

CAS Committed to Accountability

The Auditor General's Report

By Stephen M. Lewis

*Reprinted from the Toronto Star, December 7, 2006

This week, information emanating from the provincial auditor general's report led to headlines about child welfare services and their fiscal management. At the Children's Aid Society of Toronto, we believe the public has a right to the highest expectations of its child welfare service. These expectations are no higher than those we place on ourselves. The well-being of children is our reason for being. Whether we are rescuing them from abusive or neglectful situations, strengthening their families or preventing situations that can lead to violence and neglect, we know what is at stake. The hundreds of our staff and volunteers take this very seriously, every day. Our organization currently undergoes 14 separate reviews through our Ministry of Child and Youth Services annually. Toronto CAS is audited each year by an external and independent accounting firm. Based on the provincial auditor general's recommendations, we have revised policies, implemented more detailed logging and tracking systems, and are creating an additional internal audit function. Additionally, we welcome any other controls deemed necessary by the ministry as we are committed to the best possible service to the children and families of our community. Our board of directors, who are all volunteers, come to their positions with varied experience in business, finance and accounting. They used surveys and other comparative data to arrive at a fair and equitable contract for our executive director. Like the collective agreement negotiated with our staff union, it is designed to keep talented people in difficult jobs. Two recent salary and compensation surveys conducted in Toronto in the not-for-profit sector indicated that the terms of our executive director's contract and total compensation, including taxable benefits, were fair, appropriate and competitive.

Reuniting children with safe, loving families, whether locally or abroad, is a crucial part of what we do. It costs an average of \$30,000 to have a child in CAS care annually. In our view, it is better for the child and more cost effective to place them with a nurturing family even if that family is in another country. Travel expenses are integral to repatriating children to foreign countries.

Travel expenses for CAS staff are also associated with learning and training skills. Child welfare practitioners from around the world visit CAS Toronto to learn about our best practices. A limited number of CAS staff also travel as part of a global exchange program to advance our continuous improvement of child services. An example of this was our assistance in establishing a philanthropic program to fund education programs for children in rural China.

Of greatest concern to us at CAS was the inference in the auditor general's report that children are not being seen and that documentation is not being completed. I want to reassure the public that the children in the most serious circumstances always receive service within the prescribed time frame of 12 hours. Helping 30,000 children in the city each year means more than 8,000 investigations, 2,100 children living in foster homes or group homes, and a staggering 48,000 calls to our emergency, after-hours services alone. A lack of documentation does not equal a lack of service, and paperwork should not come ahead of seeing to the children.

Each day, child welfare workers balance the needs of children and families with their limited time and resources. They act with courage and determination because they want to make a difference. While their good work doesn't make headlines, there are hundreds of success stories: families overcoming substance abuse while learning to be good parents; young people who live in our care going on to post-secondary education; and the CAS of Toronto consolidating six locations into one and turning the resulting \$1 million in savings back into services for more families and children.

CAS of Toronto is recognized the world over for

the scope and quality of services it provides to the children and families in our city. The auditor general's report is a call to action to always focus on providing the best for our children, while enhancing our services and accountability.

Stephen M. Lewis is volunteer board president of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto.

Helping Kids Feel Safe

cont. ... from cover

Gary Thomas, Owner of Crush media said, "Getting involved with this project was a no-brainer. We always like being involved with projects that are for a good cause and certainly the cause of preventing child abuse is indisputably a worthy cause. Jeff Marshall, Nancy Marshall's brother who was working at Crush, approached us with the idea of creating a PSA to stop child abuse and we were totally committed." This commitment meant that over a month of time and resources went into bringing the project to fruition. The PSA truly became a team affair as everyone at Crush got involved and one employee even had his children perform the voices. Thanks to everyone's hard work and dedication we now have a unique, honest public service announcement that will help keep children safe.

A special thank you to Nancy Marshall, Daniela Melo, Kim Wilson, Aislinn O'Leary, Nicole Drosos, Glenda Rivera, the staff and children at Simpson House and everyone at Crush Media for helping us stop child abuse. Please visit our website at www.TorontoCAS.ca to watch the PSA.



