



**Vita**  
CENTRE



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**JULY 1 2020**  
**to**  
**JUNE 30 2021**



## A MESSAGE FROM THE Board Chair

**Dear Friends & Supporters of Vita Centre,**

When I presented the President's Report at our delayed 2020 AGM on February 1st 2021, I did not expect we would be in the same situation approaching our 2021 AGM, with educational programs, counseling services, Board and Committee meetings and even our second AGM taking place via Zoom. Although we often express Zoom fatigue, without this and similar technology we could not have continued to help our clients for the last 18 months. Due to COVID and the variants of concern, we have not as yet reopened our office to see clients in person, although hopefully this is getting closer. We are developing policies and procedures to ensure the safety of staff, clients, volunteers and visitors, which should be completed and approved by November 2021. We continue to closely monitor all Public Health directives, and will only set a reopening date when we feel it is safe to do so.

Tanya, Susan and all the staff have worked tirelessly to keep up with the needs of our clients. Not only providing our parenting programs and counseling services remotely but also by continuing with Care Closet deliveries, taking items to a client's home and using contactless means to safely drop off items, so clients have been able to receive those practical supports. Some of our new mothers were reluctant to risk going out for supplies, and have truly appreciated this extra help.

Vita Centre Board and Management have had one main focus since the last AGM, how to keep programs and services going with significant reductions in funding from Catholic Charities and other donors who have experienced their own financial challenges. COVID -19 has had widespread impact on the economy and many charitable agencies like Vita have suffered.

Tanya and Susan have worked hard to submit multiple grant applications, looked into and applied for government assistance when applicable, but we recognized that we need to do more to develop sustainable and diversified funding. To that end, a grant from the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** is helping Vita to develop into a fundraising culture, through Marketing/Fundraising training, and developing tools to spread the word and tell the Vita Centre story in a professional and engaging way to attract more donors and donations.

The website went through an interim update to modernize the look while a much larger project is underway to completely change over to a new platform, with professionally designed pages, including detailed information about each service, and "heartfelt stories" from our clients. In addition, a video is being developed to tell our story, to the public, service organizations and corporations. This new website will be ready to launch very soon.

A Marketing Sub Committee was established to oversee each individual campaign, and a full marketing plan was developed. We ran our first on-line fund raiser as a test case and raised the money for one more 12-week Supper Connection Program. We had help from a consultant with MAS (Management Advisory Services) who provide pro-bono consulting to not-for-profit agencies. We learned a great deal about how to post on-line, how often, what kind of messaging we should use and much more. We even had an animated video clip developed about the Supper Connection which was well received, and plan to develop one for each of our fundraising campaigns.

Most of us are not natural salesmen and even resist the idea in the not-for-profit charitable sector, but the reality is we have to get out and sell "Vita Centre" if we are to keep providing all the programs we currently offer. Our budget for 2021/2022 depends on our ability to successfully raise funds.

I would like to thank Tanya, Susan and all the staff at Vita for their tireless efforts in the last 9 months. The members of our Board and committees have also generously given a tremendous amount of their time to help keep Vita a viable organization.

We are now in the second year of our three-year Strategic Plan (2020-2023) and a detailed Year Two Operational Plan has been developed and approved by the Board, and so the work continues!

~ Christina Boyle, Board Chair

### A MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

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.

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.

Funding sustainability and diversification of funding continues to be a strong focus for 2021/2022 and beyond. We will continue to work hard to ensure all of our programs are funded. To that end, we are incredibly thankful to be one of the recipients of the **Ontario Trillium Foundation's** Resilient Communities Fund to the amount of \$30,000. With this funding, we will be able to work with a consultant to access training and resources to develop a strong fundraising culture within the Organization and build capacity to help us diversify our funding.

To all of our donors and supporters - 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 2022 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 focuses on sharing skills, resources, & information that can improve parents' food literacy & nutritional choices. Discussions also revolve around positive parenting strategies and enhancing parenting confidence. Participants receive weekly "Good Food Boxes" filled with fresh produce for themselves & their families in a bid to improve food security



## 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

**631** 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

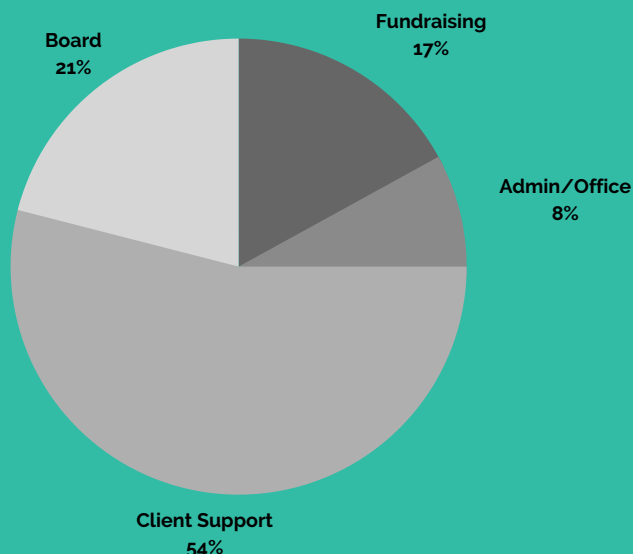
**95%** REPORT FEELING THAT THEY HAVE SOMEONE TO TURN TO FOR HELP THAT THEY DIDN'T HAVE BEFORE AND FEELING BETTER ABOUT THEMSELF

**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

**91%** REPORT THAT THEY HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO PERSONAL CARE ITEMS FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR BABY

## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Gave a total of 4479 hours!



