

# ommunicate

## The Youngs' Legacy of Caring

By Heather Beaumont,  
Communications Coordinator

**T**his is a story about what you may encounter when you adopt children.



**In 1964, Doreen Young's joy was infectious as she savoured a special moment with adoptive twins Sheri and Stephen.**

Our biological son was about six years old when my wife had surgery and could no longer bear children. He kept wanting a brother or sister like his friends, so we decided to look into adoption. We contacted the Children's Aid Society and met with an adoption worker. After a period of time and investigation of our requirements, we were approved to adopt a child. The next step was to wait until a child was available.

After a few months we visited the Agency to see some children. We fell in love with twins, a boy and a girl. Our son thought they would be great; if one was sleeping he could play with the other. After a short period of time and medicals, we were called to come and pick up our new family members. As you can see by the joy on my wife's face this was a moment to remember. The twins were given names and birth certificates and became a part of our family. Three years later we adopted another baby girl to complete our wished-for family.

After a while we moved to a new home, and our son, daughter, and the twins were attending school. My wife felt she could still put some time in with another baby so we talked to the CAS about becoming a foster home. Since they have had close contact with us it did not take long for approval. Over the next few years we took in 58 new babies. Three of the babies met the couples who adopted them while they were with us.

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# Communicate

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## LGBT Youth Program Is **OUT & PROUD** with New Name

By Tracy Ford and Lorraine Gale,  
Out and Proud Program Coordinators

For years staff, volunteers, parents and youth at the Children's Aid Society of Toronto have known of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered (LGBT) Youth Program.

Or was it Services for LGBT youth?

Or could it have been Services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Intersexed, Two Spirited, and Queer program?

The program staff's efforts to create an all-inclusive and descriptive program name led to a title that was unmanageable, long and wordy; and in the end, many people really didn't know the program's real name.

Finally in 2004, staff at the LGBT Program decided to fix this problem. In November, they e-mailed staff and students within the Society to announce a contest for a new name--something catchier and more concise.

There was an amazing response. Many names were suggested. But in the end, Melissa Leigh, a placement student from Ryerson University's Department of Social Work, won the top prize for her suggestion.

Thanks to Melissa, the LGBT program's fantastic name is now...**OUT & PROUD!** Melissa was awarded a beautiful Tiffany & Co. print, donated by the Children's Aid Foundation.

In 2005 look out for the following **OUT & PROUD** Program developments:

- Establishment of an agency-wide Pride Committee to organize exciting and enjoyable events for children, youth, staff, foster parents, adoptive parents, volunteers, families and staff.
- Publication and distribution of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Best Practice Guidelines for all agency staff, foster parents, volunteers and residential providers.
- Development of a new training curriculum for "Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Youth".

- Development of a service model to work with transsexual, transgendered, intersexed, gender variant and other gender diverse children and youth.

If you have any questions or wish to volunteer for any of our initiatives, please contact **Lorraine Gale or Tracy Ford, Out & Proud program coordinators at 416-924-4640 ext. 3055.**



Melissa Leigh, winner of the **Out & Proud** name change contest, displays her Tiffany and Co. print, donated by the Children's Aid Foundation.

## Child Welfare Secretariat's Work Continues

By Melanie Persaud,  
Manager, Communications

In Spring 2004, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services' Child Welfare Secretariat began its work. Headed by Bruce Rivers who is seconded from his position at CAS of Toronto, the Secretariat builds on the work of the government's child welfare program evaluation. The evaluation identified issues of concern to the field and clients alike, and made recommendations to improve child welfare outcomes for children and youth in Ontario.

*cover story cont...*

## The Youngs' Legacy of Caring

Our own children were all in school full time and we were asked if we would like to take in 6- to 12-year-olds instead of infants. Over the next 30 years hundreds of children became our responsibility for short periods of time and some for extended periods. Some now have their own families and refer to us as Mom and Dad or grandparents to their children.

In the meantime our own children grew up and wondered about their birth parents. About this time the rules were changed to allow adopted children to find their birth parents. The twins found theirs and had a few visits and found out some medical history, but then had no further interest. Our other adopted daughter found her birth mother and continues to see her periodically, but that has not affected our relationship. One mother of two of our foster children straightened her life out, married and became a foster mother. Her children still visit us when in town. Three of the long-term girls were "given away" by me when they married and they still keep in touch.

From 1964 until 2000, working with children from all walks of life and nationalities was a full-time job for my wife. I still had my day job and took care of the late night admissions for the last four years when we became an emergency home. Being able to assist children who arrived from some dire situation which endangered their well-being was very difficult at times but also personally very rewarding. It gave us a sense of accomplishment.

After 52 years of marriage and numerous children my wife passed away in January 2004, and now it is my turn to get repaid with all the love and help from our adopted family and our ex-foster family. They have been taking care of me in my time of sorrow.

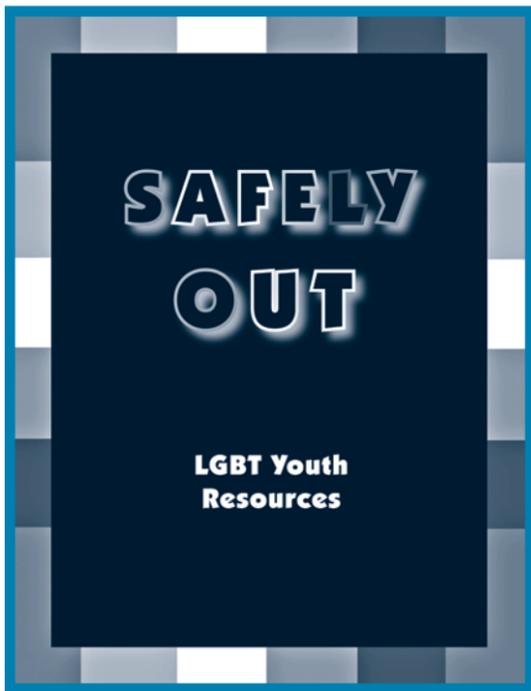
## In memory of Doreen Young, Foster Mother, from 1964 to 2000.