Tracy Ford, Volunteer Coordinator, David Routledge, Children's Service Worker, Sharron Richards, Manager, and Krin Zook, S.T.O.P. Teach Speakout Coordinator, are all smiles at the Supporting Our Youth Annual Bowlathon. Supporting Our Youth is a small organization housed in the larger Sherbourne Health Centre. SOY runs many groups and a housing and mentoring program for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, queer and questioning youth. This year SOY was able to raise \$34 000 at the Bowlathon which includes \$1500 in pledges by our team.

CAS Celebrates!

Black History Month

Every year during the month of February we honour the legacy of Black people, who, throughout history, have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate and prosperous nation we know today.

Here are some personal reflections on Black History Month from some of our staff, volunteers and foster parents.



Sophia Mazurek is Jamaican-Canadian and has been employed as an Administrative Assistant with our Agency for seven years. She is a member of the Black Education Awareness Committee (BEAC), as well as Founder and Chair of the Black History Committee, Scarborough Branch.

When I consider the Herculean efforts our ancestors accomplished hauling us to this place in history, my mind spins with wonder.

We humans are a die-hard species that has evolved to be greater than any species on this planet! Considering this fact, one cannot help but marvel at our incredibility. What is most staggering is the realization that we contributed to this astonishing progress by way of our ancestors. Each and every one of us has a connection to people who have taken us to this time we now call the present. Studying and researching Black History has helped me realize this great fact, and has formed for me a powerful connection to the ghosts of yesteryear. I am compelled to note the incredible accomplishments and strides made as human beings. I am humbled in knowing to the marrow of my bones how directly my ancestors contributed to this development.

Learning about African heritage – the history of Black people and Diaspora as related to Black people over hundreds of years – has narrowed as well as expanded my life perspective. Narrowed, in that I have become more intrigued with my Jamaican and direct familial story; expanded, because I have learned about my culture: African, Jamaican and Canadian, realizing it included others I had never before fathomed. As I learn about other cultures with whom my ancestors traded, married, fought and befriended, through a natural osmosis, this study has led to a curiosity as well as an understanding of others which, as unoriginal as this may sound, has made real the fact that we are all more similar than not. Studying Black history has bestowed upon me an appreciation that goes beyond myself, my ancestors and my culture, extending to the other people, experiences, and cultures around me. The more I learn about others, the more it is confirmed that we are all, indeed, one.

Studying Black history – human history – for seven years has revealed an even more profound truth. A truth that says, “This life is not just about you and me going about our daily routine, this life is about you and me creating history for the generations of tomorrow.” This life is about our obligation to lead the next generations into a time of which they can be proud; when they, too, can look forward to advancing our most awe-inspiring race, the humans. Hopefully, the day will arrive when they will move far beyond what, even I can imagine; where all will know we are one and the need for war, oppression, and suppression will be none.



Gail Bedeau is Trinidadian-Canadian and volunteers with our Agency as a Special Friend as well as being on the Special Events Committee.

Black History month is important because it depicts black history, knowledge, experiences and insights about a visible minority group. Educating people on issues of equity, diversity and social justice is important in Canada’s multicultural society. It teaches people to embrace diversity, and promote social justice to help break down barriers. As a black woman, it is important that Black History/heritage not only be celebrated one month out of the year but celebrated throughout and integrated into the school education system. This should also apply to the history of other cultural groups. By integrating Black History into the school system it allows teachers to learn to embrace students distinctiveness so students would not feel isolated. This would also encourage students to be proud of their black heritage and strive to become notable black individuals. I am not sure how Black History month came to be but it is something we should all continue to respect and celebrate.



Genifer Husbands is Jamaican-Canadian and is a foster parent with our Agency.