**A HUGE THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO MADE  
A DIFFERENCE THROUGH DAYS OF CARING  
THIS YEAR:**

COMMUNITY LIVING MISSISSAUGA

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Christina Boyle-President**  
**Brian Bell - Vice President**  
**Corinne Ah Choon-Treasurer**  
**Annmarie Salvalaggio-Secretary**

**Fidelia Fredua-Kwarteng -Director**  
**Sumedha Arya - Director**  
**Marina Vadivelu - Director**  
**Ma Trixia Gener - Director**

## STAFF

**From the left:**  
**Susan Robins-Program Manager**  
**Tanya Pereira - Executive Director**  
**Britney Singh-Program Facilitator**  
**Gabriella De Napoli - Community Counsellor**  
**Danish Sheikh - Community Counsellor (currently  
on maternity leave)**  
**Maria Montecalvo - Program Facilitator**

**Not pictured:**  
**Marilyn Hems - Bookeeper**  
**Aaliyah Mehboob - Community Counsellor**



@VITACENTREPEEL



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# **Thank You to Our Supporters**

## **Visionaries Gifts of \$5000+**

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto  
ShareLife  
Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation - Toronto Diocese  
Regional Municipality of Peel  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Mississauga Community Foundation  
United Way of Greater Toronto  
Frank Cabri  
Safe Self Storage  
InMoment

## **Guardians Gifts of \$1000-\$4999**

Knights of Columbus St. Maximillian Kolbe Council 9612  
Knights of Columbus Credit Valley Council #8661  
CHUM Charitable Foundation  
Al Oil Incorporated  
Michael (Anthony) Perretta  
Pallett Valo LLP.  
Daniel Reynolds  
Bell Canada  
Christina Boyle  
Janice Moro  
Tanya Pereira

# Thank You to Our Supporters

## Counsellors

### Gifts of \$500-\$999

St. Aloysius Gonzaga Catholic Secondary School

Peel Fountain of Wisdom

Ana Perez

Sharon Mathew Kang

Fidelity Investments

KAPS Realty Group

Annmarie Salvalaggio

Stella Ambler

Michael McGinnis

Victor & Susie Pereira

Sumedha Arya

Annette and Prem Prabhu

PayPal Giving Fund

Gabriella De Napoli

## Ambassadors

### Gifts of \$100-\$499

Haspro Road Services

Standard Products Inc.

St. Mary's Catholic Women's-

League, Brampton

Natalie De Souza

Ghanase Deonarine

C.A.N Cleaning Services

Madrid Taekwondo Institute

Dewdney Charitable

Foundation

Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Covenant

Community

Janemarie Broderick

Karen Sawyer

Philcos

Vince Gonsalves

Ladder Software

Ann Wilson

Amanda Pierce

Frances Khor

Lynda Nahirniak

Heather Bechard

Maureen Teixeira

Kate Gardiner

Fidelia Fredua-Kwarteng

Kathryn Blakely

Maria Cordeiro

Adam Haugh

Elizabeth Carreiro

Brian Bell

Irene Vanderlinden

Vivien Fernandes

Elizabeth & Norman Bindon

Marina D'Oliveira

Rafal Racza

Megan Tavares

Ron Starr

Calbin Rodgers

Michael Balawejder

Hermin Powell

Akhbinder Rishi

Teresa Burgess-Ogilvie

Ma Trixia Gener

Victoria Marianchuk

LifeLabs

Carla Griffiths-Lewis

Usha Mistry Ali

Marianne Russo

Simona Lettieri

Vinzon Pingol

Enrico Persicone

Claudine & Herb Reisch

Aaliyah Mehboob

Muffie Montecalvo

Barbara & John Killackey

Maria Montecalvo

Marina Vadivelo

Yetunde Olowude

Elsa Shenoy

Frank & Marie Medoro



# Thank You to Our Supporters

## Friends Gifts of \$25-\$99

Margo Davis  
L Cordingley  
Bliss Essentials  
Anna Jushkevich  
Maria Espinoza  
Sadeki Simpson  
Mikhail Roebuck  
Debra Grant  
Elizabeth Harte  
Megan Di Emanuele  
Tanya Godinho  
Melissa Ponte  
Gail Fernandes  
Jennifer Keating  
Marilyn MacRae  
Theresa Fernandes  
Audrey Partington  
Cynthia Unwin  
Paul Gibson  
Gordon Rand  
Thilini Perera  
Margaret Poon  
Zilla Dias  
Laura Shippen  
The Lobo-Pires Family  
Sally Amaral  
Kaydian Jones  
Jennifer Rocha  
Ann Marie Lloyd

Christina Gauthier  
Sandra DeSouza  
Joan Cabri  
Blanche Monteiro  
Glenn Pierson  
Rica Roceles  
Irwinjit Kapoor  
Joan MacDonald  
Jessica Bourne  
Benedict De Sastro  
Emily Green  
Annette Carvalho  
Gloria D'Amaral  
Desiree Bender  
Lily Fernandes  
Michaela Fernandes  
Mary Jo McCallum  
Stephanie Fennell-Brown  
Richard Kohman  
Bonnie Van Toen  
Tara Merriment  
Robyn Huezo  
Maureen McCullaugh  
Candace Ferriss  
Alison Gorbould  
Ma Trixia Gener  
Irene Van der Linden  
Melanie Nazareth  
Rose Marie Valere



# Thank You to Our Supporters

## Thank You to Our Funders



Vita Centre gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the **Novo Nordisk Diabetes and Obesity – Health Equity Fund** and the **Pendle Fund** at the Community Foundation of Mississauga, a registered charitable public foundation serving the people of Mississauga