**A father and still a foster father,  
Walter Young.**

## New Name for STOP, TEACH, Speak Out Program

By Krin Zook,  
Coordinator, Positive Space Program

When TEACH (Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia) youth speak to other young people about sexual orientation issues, residential staff notice that more youth feel safe enough to disclose.



“Youth who come out in environments where other youth are making homophobic comments are afraid,” one residential worker wrote in a training evaluation of the Positive Space Project. “Often, it can seem unsafe to LGBT-identified youth to speak in confidence with staff, even when those staff members have worked hard to create an inclusive environment.”

Residential workers often comment on the high level of homophobia among the residents. Not surprisingly, they also report few or no cases of youth talking to workers about issues of sexual orientation.

The STOP, TEACH, Speak Out Program, now called Positive Space Project, produces training materials on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and transsexual issues for residential workers. The Program, sponsored by Planned Parenthood of Toronto, also coordinates workshops for youth in residential settings. In the past three years, over 100 workshops have been delivered to youth in care.

To help staff provide quality counselling and referrals for LGBT youth, the Positive Space Project has produced a binder of up-to-date resources called Creating Positive Space. The binder includes myths, stereotypes and different scenarios to increase workers' knowledge when talking to this population. There is also a pocket-sized companion booklet aimed at youth called Safely Out. This booklet addresses myths and stereotypes, lists resources, and explains reasons

a youth might want to come out and what to consider when doing so.

These materials are free to youth in care and to staff in residential settings. The resource binder is also available to CAS of Toronto staff. Safely Out is available to outside agencies at \$3.00 each with a reduced rate for bulk orders, and Creating Positive Space is \$15.00. To order these materials or book a TEACH workshop, contact **Krin Zook at 416-924-4640 ext. 3059.**

## M-STAR 2004 Mural Project

By Lisa Nelson,  
PARC Youth Worker

The M-STAR 2004 Mural Project, a joint venture with the Pape Adolescent Resource Centre (PARC), and the Eastview Neighbourhood Community Centre, provided PARC youth with an opportunity to develop job-readiness skills.

The program focuses on painting and transforming graffiti to art. A great deal of time was spent forming and fostering relationships with youth from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Project Coordinator, a talented youth leader, former youth in care and artist, managed the summer project, which ran from July 13 to August 27. He was helped by two youth assistants.

In total, six men and four women, ages 14-20, participated; two worked part-time. Owing to their involvement in a literacy program their wages were subsidized. The crew was extremely talented and committed. They often worked voluntarily into the evening to finish the mural on time.

As with previous years, the “layered learning” approach was employed; older youth taught younger youth, who in turn taught youth even younger than themselves. This model builds connections among the youth and teaches employment skills.

The M-STAR 2004 Mural Project provided an employment opportunity for young people who face multiple barriers stemming from abuse, poverty, racism, stigmatization, and immigration issues.

Ten youth and two youth assistants were hired to participate in this

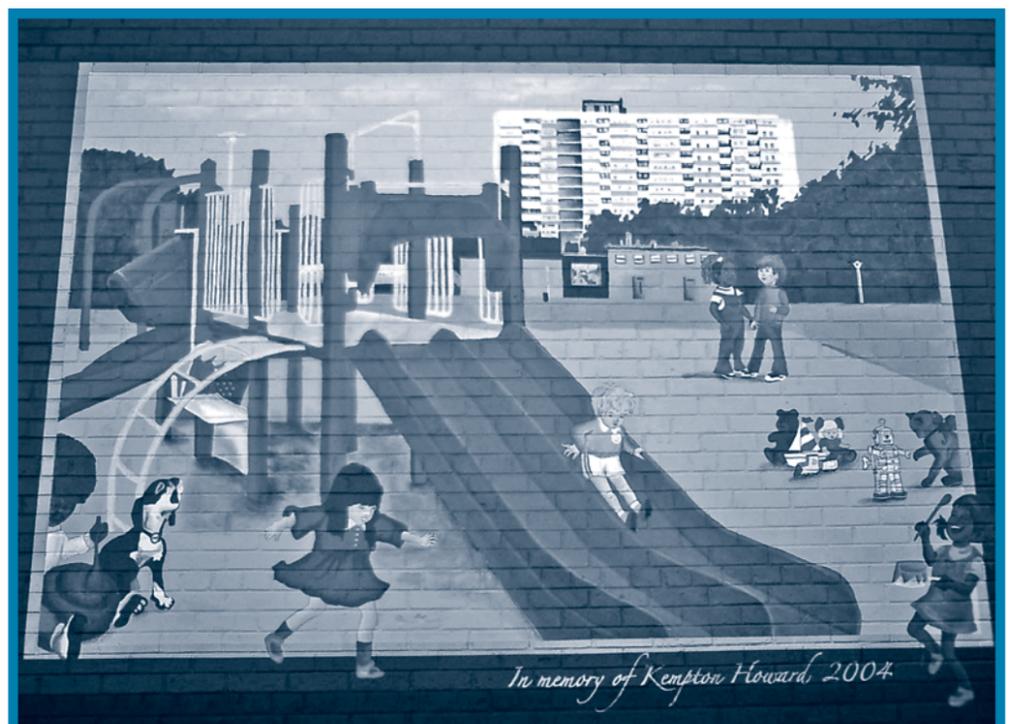
summer project. The PARC participants were youth in care from the child welfare system who were already involved with PARC, or were referred by their social workers to gain job-readiness skills. In addition to the on-going hands-on training, the youth also met with an employment counselor from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), who provided instruction in resumé writing, interview, and job maintenance skills. Youth also volunteered for one day at the Daily Bread Food Bank.

