

**JULY PROGRAM**

It was a new experience for the staff and youth of the Youth Program this July as we had staff and children from the Children's Program move in with us due to the construction at the Leslie location. It proved to be an enjoyable time as we shared supplies, some outings and a lot of fun together!

Some highlights from July were:

- the trip to Arbraska Treetop Challenge at Horseshoe Valley. For 3 hours, staff, teens and kids could be found high in the trees navigating various challenges and obstacles and, best of all, zipping along on our pulleys. This outing was everyone's favourite.
- spending a day at the beach at Sibbald Point Provincial Park, where we swam, "caught some rays" and took part in the watermelon-eating competition (won this year by a voracious Josh H.)
- various sports activities such as baseball, tennis, bowling, ball hockey and mini-putt rounded out the program.....with a nod for a strange but fun choice by out teens to go to see "Kung Fu Panda" on one of the few rainy days we experienced

**Winter Camping**

A proven "favourite", 4 staff and 9 teens once again ventured off to Kinark's Peterson Woods in January for a 3-day winter camping experience. As always, everyone had a great time snowshoeing, tobogganing, playing broomball, cross-country skiing and having terrific meals. A big plus this year was traveling to and from the camp, located north of Minden. We traveled in style, as one of the parents of a youth program teen pulled some strings and got us a luxury coach for the price of a regular school bus. **BIG THANKS to you MR. E!**

**Staff Change**

The Youth Program says goodbye to teacher, Nadia Savelli, who leaves us to take on new challenges with Southlake Hospital. We thank her for all the hard work and creative programming. We will miss her and the snacks and treats she brought us!

We welcome teacher, James Wengle, who comes to us from Richmond Hill High School. With a keen interest in sports, recreation and science, we're looking forward to having you aboard "Jay".

Bill Farquhar  
Youth Program Coordinator

**Kids' Corner**

*What am I?*

I am paint  
I live in a store in a can  
My favourite colour is electric blue  
I like to wear an aluminum can  
My job is to cover walls with my colours  
My family is pink and green  
For vacation I go to people's homes  
My favourite vacation is renovation  
I move with a brush

By Alex B.



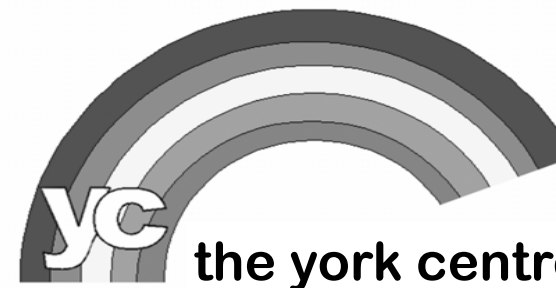
**ALICE FREY AWARD**

Congratulations  
John Ciccone  
on  
being the 2008  
recipient of the  
Alice Frey Award

**RICHMOND HILL ROTARY CLUB - TV AUCTION**  
*Tune in December 5 - 7, 2008*

Support various local charities, including The York Centre

If you would like to donate items to the auction on behalf of The York Centre, (sports event tickets, memorabilia and weekend getaways especially welcome), please call Cheryl Denomy at 905-887-5896 ext 226 or email [cheryl.denomy@theyorkcentre.ca](mailto:cheryl.denomy@theyorkcentre.ca) by November 15, 2008



**the york centre for children, youth & families**

[www.theyorkcentre.ca](http://www.theyorkcentre.ca)



Newsletter  
Fall 2008

**From the Executive Director**

It is hard to believe that it's been almost a year since our last newsletter. So much has been happening at The York Centre! Just drive by our Leslie site to see for yourself.

This newsletter will serve to update you with our activities. You can read about our exciting ground breaking ceremony, appropriately held during Children's Mental Health Week. We were fortunate to have many of our friends and supporters in attendance, including two local MPPs, Helena Jaczek and Reza Moridi, in addition to the Deputy Mayor, Brenda Hogg and many Regional Councilors. We received many messages of congratulations from former staff and associates who regrettably were unable to join us, but the messages were the same, "We miss working with you...even with the new building, don't change who you are!"

Since that day we've watched the building grow, bricks being laid, dry wall and windows appearing and other activity going on inside that we cannot see! We are planning on moving the Children's Program into the new building in the fall and then renovating the existing buildings for the Youth Program to move in the new year. Very exciting times!

