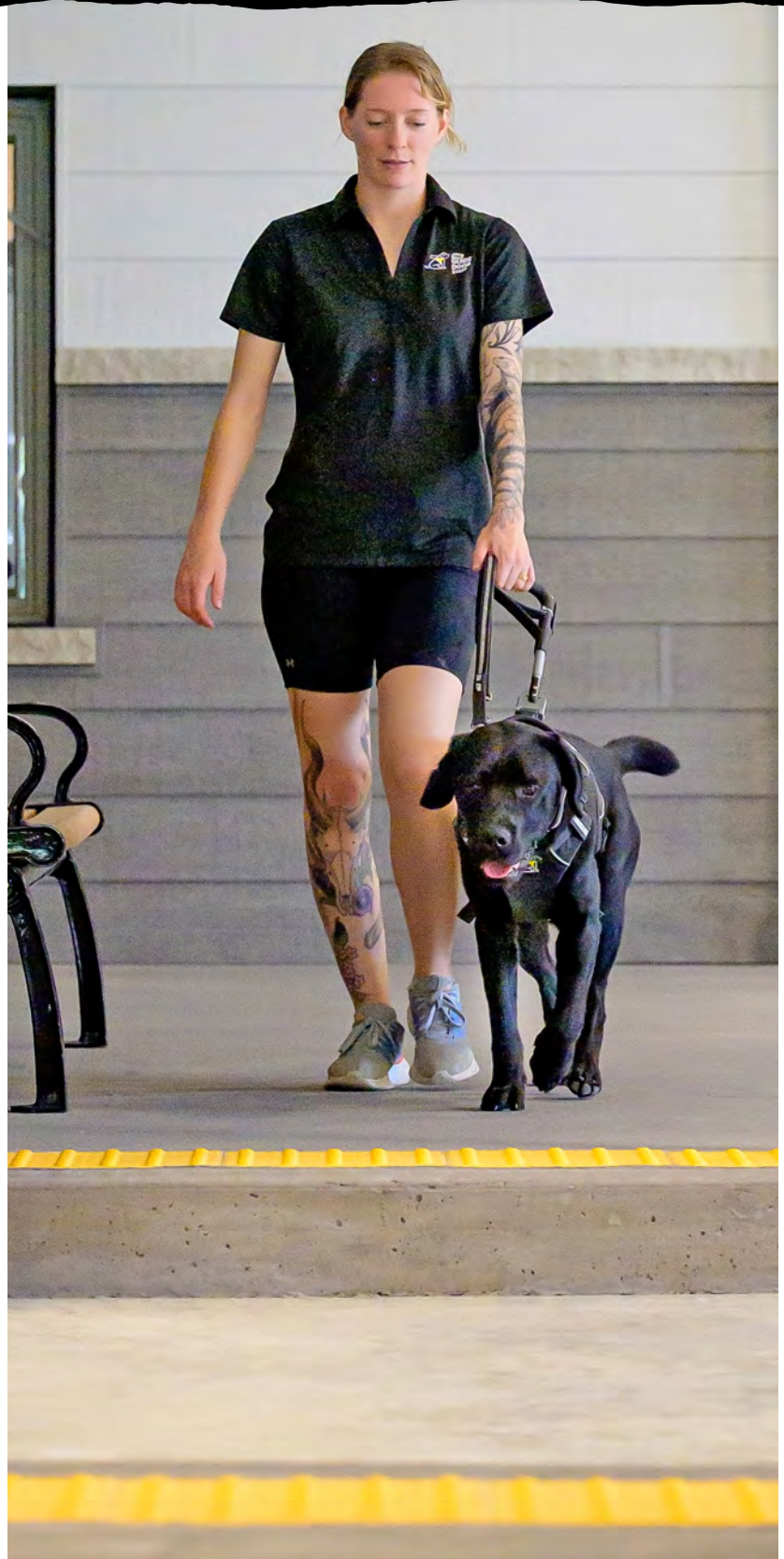
Behind the Scenes: Canine Campus

As we look to the future of CNIB Guide Dogs we are taking strides to ensure the sustainability and longevity of services to our existing and future handlers.

At our Canine Campus, we completed several significant upgrades in 2025 to enhance our training environments. By adding a plane fuselage and an elevator, dogs can now work alongside their instructors in carefully controlled, real-world simulations, building the skills and confidence needed to navigate more complex and unpredictable guiding situations with greater success.

We also upgraded the fencing around our free-run area, ensuring two fully enclosed and secure space where dogs can safely run, play, and recharge. The free-run areas provide opportunities for dogs to be dogs and enjoy down time which will help keep generations of our future guide dogs happy and healthy during formal training.