The mural project offered youth from the PARC and Eastview communities an opportunity to develop “hands-on” job-readiness skills, and build positive communication skills, problem-solving skills, teamwork, artistic skills, and a sense of community and pride.

The crew restored and resurfaced the CN bridge (both sides) on Jones Avenue -- an arduous task. The site had undergone some construction and each of the murals had been “tagged” (that’s when a graffiti artist puts graffiti on a wall).

The crew also touched-up the two-sided mural in the corridor of the Boulton Supportive Housing complex, along with a mural inside Boulton’s Breakfast Club room. New projects included a large window insert for the Woodgreen Youth Job Centre at Danforth and Donlands avenues and a banner for the Eastview Neighbourhood Community Centre’s annual barbecue.

Finally, and most significantly, a mural was designed and painted at the Eastview Neighbourhood Community Centre to commemorate the death of Kempton Howard, a youth who was shot and killed in the Blake-Boulton community on December 13, 2003. Howard was a mural project crew member when it was established seven years ago. The residents in the community asked that a mural be created in Howard’s honour. The completed mural depicts a playground scene at Eastview Park. The park will be renamed Kempton Howard Park.



This vibrant mural is a result of the combined efforts of youth from PARC and the Eastview Neighbourhood Community Centre.

## A Message from Carolyn Buck, Executive Director



The Executive Director reports regularly to the Board of Directors about the Agency's activities. Here are some highlights.

- The CAS Foundation held its annual Teddy Bear Affair at the Convention Centre. This was a sold-out event, attended by over 1,000 people. Premier Dalton McGuinty and Mayor David Miller attended. Both spoke about the importance of the work of child welfare and how the Foundation generously provided additional help to children and youth. A youth in care also spoke eloquently about being supported by her CAS worker as well as the Foundation. This was an outstanding evening and our Foundation raised over \$700,000.
- The Annual Children's Holiday Party, hosted by the CAS Foundation, was held at The Sheraton Centre's Toronto Hotel on December 12, 2004. It was attended by over 1,000 children and their families and was a huge success.
- Our agency's Intake Branch is working on an exciting pilot project with the Toronto Police Force and Catholic Children's Aid Society (CCAS). We are examining the co-teaming of one of our Intake workers with one of the Youth Bureau constables to enhance working relationships and service outcomes. This is only at the preliminary stage, so there will be more information to come as this is developed and implemented.
- The Executive of the Alumni group met with our Foundation to hear about fundraising options for the new Child Welfare Centre. Sheilagh Johnson, the Foundation's Executive Director, provided an overview of the Ketchum Canada report and outlined the contribution the Alumni could make in a limited Capital Campaign. The Alumni were most interested in being included in the proposed fundraising campaign.
- On January 20<sup>th</sup>, members of the Rotary Club of Canada offered to help support children diagnosed with dyslexia by paying for additional testing to determine whether they might be assisted through the Irlen method. This method helps children with the use of coloured overlays or coloured lenses. This method has also been accepted and is effective in many parts of the world, but not yet in Canada. We will identify ten children who are wards of this agency to determine if such intervention will help them.
- CAS of Toronto has agreed to extend our agreement with Native Child & Family Services for another year. In effect, CAS of Toronto will continue to provide Emergency After Hours Ser-

vice, the Children's Transportation System, and teaching related to adoption service for agreed-upon rates of reimbursement.

- Our agency has partnered with North Scarborough Boys and Girls Club to locate our Cyberbus in their area for the next four weeks. This is a new project funded by the Foundation and Human Resources Development Canada, to expose children and youth in a high-needs community to technology and computers, to help them with homework, and to teach them about Internet safety. Fourteen of our PARC youth are mentors in this project as part of a training program.

- CAS of Toronto has been invited by the University of Toronto to partner with eight other agencies in the launch of an "Institute for Evidence-Based Social Work". The commitment is to work towards a collaborative research agenda, provide a forum for sharing findings and disseminating best practices, and work towards the implementation of evidence-based practice.

### The Agencies include:

The Hospital for Sick Children, Integra, Bloorview-MacMillan Children's Centre, Hincks-Dellcrest Centre, Kids Help Phone, Native Child & Family Services, Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

## CAS Receives Children's Mental Health Funds

By Heather Beaumont,  
Communications Coordinator

The Children's Mental Health Fund was established by Ontario's Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Funds are used for collaborative partnerships with evidence-based research.

Toronto is home to over half of the 250,000 immigrants and refugees who migrate to Canada on an annual basis.

Many are children, who once lived in a refugee camp, where they witnessed the horrors of war and experienced multiple traumas. The ensuing fear, sadness, and confusion and the ability to express those feelings are key to these children's recovery from trauma.

