



Vita
CENTRE



ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1 2019
to
JUNE 30 2020



A MESSAGE FROM THE Board Chair

Dear Friends & Supporters of Vita Centre,

It is difficult to know just where to start in summarizing 2020 and sharing all the hard work the Vita staff have done to keep providing the essential services, counselling, education programs and the necessities of life to our Clients through an extraordinarily difficult year. Based on the criteria of what made up an essential service we realized that Vita Centre fell under that description and although our physical offices have been closed to the public since mid-March 2020, our staff have worked fulltime throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. They developed new ways to deliver education programs by using on-line platforms, quickly adapting their teaching and content to that media. Counseling moved to the telephone and later to a videoconferencing option. Delivery of needed items, food, wipes, diapers and groceries cards were delivered to clients via contactless delivery methods. Staff were creative and did an excellent job to meet their clients' needs.

Tanya and Susan worked hard on grant applications when new opportunities for COVID-related special funding became available, including use of the Federal Wage subsidy (CEWS) opportunity. Some pockets of funds came through the Region of Peel, Community Foundation of Mississauga and United Way. Applications had to be timely and competitive with all the agencies trying to access the same funds. We had more successes than failures with the applications which allowed us to continue providing our services virtually. Funding from the Region of Peel has allowed us to add a second Supper Connection to our Winter line-up.

At the end of 2019 the Board and Management had committed to conduct a rigorous strategic planning process in 2020 with a target completion date of June 30th 2020. Having selected a consultant and planned for a full day workshop to develop our plan, the first lockdown changed everything. Not prepared to give up, we changed our process to have a series of on-line sessions, using a smaller working group and then taking the work back to the larger group for decision-making. Board, Management, and non-board Committee members successfully worked through different areas providing excellent ideas. Despite the limitations of never meeting in person, we completed a Strategic Plan and a comprehensive Operational Plan to cover fiscal year 2020/21 and through to 2023 which was formally adopted by the Board of Directors at their Board Meeting on September 21st 2020, less than three months past our original target date. Our thanks go to Sue Croft, a consultant from MAS (Management Advisory Services), an organization of former business executives who provide pro-bono consulting to not-for-profit agencies.

In early 2020, knowing we needed to revamp our website and modernize our look, Vita Centre also went through a process to re-brand our Logo, and develop a revised slogan "Helping Vulnerable Families is at the Heart of What we Do". These new images and colours will be used in our first big project of 2021 to develop a comprehensive marketing plan. Funding remains tenuous due in part to lower than expected ShareLife contributions, the closure of Bingo Halls since March 2020, and generally reduced donations largely due to COVID 19.

Corporations who had previously supported Vita Centre are struggling themselves with the economic turndown and could not support our Christmas Sponsorship Campaign to the same degree. However one or two companies and individual donations generously sponsored over 40 families during our Christmas campaign, for which we are very grateful.

Our 10-year lease expired at the Watline Avenue location at the end of October 2020 and in order to be more fiscally responsible, knowing that a significant rent hike was coming, we made the difficult decision to move to a new location in the middle of a pandemic. Thanks to one of our Board members, Brian Bell, we were able to secure excellent terms at a location only minutes from our old site. We took over the new space on McAdam Road on October 15th. Brian oversaw the time consuming renovations at the new site, With Brian pushing the contractors along and with volunteer help from board members, their families and staff we were able to move in on time and vacate Watline by November 1st. We are excited to show off our new space once the lockdown is lifted and we can resume in-person services.

All our Board and Committee meetings continued uninterrupted throughout the year using the Zoom platform. My sincere thanks to all the Board and Committee members who made it to meetings in amongst dealing with their own work and family life complicated by the pandemic. Thank you for always making Vita Centre one of your priorities throughout the year.

In conclusion I want to congratulate Tanya Pereira and formally announce Tanya's promotion to the position of Executive Director of Vita Centre. This decision was made by the Board several months ago and we planned to make the announcement official at the AGM. Unfortunately, the AGM was pushed back by delays to the audit process, so Tanya our congratulations are no less heartfelt, and we thank you for your patience in receiving the public recognition you so deserve..

~ Christina Boyle, Board Chair

A MESSAGE FROM THE Director of Operations

The last year has been a challenging one without a doubt. As Christina has noted, although Vita did close our physical location in mid-March in accordance with Federal, Provincial, and Municipal guidelines, we did not "shut down". With staff working hard remotely, we adapted our programs and services so that we could continue to support vulnerable parents in Peel during this unprecedented time. All in-person counselling sessions are now being offered telephonically as well as through video-conferencing options. Our parenting group programs were adapted and are now being offered virtually. With the first virtual group having been launched in June 2020, we have now successfully run 14 virtual groups to date and we plan on continuing to do so. Knowing that our virtual groups have been successful we are excited for a future where we might be able to offer a hybrid in-person and virtual program to the community allowing us to build capacity within each program to increase our reach to serve vulnerable parents in Peel Region.