Black History month allows me to focus on our rich heritage which is so often forgotten and wrapped up negatives. It is a time when I can speak freely of the history of our people with pride and not fearing being ridiculed for “talking too much about our past.” It is a special time when I can think of the accomplishments of the black race, the achievements of those past and present and can actually take my children to functions available at this time of the year where they can be motivated. All too often blacks are portrayed as athletes at best or gangsters, robbers, pimps, drug pushers and murderers at worst, but little is taught of the inventors who contributed, even giving their lives so that we can live in freedom and comfort today.

Black History month is about teaching our young the value of hard work, perseverance, ambition, positive thinking and their ability to achieve as they reflect on the lives of their ancestors and the value systems that took them through those hard times.

Did you know?

Nova Scotia and the province of Ontario allowed public schools to be segregated along racial lines until the 1960’s. Schools for blacks had few of the resources of other schools and not surprisingly, the students often received far from adequate education.

The civil rights movement in Canada paralleled and in some cases predated that of the U.S.A. One of the first major challenges to racial segregation in Canada occurred in 1946 when Viola Desmond, a black business woman, refused to sit in the balcony of a New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, theatre but instead sat downstairs, an area designated for whites. She was charged with “attempting to defraud the Federal government” and was subsequently fined \$ 20.00 and sentenced to 30 days in prison.

Michaëlle Jean is Canada’s Governor General. At just 48 years old, the award-winning journalist is one of the youngest governors general ever, the third woman in the job and the first black person to call Rideau Hall home.

Chinese New Year February 18, 2007 Year of the Pig

Chinese New Year is the longest and most important celebration in the Chinese calendar. The Chinese New Year starts with the new moon on the first day of the new year and ends on the full moon 15 days later. The 15th day of the new year is called the Lantern Festival, which is celebrated at night with lantern displays and children carrying lanterns in a parade. The Chinese calendar is based on a combination of lunar and solar movements. The lunar cycle is about 29.5 days. In order to “catch up” with the solar calendar, the Chinese insert an extra month once every few years (seven years out of a 19-year cycle). This is the same as adding an extra day on leap year. This is why, according to the solar calendar, the Chinese New Year falls on a different date each year. New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day are celebrated as a family affair, a time of reunion and thanksgiving.

**Kung Hei Fat Choi to everyone
who’s celebrating this year!**

Foster Parent Tea 2006

During Foster Family Week, CAS of Toronto hosts a tea to celebrate the contribution of foster parents to the care of vulnerable children. This tea is lavishly supported by our community.



Please see below for a list of our sponsors:

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Nurturing Mohammed

By Marina Jiménez

*Reprinted with permission from the Globe and Mail

When child-welfare workers took her away, the little girl was traumatized, malnourished and falling behind at school. Fortunately, the seven-year-old was placed with foster parents who not only knew how to help a neglected child, but were also black and from the same Toronto neighbourhood. Soon, the girl was thriving and so comfortable in her new life, she was begging to accompany her foster mother to church. That was a problem because her biological parents, although drug addicts, were Muslims - as were the parents of a boy who also ended up in a non-Muslim home after being apprehended a few years ago by child-welfare authorities. While a Hindu foster child in the same home had

A special thank you to Khalid and Rubina Zahar for being such willing ambassadors for our Agency, we are very proud to have you as foster parents.

a shrine to Krishna in his bedroom, the Muslim boy "wasn't provided with a prayer mat, or told which direction to face to perform his prayers," says Nayeema Siddiq, a Toronto doctor who specializes in immigration and refugee issues. "He lost touch with his religion."

As more and more Muslim children need foster and adoptive homes, the potential for friction grows -- particularly when there are no Muslim homes to place them in.

The foster mother of the girl with the drug-addicted parents urged her to accept her own identity and arranged for visits to a mosque, but not all Muslim kids are as fortunate.