On behalf of the Children & Youth Affected by War and Migration Coalition, the Toronto CAS identified children who could benefit from a counselling program called Playing With Rainbows. The CAS of Toronto received \$88,900 to fund Playing With Rainbows. More than 75 refugee and immigrant children and their caregivers were involved.

**Playing With Rainbows operated on a number of levels:** The group counselling program included age-appropriate play and art

therapy for children, ages 5 to 13, in twelve-sessions. This program identified and responded to trauma, provided normalization and support, and educated the children who participated. It also encouraged development of their coping skills. Their caregivers were also provided with information, support and community resources in three sessions, so they, in turn, could offer assistance to the children in their care.

The animatronic characters from Toronto CASs Robot Project also helped the children to communicate and express themselves.

The Playing With Rainbows program began last January and ended in March 2005. With the help of two train-the-trainers workshops, the program enhanced the capacity of eight to ten ethno-specific community agencies by increasing the skill and knowledge of the 16 staff who delivered the program. This important work was funded by a one-time allocation, but there is a possibility that it could be continued and expanded with annual funding.

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An estimated 9 out of 1,000 babies in Canada are born with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Their families need significant on-going services and supports.

When a child has an alcohol-related disability, something important is also being said about the birth mother. To best serve children and parents affected by FASD, it's critical that we learn to identify the disability and its unique demands.

The Toronto CAS, in conjunction with the Catholic Children's Aid Society, received funds from the Children's Mental Health Fund to host three two-day training sessions on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) for senior managers working in children's mental health, justice, education, health, child welfare and early childhood education. The training sessions were conducted to help staff and caregivers learn about FASD and different ways to work with children affected by FASD.

Workshops were delivered to participants, in February and March, free of charge. Donna Debolt, FASD Specialist; Margaret Leslie, director, early intervention programs, Mothercraft and Breaking the Cycle; Dr. Gideon Koren, director and founder of Motherisk, The Hospital for Sick Children; all experts in the field, provided a dynamic learning experience on the science of FASD.

**Some of the subjects covered at the FASD workshop were:** a definition and a practical tool for detection and diagnosis; guidelines for family support; creating environmental supports; and working in partnership. Existing services, gaps in service and future directions were also examined.

## CAS of Toronto Youth Celebrate BLACK HISTORY MONTH At Kick-Off Luncheon

By Ken Sosa, Community Worker, Community Development & Prevention Team

Six CAS of Toronto youth and their foster parents celebrated Black History Month's 2005 kick-off luncheon event with the Ontario Black History Society (OBHS) and other dignitaries in the black community, on January 30<sup>th</sup>.



**Professor David Divine, keynote speaker at the Ontario Black History Society luncheon.**

Keynote speaker Professor David Divine, the James R. Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies at Dalhousie University, spoke passionately about issues that affect the black community, including "critical problems that affect black males and youth in particular (which) revolve around an apparent lack or unwillingness, or a combination of both, to constructively engage with and understand...in a liberating way, the wider society of which they are an integral part." These were profound and insightful words.

In its application to the Children's Aid Foundation on behalf of the youth who attended, members of the Agency's Black Education Awareness Committee (BEAC) noted that the luncheon would be an important event for the youth. The luncheon provided them with the opportunity to rub shoulders with distinguished guests from the black and other communities. Ontario Black History Society president Rosemary Sadlier was present along with Toronto Mayor David Miller, who read the Proclamation to declare February Black History Month in Toronto. Representatives from the consulates of Jamaica, Trinidad

& Tobago, St. Lucia and Senegal, and other distinguished guests from the provincial and federal government were also present.

Members of CAS of Toronto's Volunteer Department and the Community Development and Prevention Program distributed brochures and information to complement a display board that highlighted the Agency's participation in Black History Month over the years. Many of the luncheon's 500 visitors commented positively on the display board before taking the distributed literature.

Finally, thanks to the Communications Department for organizing the display board for the luncheon and also to staff at the Children's Aid Foundation, who made it possible for CAS of Toronto youth and foster parents to attend the event.

## Nominate A Hero for the Stand Up For Kids Awards

By Heather Beaumont, Communications Coordinator

Abused and neglected children need heroes to stand up and help them. And those heroes need to be recognized with a Stand Up For Kids Award.



Every October, the Stand Up For Kids Award is presented during Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Award recognizes individuals or organizations with the courage to stand up and take action to prevent or stop child abuse and neglect. Nominees have demonstrated selflessness and dedication to keep children safe.

Staff from four Toronto area CASs can nominate an individual or organization for an action that took place in the city of Toronto after October 1, 2004. The deadline for nominations is Thursday, July 28<sup>th</sup>.

The individuals who are recognized have taken specific and positive action to prevent or stop the abuse or neglect of a child or children, or to improve the quality of life for children at risk. This action or actions clearly demonstrates that the nominee has gone above and beyond expected behaviour, and will serve as a model to others.

The Stand Up For Kids Award is presented by the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto, the Children's Aid Society of Toronto, Jewish Family & Children's Services and Native Child and Family Services of Toronto.

In 2003, one of the first annual Stand Up For Kids Awards was presented to Sergeant Paul Cote of the Toronto Police Service. Cote contributed to the revision of the Protocol for Joint Investigations of Child Physical and Sexual Abuse. Sergeant Cote educated day care providers and served as a catalyst in support of joint training for police and CAS workers.

Staff at Birkdale Residence, a homeless shelter for women and children in Scarborough, also received an award that year. They went well beyond the shelter's mandate to monitor a 13-year-old child's physical condition.