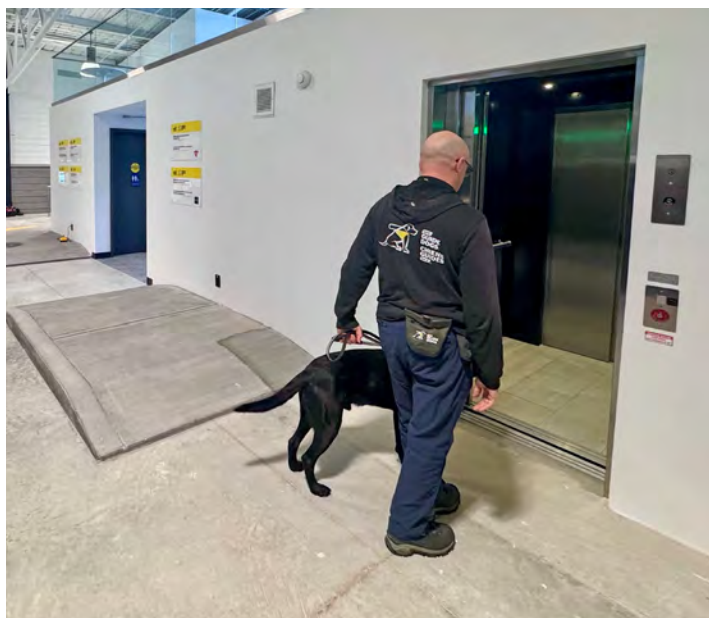
This is only the beginning. We're excited to continue growing and enhancing our Canine Campus and look forward to sharing more of our vision for the future in the years ahead.



Behind the Scenes: Canine Campus



The plane fuselage allows our dogs to learn how to navigate narrow aisles, settle in small cabin spaces and in-flight routines.



The elevator allows our dogs to learn how to confidently enter and exit enclosed spaces and settle calmly during movement. Together, these simulated environments help prepare dogs to navigate real-world travel with greater confidence alongside their future handlers.

Volunteer & Community Support

In 2025 more than **1,800 volunteers** contributed over **650,000 hours** of their time to support CNIB programs.

Of those volunteers more than **373** supported the CNIB Guide Dog's program, including **121** who joined us for the first time.

Our puppy development program had another standout by expanding our puppy-raising footprint to Victoria, British Columbia and along the Ottawa-Kingston corridor in Ontario, a big step toward reaching more Canadians who want to be part of this journey and help contribute to the next generation of guide dogs.



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Not only am I privileged to play a small part in preparing these pups to become guide dog's, I'm receiving **unconditional love** in the process. It's a win-win.”

— Sandra, Puppy Raiser

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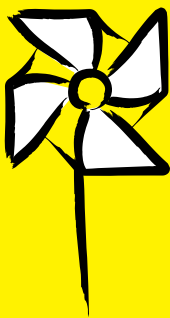
Our Empowering Programs

At CNIB, we are committed to delivering innovative programs and powerful advocacy that enable Canadians impacted by blindness to live the lives they choose. We offer many virtual and in-person local programs for people with blindness or low vision of all ages, across all provinces and territories. From career support and technology training to youth programs, cooking classes, and book clubs, our programs help people build new skills, gain confidence, and discover new possibilities.

Here are just a few CNIB programs made possible through your generosity:

Children & Youth

Our children and youth programs open up access to pre-employment skills training, peer support groups, music therapy sessions, and more, during the most formative years of a young person's life.



CNIB Lake Joe

Located in the heart of Muskoka, Ontario, CNIB Lake Joe is the only fully accessible camp for people who are blind in Canada - where children are encouraged to shine, youth are empowered to thrive, and kids of all ages enjoy recreational pursuits.



CNIB Come to Work

Come to Work connects job seekers who are blind, Deafblind, or have low vision with employers who want to discover the full potential of Canada's talent. The program offers job-readiness workshops and technology training, professional development through innovative mentorships, and so much more.



Our work is powered by the generosity of Canadians from coast to coast to coast. When you give to CNIB, you help ensure we have the resources to achieve our goals and make real, lasting change.

About CNIB Guide Dogs

We believe everyone who would like to have a guide dog should have that opportunity. At CNIB Guide Dogs, we raise, train and match dogs with Canadians who are blind or Deafblind or have low vision. We also raise our voices to ensure people with sight loss have opportunities to live, work, and play without barriers.



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Charitable Registration Number:
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