The York Centre continues to be busy in the community too. Our involvement with other community child and family serving agencies has resulted in some very innovative and exciting services. This work has allowed us to build important relationships, which enable us to provide more integrated services to our clients. We are one of the host agencies for COMPASS. This collaborative model has produced some impressive results, providing brief services to families in their schools and helping to support others to get the on going services they require, while at the same time increasing the capacity of school staff to support their students with mental health needs.

Our own Community Outreach program has been working

in cooperation with COMPASS, and thanks to United Way of York Region, has doubled in size and capacity to provide a broader range of groups in the school system and community. This coming year Community Outreach will have an additional staff person, enabling us to offer schools the opportunity to use Restorative Practices and Friends for Life. We are also the recipient of a capacity building grant from the Centre for Excellence to do research on our anti-bullying groups. The York Centre will be partnering with other service providers and schools to provide Triple P services in Richmond Hill and Thornhill. All of this work will enhance our ability to serve the children, youth and families in York Region.

Another exciting development has been the formation of a dedicated group of former and current parents who have been meeting to develop their advocacy skills while supporting each other. They are organizing a raffle with some great travel prizes. The proceeds will assist with funding some of our programs. We have also made arrangements to bring Susan Hess, President of Parents for Children's Mental Health, to Richmond Hill on October 25<sup>th</sup>. Susan is an excellent and inspirational speaker who has trained numerous parents to tell their stories to support stigma reduction and advocacy for children's mental health. If you are a parent interested in this important opportunity, please contact me to get on the list.

I hope you enjoy our newsletter and we look forward to showing you our new building in our next edition.

Mary Beth McLeod,  
Executive Director

**Be sure to check inside for news of  
Richmond Hill Rotary Club's TV Auction  
and  
An exciting York Centre "Get Away" Raffle  
with a GREAT prize for the winner**



CHILDREN'S PROGRAM: 11225 Leslie St., Richmond Hill  
Phone: 905-887-5896

YOUTH PROGRAM: 120 Newkirk Rd., Richmond Hill  
Phone: 905-883-9413

Accredited by Children's Mental Health - Ontario

Charitable No.: 12999 5817 RR0001

**Together ... for Children's Mental Health**

Excitement is escalating as The York Centre's inviting new building nears completion and moving dates are set. The "foundations" for this striking new facility were set in place years ago and were made stronger as The York Centre continued to fulfill its mission of meeting the mental health needs of children, youth and families.

Each of the three successive Executive Directors; Alice Frey, Paul Meadows and Mary Beth McLeod, made very significant contributions to the development of the Centre. Over the years, the complement to the professional work of the Executive Directors and staff has been provided by the effective governance and strong commitment of successive Boards of Directors. The productive nature of this positive working relationship exemplifies The York Centre's T.E.A.M. spirit motto, "Together, Everyone Achieves More."

The successful outcome of the expansion/consolidation project, "Building...for Children's Mental Health", is the result of years of concerted effort by many people; the support of volunteers, the generosity of numerous donors, the ongoing support of C.E.R. staff and their Ministry's assistance with mortgage payments, as well as grants from Municipal and Provincial Governments and the Ontario Trillium Foundation. We are very grateful to everyone who contributed to the achievement of the goal of "Building...for Children's Mental Health."

The extraordinary contributions of the following individuals are acknowledged with gratitude

- Graham Jones (L) and Bill Jones (R), two visionary board members who worked tirelessly to develop and manage the building project from its inception. Their determination and persistence, despite numerous difficult challenges, are truly commendable.



- Mary Beth McLeod, our Executive Director, who, in addition to effectively managing all aspects of the agency, assumed many of the major responsibilities and frustrations of the building project, all the while maintaining her pleasant disposition

- \* Dino De Dominicis and his family for hundreds of hours of work they devote annually to "orchestrating" The York Centre's signature fundraising event "Christmas in the Cathedral." Proceeds from this concert over a 20 year period, provided a large portion of The York Centre Family's \$500,000 contribution to this project.
- \* Gordon Griffiths and his wife, Margaret Shaw, who graciously accepted the challenge and responsibility of co-chairing the Capital Campaign Cabinet for "Building...for Children's Mental Health". Major donations which they solicited and continue to pursue constitute a significant portion of the funds received to date.
- \* The parents and clients who have the courage to speak in public about the difficulties they were experiencing when they applied for York Centre services. Their articulate and moving testimonials have helped to dispel some of the stigma and misunderstanding associated with social, emotional, behavioural and mental health issues. They also serve as "ambassadors" for the Centre by describing the care, commitment and acceptance they experienced at The York Centre and confirming that the agency provides very effective services.