Annie Cornelis, principal of Secord Public School received a Stand Up For Kids Award when she decided to drive two brothers to and from their individual schools for five weeks after they were placed in a foster home. She added one hour to her daily commute and minimized the losses these two children experienced while in foster care.

**Contact Melanie Persaud in Communications at 416-924-4640 ext. 2086 or write to her at [mpersaud@TorontoCAS.ca](mailto:mpersaud@TorontoCAS.ca) to nominate an organization or individual who has acted above and beyond the ordinary, to keep children and youth safe from harm.**

## Employee Pledge Plan's Annual Cash Prize Winners Announced

By Andrea Orr, Manager of Individual and Major Gifts

Your contributions make a difference in the lives of the children, youth and families served by the Society. One hundred per cent of all contributions go directly to the Foundation's Prevention, Enrichment and Education Programs.

The winners of this year's annual cash prize draw for the Employee Pledge Plan are:

**Bibi Anthony, Internal Resources, \$250**  
**Michelle Pickett, Scarborough Branch, \$250**  
**Franz Noritz, Toronto Branch East, \$500**  
**Kim Collins, North Branch, \$1,000**

In a special additional draw, Karin Martinez of Internal Resources was awarded an elegant wall mirror donated by Tiffany & Co.

Watch for this year's specially themed draws. A Chocolate Bunny Draw took place in March and a Summer Sizzler Draw is scheduled for just before the long weekend in May.

Remember, the winning doesn't stop here. All members are eligible for dozens of surprise draws throughout the year. Last year's prize winners received HMV and Famous Players' gift certificates, CD packages, Roots' hoodie sweatshirts, and tickets to the ballet, opera and baseball games.

Remember, if you want to win you've got to plan. Join the Employee Pledge Plan. Sign up or increase your pledge anytime in the year.

Contact **Andrea Orr** at **416-923-0924 ext. 291** or e-mail her at **[aorr@cafdn.org](mailto:aorr@cafdn.org)**.

## Communicate

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# Focus On Corporate Giving

The Children's Aid Society of Toronto's website regularly posts articles on corporate giving. Please visit [www.TorontoCAS.ca](http://www.TorontoCAS.ca).

## Summer to Remember at Tim Hortons' Camps

By Don Hepburn,  
Scarborough Branch Director



Each summer, the Tim Horton Children's Foundation sends over 9,000 children across North America to summer camp.

"Thank you for sending me to this awesome camp," one camper wrote. "I have never been out of Ontario before. I went on my first plane ride. I enjoyed rafting and the pontoon boat."

The Tim Horton Children's Foundation sponsors six camps: Parry Sound, Ontario; Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia; Kananaskis, Alberta; Quyon, Quebec; Campbellsville, Kentucky, and St. George, Ontario.

Eligible Tim Hortons' stores send an average of two campers to camp each year. Scarborough Branch has been the lucky recipient of one particular store owner's camp applications for the past four summers. Dan and Margaretann Bond operate four Tim Hortons' stores in Scarborough. Four campers have been sent to camp each summer for the past 14 years.

Scarborough branch recommends children from family service caseloads, although some children in care are also able to go to the camps; however, the child must be from an economically disadvantaged home.

This year, the number of summer spaces has been reduced owing to an increase in Tim Hortons' stores eligible to send campers. However, there are growing opportunities for sponsored youth to attend new fall, winter and spring sessions with the generous support of the Tim Horton Children's Foundation. The branch recently received three applications for boys for a March break camp session in St. George, Ontario.

Two years ago, a child in care was sent to the Kananaskis, Alberta camp. This lad was in care because he witnessed the murder of his mother by his father. In October of this year, the boy's children's service worker received a call from the Tim Horton Children's Foundation. They had selected the child to attend camp for another summer.

The Tim Horton Children's Foundation camps provide economically disadvantaged children with opportunities to learn new skills and develop relationships that will affect their lives long after the summer wanes.



Dan and Margaretann Bond have sent children to camp for the past 14 years.

## DI Group Rallies Support

By Heather Beaumont,  
Communications Coordinator



When the CEO of Digital Impressions Group, a graphic communications and market-

ing company, visited a toy warehouse to buy Christmas gifts for children and youth in care, he felt like the proverbial kid in a candy store.

In the 30,000-square foot Miko Toy Warehouse, Barron Lau's eyes lit upon a DJ mixing table. "I'm really into music," he explained. "I would have kept it for myself but my friend Dianne said it was too expensive." Lau bought the mixing table for a budding DJ in care.

Lau enlisted the help of Dianne Dalisay from Shoppers Drug Mart. Her contacts provided packages filled with pharmacy products. Dalisay selected all of the girls' gifts while Lau chose the boys' presents.

In the past, Lau's company has done some pro bono work with the Communications department. They donated the design of the 2003/2004 Annual Report. They've provided hundreds of tickets to the All About Car Show to CAS youth. The company has also donated toys to the Children's Aid Society of Toronto. But last year, Lau decided to take the toy drive to a different level.

Volunteers at the seven-year-old company sent out e-mails inviting guests at the company's holiday party to donate money to the CAS. Clients also delivered toys to the company's head office. The lobby overflowed with gifts.

"I love kids and I love what the Children's Aid Society does for children," Lau said. "I wanted to help kids who are underprivileged," Lau continued, "It was fun. I'd like to thank everyone, the DI Group as a whole, our friends and all the clients. Next year, we'll come back with three carloads of toys."