In Dec 2020 we were excited to learn that we were approved for funding from the Region of Peel through the Change Fund. This will allow us to offer 2 Supper Connection programs in both our Winter and Spring series. We will be partnering with Eden Food for Change, The Mississauga Food Bank (TMFB) and VolunteerMBC to make this happen. In lieu of the meal that would be provided to each participant, each week Eden Food for Change with assistance from TMFB will be building food boxes of fresh produce and healthy alternatives that will be delivered to each client participating in the program via contactless delivery methods by volunteers from VolunteerMBC. We are excited to receive feedback from clients and hope that this will be a success.

We are also looking to modify our Growing as Parents program to incorporate Financial Literacy content. Over the coming months we will be looking at models and potential partners to provide this service through Group programs, 1:1 Counselling or a combination of both. As members of the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee, in particular the Income Security and Economic Opportunities work table, we are staying current in reviewing models that are successful and evidence based, and are availing our collaboration in order to optimize the opportunity to offer this service to our clients.

Funding sustainability and diversification of funding continues to be a strong focus for 2020/2021 and beyond. We will continue to work hard to ensure all of our programs are funded. With our new logo and slogan, we are developing comprehensive marketing and fundraising plans aimed at stewarding, strengthening and growing our donor base. We thank you for your past support and ask for your continued generosity towards Vita Centre - without your financial help and giving of your time and talent we could not accomplish our goals.

As we move forward into 2021 and beyond, I would like to take this opportunity to offer thanks and recognition to the Board of Directors, our volunteers, and our Partners. Most of all, I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the staff of Vita Centre who work with such passion and dedication to ensure that our programs and services are successful at achieving our mission and vision. We are proud of what Vita Centre has accomplished this past year and are excited about the future.

~ Tanya Pereira, Director of Operations

SPOTLIGHT ON PROGRAMS



ONE TO ONE COUNSELLING

Through our one to one counselling, vulnerable parents are supported to identify goals and access resources to reach those goals that will improve the quality of life for their families. Counsellors offer emotional support and guidance to help vulnerable parents recognize and build on their own strength and resilience to move forward and thrive.

SUPPER CONNECTION

This program brings families together to share a meal while providing social opportunities that help decrease the feeling of parent isolation. Sessions focus on sharing skills, resources, and information that can improve parents' food literacy and nutritional choices. Discussions also revolve around positive parenting strategies and enhancing parenting confidence.



GROWING AS PARENTS

This parenting group program is an original Vita Centre program designed to build parenting capacity and confidence through interactive, strength-based group sessions. Session topics, such as Financial Literacy, help parents access relevant information and resources to improve their family well-being and ability to make informed choices to make progress against their life goals.

NOBODY'S PERFECT

A facilitated parenting program for parents of children from birth to age six. The program is designed to meet the needs of parents who are young, single, socially or geographically isolated, or who have low income or limited formal education. Sessions are based on what parents want to learn about, not step by step from a book. The program provides parents with a safe place to meet others with children of the same age and with whom they share interests and concerns.



SPOTLIGHT ON PROGRAMS

ME, MY BABY, OUR WORLD



Me, My Baby, Our Connection is a fusion of the Me, My Baby, Our World (Rosalie Hall) and Make the Connection (The Psychology Foundation of Canada) programs - both evidence-based programs designed to enrich the relationship between parents and their children by increasing parent responsiveness and confidence, leading to best possible infant mental health outcomes. Me, My Baby, Our Connection program focuses on what every child needs to become securely attached. The sessions incorporate hands-on parent-baby activities, scrapbooking and discussions to help parents strengthen their relationship with their child from birth to three.

OUR COMMUNITY IMPACT

602 PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN IMPACTED

100% REPORT INCREASED CONFIDENCE IN PARENTING ABILITY, PARENTING SKILLS, ABILITY TO USE EFFECTIVE PARENTING STRATEGIES, AND SELF-CONFIDENCE, AND DECREASED SOCIAL ISOLATION

89% REPORT FEELING MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR FUTURE

100% REPORT ENHANCED UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL NEEDS; AND HOW THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR CHILD IMPACTS HIS OR HER DEVELOPMENT