The York Centre's recently adopted slogan, "Together...for Children's Mental Health", expresses WHY this agency exists, which is, as stated in our Mission statement, to meet the mental health needs of children, youth and their families in York Region. Inherent in the slogan is the concept of HOW this mission will be fulfilled. Children's Mental Health is a shared responsibility; collaboration amongst families/caregivers, communities, service providers, government and all child and youth-serving sectors is essential. **Together** we can make a difference; we can ensure that children and youth have timely access to the services they need to experience optimal mental health and well-being.

Noreen Lee,  
Chair  
Board of Directors



3 successive Executive Directors: Alice Frey (centre); Paul Meadows (R) Mary Beth McLeod, current E.D. (L)



We are very pleased to announce the date of our 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Concert

Sunday December 14<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. when the tradition will continue

There is a change in location this year!

Plan to join us at the comfortable, acoustically pleasing Unionville Alliance Church in Unionville

Featuring:  
Michael Burgess Jackalyn Short  
Toronto Mass Choir Bach Children's Chorus

For further details call The York Centre at 905-887-5896 or email [info@theyorkcentre.ca](mailto:info@theyorkcentre.ca)

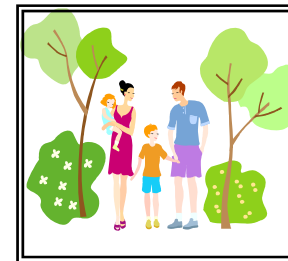
**"GETAWAY RAFFLE"**

Our *Getaway Raffle* - in time for winter holidays and extravagant gift-giving. Through generous sponsorship we are able to offer chances to win:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize - Economy Tickets for 2 on Air Canada to any North American or Sun Destination - Mexico, the Caribbean, and Hawaii
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - Return tickets for two on VIA Rail Comfort Class, Toronto to Montreal
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize - One weekend night stay for 2 (includes brunch) at the Hilton Suites Markham

Draw to take place Sunday, December 14, 2008 at the Concert. **You do not need to be present to win.**

Tickets: \$10 each or 3 tickets for \$25 For tickets call the Centre - 905-887-5896, ext. 235 or 100.



**ZERO to 6 PROGRAM**

2007-2008 has been a very busy year for the Zero to 6 Program as the population of York Region continues to expand.

On a daily basis, the Zero to 6 team members are responding to inquiries from both interested parents as well as community agencies. We continue to successfully deliver the Triple P Programs through community groups and seminars, and look forward to delivering the groups again throughout the fall and spring.

The Zero to 6 team is very excited about, and looking forward to moving to their new office at the finally integrated York Centre, Leslie Street site in late winter.

**NEWS FROM THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM**

This was another exciting year at our Children's Program. The excitement in the program has focused on the construction of the new building. Many of the children enjoyed watching the construction workers and the progress they made. Although it became somewhat loud and distracting (as well as losing half our playing field) staff did a great job ensuring the program ran as routinely and smoothly as possible.

Many exciting trips and activities occurred throughout the year. Some of the highlights included trips to Reptilia, to Airborne Trampoline, and to the Newmarket Theater to watch "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat" as well as our regular swimming trips. A winter trip to Kinark Camp was very exciting for the children who attended, many of whom made quincys (igloos) upon their return.

Twenty four children graduated throughout the year with the majority (15) being part of a graduation ceremony in June. All the children worked hard and some made great progress in their goals. Hopefully they will all use their strategies in their new schools.

We look ahead to a very exciting year, as everyone looks forward to being in our new building in the early fall of 2008.

Marcel Wegman  
Children's Program Coordinator

*Thank You!*  
The York Centre gratefully acknowledges Marilyn Kelley for her photography services.