Front Row (L-R) Dianne Dalisay, Joey Toribio, Barron Lau, CEO, DI Group, Jai Huang, Patrick Lau. Back Row (L-R) Farrell Haynes, CAS of Toronto Director, Volunteer Services, Innovative Projects and the Children's Transportation Centre, Brooke Smith, Peter Flaschner, Nigel Ong.

## Parkway Honda Brightens Lives of Children and Families

By Jackie Fagnoli,  
Director, Internal Resources



Since 2000, Parkway Honda has generously donated furnishings, computers and other gifts to benefit the children, youth and families at the CAS of Toronto. These gifts have enriched the lives of our families in many ways.

One parent has come to love one of the three visiting rooms with furnishings donated by Parkway Honda. "I always ask for this room for my visits because I feel so comfortable and special. My son and I can watch Shrek," the parent said. The rooms in the Family Resource Centre are filled with leather sofas, loveseats, chairs, coffee tables, a large-screen television and VCR. A complete videotape library is kept in the staff office.

Over the years, Parkway Honda has been an important part of Internal Resources programs. Staff fundraise within the organization, but they also canvass their many contacts and suppliers, too. The automobile dealer provides educational and recreational gifts that brighten not only our children's lives but also the lives of their families.

Parkway Honda has donated two complete computer systems to the Agency including colour printers. The children at Richardson Residence received one computer while the other went to the youth at the Moberly program. Parkway Honda has also supplied 12 new bicycles to the children in Richardson and Gablehurst residences. Baseball equipment, including bats, balls and gloves, was also donated to the Internal Resources children's summer league.

Long before the Christmas season, David McAulay, manager, used vehicles, Karen Eisnor, administration, who co-ordinates the program, and Devon Harris, sales representative, contact the branch to ask about items that may be needed.

Parkway Honda is renowned for its gift giving. One Christmas, the automobile dealer donated a special gift to each child in the Simpson Day Treatment Program. The children thumbed the pages of the Sears Christmas Wish Book before carefully choosing what they wanted. Personalized gifts were also given to the children's seven siblings, ranging in age from 8 months to 12 years old, who attended the program's Christmas party.

Four years ago, teens in care received over \$1,000 in donated Sears points to buy Christmas and birthday gifts. Sears Scarborough Town Centre matched the points and the Branch went on a shopping trip.

Internal Resources has awarded Parkway Honda with a plaque. It's a small thank you to a generous corporate sponsor that has made a huge difference.

# Memories of Christmas Past

## Community Spirit Alive at Scarborough Branch

By Tracy Pickett,  
Community Based Services Supervisor

Scarborough Branch has always been known for its incredible spirit of generosity, especially around the holidays. However, this year was exceptional.

Each community-based team was challenged to demonstrate its holiday spirit in a unique way. No parameters were set and no suggestions were made. But what came next was quite remarkable....

**“Holiday spirit took fire in Scarborough this year,” said Don Hepburn, Scarborough Branch Director.**

“I was amazed at the excitement, generosity, enthusiasm and concern from our staff,” Hepburn added. “It speaks to their commitment and the kind of staff we have.”

The South Adolescent Team sought donations from the volunteer department and bought items to create four beautiful holiday hampers. The hampers were filled with non-perishable food products, candles, hats, mittens, watches, toys, gift certificates and other items. The hampers were then raffled off to workers to present to their clients to provide a little pick-me-up for families during the stressful holiday season.

The Southwest Team kicked things off with a food drive. For four weeks in November and December, the team collected non-perishable food items from staff. Later, they were wrapped and distributed to teams for their clients. In total, 48 bags of food, ranging from canned fruits and vegetables to pasta and protein products, were collected for our families.

The North Central Team assembled a Mitten Tree. It was adorned with mittens, scarves, hats, and socks. Staff were encouraged to browse and then select items to give children in the community to keep them warm throughout the winter months.

As a treat to all Scarborough staff and in recognition of their tireless efforts over the holiday season, the North Adolescent and Family Support Team hosted a holiday tea, remembered for its festive mood and delicious food. The East and West Central Teams collaborated on a humorous, entertaining song-and-dance number they performed at the Scarborough Branch holiday party.

The South East Team put together Hershey’s Kisses packages, then sold them. Half their profits were donated to The Hospital for Sick Children’s Oncology Department to pay for gifts for children undergoing painful cancer treatments. The other half of the proceeds paid for craft supplies that were then donated to Scarborough’s Emily Stowe Shelter for Women.

The South Central Team developed a theme of self-care and wellness, then created two baskets filled with little luxuries to pamper and treat staff. The team also donated new toys to the family visitation rooms.

The North West Team enlisted the help of Riverdale Collegiate art students. They assisted the team and donated their time one Sunday. Together, they created a hand-painted mural masterpiece to span the walls of one of the family visitation rooms. The mural will be enjoyed by children and families for years to come.

## North Branch Teams Remember LIFE Teens

By Kim Dorion,  
LIFE Coordinator

When the members of Don Wilkins’ Team 3 and North Branch’s Placement team decided to donate the funds from their annual holiday gift exchange to a CAS of Toronto program, they weren’t thinking about getting something back. They just wanted to help teens in the LIFE Program to feel special.

Foster Care resource worker Nancy Cronin recalls working at Moberly House in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s. “We were always short of teen gifts at Christmas time,” she said.

**It really is better to give than to receive.**

Homefinder Nancy Rice agreed as she acknowledged that teens, and particularly teens on Extended Care and Maintenance (ECM), are often forgotten when it comes to Christmas gift giving.