Persuading Muslims to become foster parents is a challenge. It is an alien practice to many new immigrants. Instead, relatives take in neglected or abandoned children according to informal kinship systems. In countries such as Pakistan, adoption is not even formally recognized; adoptive parents are considered legal guardians and children retain their biological surnames and lineage. "Muslims feel nervous to foster because they're seen as sellouts," Dr. Siddiq suggests. "They're helping an institution which apprehends children. The Islamic model is more about kinship and guardianship where the child is eventually returned to his family, as opposed to a model where the foster child becomes a ward of the Crown and is eventually adopted." (In Canada, when it isn't possible to reunite foster children with their biological families, they may be adopted by relatives, or another family, including foster families.) No surprise, then, that Muslim newcomers to Canada are not rushing to care for a stranger's child. Many are also under a lot of pressure already, struggling to look after their own large families. They may not know that foster parents are paid from \$1,000 to \$2,000 a month to care for a child -- depending on the child's need and their own level of experience.

The accommodations non-Muslim foster families must make are many -- for example, ensuring Muslim children do ritual ablutions before prayer, observe the fast during Ramadan and eat *halal* meat. More conservative Muslim girls may be required to wear the *hijab*, and prohibited from attending dances with boys, or swimming with them in public pools. Local children's aid societies in Ontario, B.C. and other jurisdictions have begun training foster parents in cross-cultural care to address these issues. There are classes on diet, music, sports and even skin and hair care for different ethnic groups.

"In an ideal world, we would match every Muslim foster child with a Muslim foster family of the same ethnic background," says Sharon Schnurr-Cabrera, supervisor in foster care and adoption with CAS in Toronto.

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Saving the children

By Judy Gerstel

*Reprinted with permission from the Toronto Star

Tuesday morning, children's aid social worker Nandita Junnarkar sets out in her six-year-old Mazda with the noisy muffler to try to fix three broken families. But first, she meets in the North York CAS office with the mother of a 4-month-old girl and a toddler boy, a mother who doesn't know a baby needs to be fed.

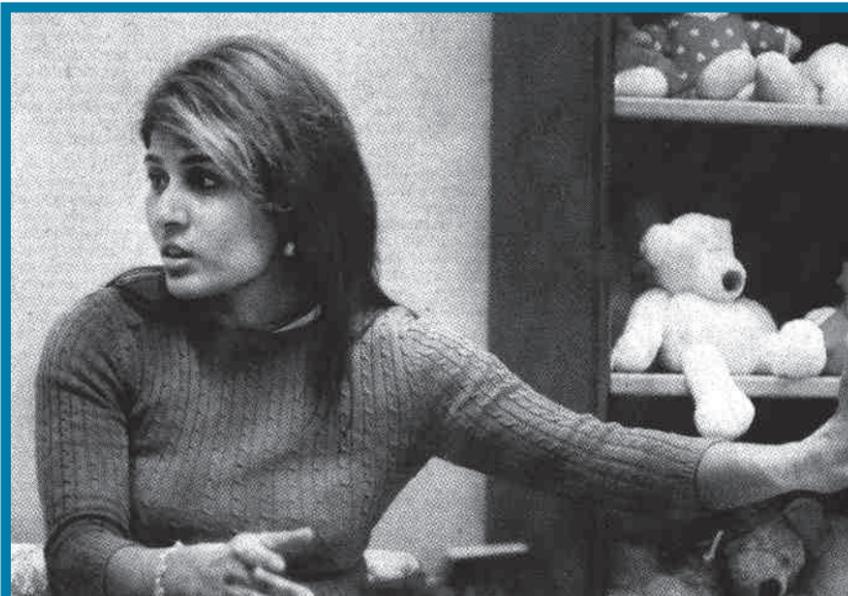
It's one family that can't be put back together again. "She couldn't read the baby's cries at all," explains the 34-year-old caseworker. "She'd leave the baby at the edge of the couch and walk away." Junnarkar reminds the mother, diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and prostituting herself for money, that her children will be adopted. She will never see them again, unless they try to find her when they turn 18. She gives the woman a little blue gift bag. In it are pictures taken at the Toronto Children's Aid Society office when the mother visited with her children for the last time. "She's so cute," says the mother, gazing at pictures of her baby girl. She tries to convince Junnarkar that she has "a plan," that she will try to find a job — "not too early in the morning, maybe in the afternoon" — so she can pay someone to look after the children. But Junnarkar is firm in trying to make this woman, who hears voices and won't stay on medication, understand it's too late. "My job," Junnarkar explains later, "is to say, 'You haven't met our expectations.'" "It's not clear whether the mother comprehends that her children are lost to her forever. Perhaps she does. "It's sad," she says, finally.