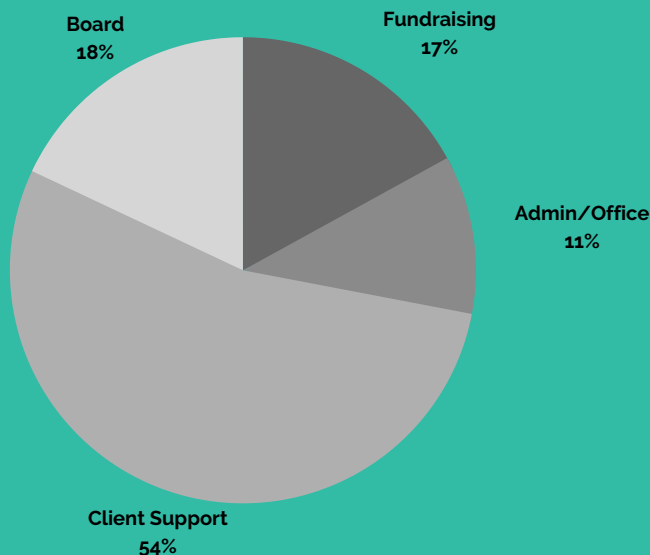
100% REPORT FEELING THAT THEY HAVE SOMEONE TO TURN TO FOR HELP THAT THEY DIDN'T HAVE BEFORE AND FEELING BETTER ABOUT THEMSELF

100% FEEL THEY LEARNED ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF EATING HEALTHY AND HOW TO MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES AND REPORTED THAT THEY HAVE INCREASED CONSISTENT ACCESS TO FOOD

93% REPORT THAT THEY HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO PERSONAL CARE ITEMS FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR BABY

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Gave a total of 5203 hours!



A HUGE THANK YOU TO THE CORPORATIONS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE THROUGH DAYS OF CARING THIS YEAR:

COMMUNITY LIVING MISSISSAUGA
ENBRIDGE
INTUIT CANADA
SUNCOR

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Christina Boyle-President
Brian Bell - Vice President
Corinne Ah Choon-Treasurer
Allison Brand-Secretary
Anmarie Salvalaggio-Director

Renata Correia - Director
Fidelia Fredua-Kwarteng -Director
Sumedha Arya - Director
Ashwin Singh - Director

STAFF

From the left:
Tanya Pereira-Director of Operations
Susan Robins-Program Manager
Britney Singh-Program Facilitator
Gabriella De Napoli - Community Counsellor
Danish Sheikh - Community Counsellor
Maria Montecalvo - Program Facilitator
Not pictured:
Arsh Bains - Volunteer Coordinator/Admin. Asst.
Marilyn Hems - Bookkeeper



Thank You to Our Supporters

Visionaries Gifts of \$5000+

Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto
ShareLife
Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation - Toronto Diocese
Regional Municipality of Peel
Dewdney Family Charitable Foundation

Guardians Gifts of \$1000-\$4999

Knights of Columbus Our Lady of Peace Council #8668
Knights of Columbus J.F.K. Council #5523
Knights of Columbus St. Maximillian Kolbe Council 9612
Knights of Columbus Credit Valley Council #8661
Knights of Columbus St. Gianna Beretta Molla Council #14749
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
Al Oil Incorporated
Prem & Annette Prabhu
Mississauga Community Foundation
Enbridge
Melissa Sargeant
Tanya Pereira
Christina Boyle

Thank You to Our Supporters

Counsellors Gifts of \$500-\$999

St. Mary's Catholic Women's League, Brampton
John Cabot Catholic Secondary School
Peel Fountain of Wisdom
Spoonfed
Cuchulainn's Irish Pub KAPS Realty Group
Anonymous

Stella Ambler
Rafal Raczka
Victor & Susie Pereira
Janice Moro
Daniella De Napoli
Karan Forsythe
Jennifer Bourikas

Ambassadors Gifts of \$100-\$499

St. Martin of Tours Parish CWL St. John Fisher
CWL, Brampton
St. Mary's Catholic Women's-League,
Brampton
St. Francis Xavier CWL Council 3067
St. Ignatius Loyola CWL
Natalie De Sousa
Madrid Taekwondo Institute
Nativity of Our Lord CWL
Dr. Anilkumar Menon Medicine Professional
Corporation
Dominion In Christ Internation Ministries
Ontario Power Generation Employee &
Pensioners Charity Trust
Harry Witzenhausen
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Brian Bell
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Irene Vanderlinden
Natalie De Sousa
Arsh Bains
Kiran Bains
Kavita Gandhalikar
Vivien Fernandes

Thank You to Our Supporters

Friends Gifts of \$25-\$99

Blanche Monteiro
Hugh Loughran
Anna Jushkevich
Rose Marie Valere
Dolores Wielgus
Hermin Powell
Helen Callery
Karen McCarthy
Beverly Dywelska
Frank & Marie Medoro
Janice Tesolin
Gina Harvey
Lincoln Murzello
Donna Punch
Ashwin Singh

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Philip Fernandes
Nino Quintal
Allison Brand
Corinne Ah Choon

Thank You to Our Funders