“Teens are usually overlooked during the holiday season, because a lot of people think about the little kids and want them to have a special Christmas. But teenagers like to be remembered at Christmas time, too,” said Rice.

Over the years, the foster care department has donated to many worthy charities around the city during the holiday season. But this year, according to Cronin, they wanted their money to ben-

efit the youth served by the CAS of Toronto.

“Rather than have our own staff Christmas gift exchange, we decided to donate the money to a party for the youth in the LIFE Program,” said Cronin. Then she added, “After all, that’s what the holiday season is about -- giving to others.”

The two teams raised over \$200. That money was quickly spent on stockings that were filled with hand cream, chocolates, movie passes and a Christmas decoration. Then a pot luck party was held on Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at the house on Wyndcliff Crescent.

The 17 youth at the party, ranging from 16 to 21 years, were asked to bring a \$5 present for a gift exchange. The LIFE program’s role models also used the party as a teaching tool. Guests were advised of some of the social graces at party time. The youth were taught to RSVP, take off their shoes when entering a home, make small talk, bring a dish of food, drink or flowers to a party, and help with clean-up at the end of the evening.

The youth also gave back to the team members who had remembered them. A signed letter of thanks was presented to the teams along with plaques of appreciation for their generosity. Said Cronin, “If my team made a few teens happy this Christmas, then I’m happy.”

Both workers hope their teams have started a new trend and that more people will remember the teenagers during the holiday season.

## CUPE Local 2316 Plans Future Events

By Alan Choi,  
Family Service Worker

Once again, it’s time to start thinking about Mixer Night. On Mixer Night, each branch works with the special projects coordinator to organize a social event. A budget is provided for different activities and appetizers. It all takes place on the same evening.

For example, last year, a small but fun group of staff from Etobicoke branch went bowling while staff from other branches gathered at The Artful Dodger pub. This event has been a great success. Look for more information soon.

Also coming up is the Annual CUPE Local 2316 barbecue. This well-attended event is slated to take place at High Park on Sunday, July 10<sup>th</sup>. Members are always encouraged to bring their children or partners. This adds to the family atmosphere. Each year, there’s great food, games and entertainment.

## The Animatronic Robot Project Update

By Robert Lethbridge,  
Robot Project, Project Coordinator



**“Motoring Mike really enjoys learning from the children and adults he meets through the Animatronic Robot Project. When asked what he thinks about his work, he consistently replies that it is a privilege to be involved in the lives of children and young people.”**

Our child-friendly robotic characters, known from time to time as Motoring Mike, Touring Tom, Judge Wheeler, Rotary Ruth, JR Goodsense and Samantha Street, continue to benefit the children served by the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto.

These robot characters, accompanied by one of the Agency’s robot

facilitators, provide support to children in group settings. They help children cope with disconcerting emotions, discuss difficult topics and explore distressing community, family and life experiences. The robot characters continue to assist with foster parent training and disseminate important information concerning child abuse, healthy adolescent sexuality and Internet safety.

The Safe, Smart and Cyber Savvy Internet Safety and Awareness Program has proven to be an excellent vehicle for educating children, parents and caregivers. The program discusses the nature of the Internet, ten key safety messages for children and ten key safety messages for parents and caregivers. Clearly, the program fills a niche. Demand for the program has grown steadily since its introduction. It continues to engage foster parents and schools. Project staff is scheduled to provide a training workshop this April to foster parents in the York Region Children’s Aid Society

Project staff submitted a workshop proposal to the Child Welfare League of Canada’s upcoming conference, Coming Together for Canada’s Children, Strengthening Foster Care Practice and Systems to Enrich the Life Opportunities of Canada’s Children and Youth. Our submission “Foster Parents and Foster Children: Safe, Smart and Cyber Savvy” was approved. Chris Brody from the Foster Care and Adoption Services and the coordinators of the Robot Project are looking forward to bringing the Safe, Smart and Cyber Savvy approach to Internet safety to the foster parents who will attend the conference in Calgary, Alberta from June 28<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Thanks to the openness and hard work of our foster parents and children in care, the program was able to reach fruition. Foster parents and children in care helped in the development of program content. They responded to our request for focus groups and scrutinized the final safety messages.

**The Robot Project served approximately 3,465 children and adults from January to November, 2004.**

The Robot Project is possible, thanks to the financial

support of the Children’s Aid Foundation and State Street. The Rotary Club of Toronto has also made financial contributions to provide “Rotary Ruth”, a child-friendly character who operates a child’s wheelchair. This contribution has allowed the project to better reflect the diversity of the children and youth that we serve.

Safe, Smart and Cyber Savvy	500 children
Me and My Buddies	1000 children
Child Victim Witness	296 children
Dundas Street Program	6 children
Foster Care and Adoption	95 foster parents (Internet Safety)
Homes for Kids	510 adults (Promotion, CNE and Advertising)
Horsham Day Treatment	6 children
Volunteer Services	60 children
Community Work	500 children (Flemingdon Park Children’s Fair)
Scouts Canada	75 children
Training Forensic Interviewing	54 staff
Rotary Club Luncheon	120 adults
CAS of Toronto AGM	243 adults, children and youth

**Safe, Smart,  
Cyber Savvy  
Service Statistics**

## Children’s Aid Foundation Corner

### Vince Carter and Family Make the Holidays Special

By Andrea Orr,  
Manager of Individual and Major Gifts

Yes shimmered and smiles were wide as 41 children gathered at the Children’s Aid Foundation last December to open presents from former Toronto Raptor Vince Carter, his wife, Ellen, and his mom, Michelle.



**Ellen, wife of NBA superstar Vince Carter, poses with Teneisha, sister Markila, Vince Carter and his mom, Michelle at a CAF party sponsored by Carter’s Embassy of Hope Foundation.**

On December 13<sup>th</sup> the Children’s Aid Foundation was transformed for a special holiday celebration hosted by Carter and his family. Parents and children served by the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto were treated to pizza, crafts and gifts.

“The holidays are a hard time for the children and families we help,” said Sheilagh Johnson, executive director of the Children’s Aid Foundation. “These families struggle with basic items like food and shelter. Vince and Ellen Carter have given these families a much-needed boost through a difficult time of year.” The families were also presented with gift baskets.

Many of the children learned that wishes really do come true when they opened presents chosen especially for them. Carter family members were provided with each child’s wish list before the event and they helped to select the gifts.

Patricia Hamilton’s child received a gift. “He’s a great player and he really is a good role model to kids,” she said of Carter, whose number 15 can now be seen playing on the New Jersey Nets’ basketball team.

Special thanks to the Carter family. The Embassy of Hope Foundation was established in 1998. The Foundation’s slogan, “Believing In Your Dreams,” represents Carter’s commitment to perseverance and achievement. Thanks also to the Children’s Aid Society staff who co-ordinated the event for the children and their families.

### DeWALT’s Zealous Commitment to Youth

By Niki Gastis,  
Senior Development Manager

DeWALT Industrial Tool Co. has recently partnered with the Children’s Aid Foundation to establish the DeWALT Industrial Tool Co. Bursary in support of young adults pursuing career paths in the trades.

Providing financial support and encouragement to youth who are searching for a meaningful alternative to a university and/or college education, is very important to DeWALT Industrial Tool Co. In addition, they have been a proud supporter of the Teddy Bear Affair for many years.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to DeWALT Industrial Tool Co. for their outstanding commitment and the leadership they have provided to our youth. Many youth have tremendous opportunities to pursue rewarding careers in a number of trade programs now available.



**Jason Moody (L) a recipient of the 2004 DeWALT Industrial Tool Co. Bursary is congratulated by Joe Dillio (R), Vice President, Marketing, DeWALT Industrial Tool Co. at the CAF Recognition Dinner. Jason is studying electrical engineering technology at Niagara College.**

# National Social Work Week

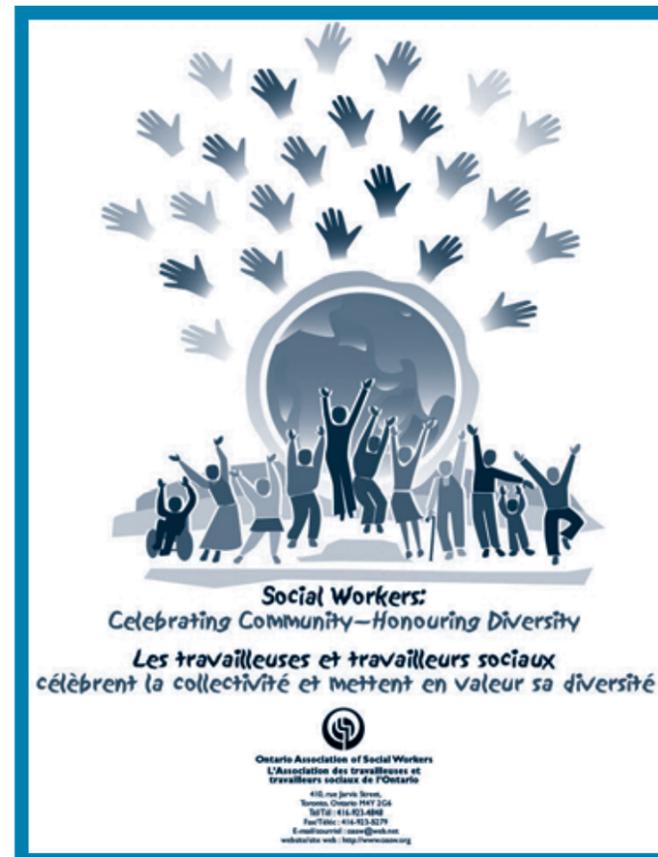
By Heather Beaumont,  
Communications Coordinator

In 1990, the board of directors of the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW), which was comprised of representatives from each of the provincial membership associations, decided that a National Social Work Week would be an effective way to heighten the profession's visibility.

While many at CAS of Toronto are Child Protection Workers, we know that you still practice the skills that make social work such an important profession! National Social Work Week is an occasion for colleagues to celebrate the profession's knowledge, skills and contribution to human services.

Social Work Week's main goals are, to:

- Encourage social work organizations and schools of social work to celebrate the role and contribution of social workers by hosting a wide variety of events.
- Increase information about the role of social workers and heighten the profession's profile with colleagues and the public.
- Enhance the visibility and profile of the professional association within the membership and the social work community.



To find out more about National Social Work Week, please visit the Ontario Association of Social Work website at [www.oasw.org](http://www.oasw.org).

## CAS of Toronto's Annual General Meeting

**June 9, 7 p.m., 34 Isabella Street.**

**RSVP to Michelle McIntosh at 416-924-4640 ext. 3021**

\*\*Please note this event is a business meeting only. There will not be a reception or awards ceremony.

We look forward to seeing you at our next formal celebration, the **2005-2006 AGM**, to be held in **June 2006**.

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