Sadness is abundant among the clients of Ontario's 53 children's aid societies. Sadness also lurks throughout Junnarkar's days and sometimes seeps into her nights: She has chosen to work with child abuse and domestic violence cases. "There's no way it doesn't take a toll," she admits. Still, she says as she drives home to Oakville, most of the time, at the 427, anything in my head about work stops there and I start thinking about personal things." The University of Toronto graduate in psychology came to CAS six years ago.

She's one of 38 caseworkers at the North York office at Yonge St. and York Mills Rd. Peer support and good rapport with her supervisor helps her stay balanced and strong, she says, along with yoga, running, acting classes and writing. Even though each family she visits could be a short story, or even a novel, she doesn't use clients as source material for her fiction. "Believe it or not, I have a lot of other stories running around in my head." She acknowledges her job

brings "an incredible access into people's lives." But trying to heal unhappy families with children who are neglected, abused or witnesses of abuse is not a job for the faint of heart. You have to wonder why Junnarkar, daughter and sister of upper-middle-class bankers, who still lives in the family home in Oakville, chose it.

There's danger, too. Junnarkar was once held hostage by a client and she says, about entering some apartment buildings in North York, "I've been scared to be in the elevator. The whole building has the feel of being unsafe." And yet, she says, it's not only being able to help people — something she's wanted to do ever since she was little — that keeps her devoted to her career. "There's not two days the same," she explains, "even with the same family." It doesn't take long, after embarking on a journey with Junnarkar through her working day, to grasp that it's too reductionist to refer to what she deals with as the seamy side of life.



Nandita Junnarkar, Family Service Worker.

Sure, these may be families in crisis living in poorly ventilated cheap apartment buildings that loiter along suburban thoroughfares with suites that will never make it into the *Star's* Your Home section. But it's just life, plain and simple, anybody's life when luck goes bad or circumstances change or mental health deteriorates. It's life, not fiction or cinema, and so, maybe more often than not, weakness triumphs instead of love, and happy endings are hard to come by.

Of the hundreds of thousands of Torontonians who live such lives, Junnarkar counts several dozen as her clients, dispersed among some 18 families. That's a typical load for a CAS case worker, with 21 as the maximum. This includes families with children living at home and those with children in foster care. There's a lot of flux between these two situations and Junnarkar, along with her supervisor and team, is key to managing the flow, always adjusting for the safety, protection and welfare of the child. But even with all the checks and balances built into the system and the suffocating avalanche of documentation and paperwork, especially in connection with the courts, it's not hard to

see how some telling detail, some forewarning, something not said, may be overlooked. It's easy to see how cunning people are, how closed, how they seal up the cracks when the social worker comes to call.

"You're always trying to figure out if people are just saying things you want to hear," says Junnarkar. "That's the thing when you first get a case: trying to figure out what the story is. You learn to be patient. "For some people we don't make a difference. And if you always feel you will, you'll end up feeling depressed and burned out." She arrives at a home where a man in a marriage arranged in his South Asian homeland beat the living daylights out of his wife in front of their two young sons until she fled to a shelter even though, says Junnarkar, her own family told her to suck it up. "The kids had seen mom beat up several times. They saw him beat her black and blue." He was taking days off work to follow her, accusing her of having an affair, she

says. The social worker is meeting with the parents and children to find out what it's like now, after his anger management therapy, and whether the family can heal and stay intact. "I'm monitoring to see if everything is peaceful, harmonious," she says before we arrive. Next, there's a shy, sweet-faced woman the same age as Junnarkar, mother of an 18-month-old girl. She's torn between remaining with a man Junnarkar describes as unstable, alcoholic and verbally abusive, or moving into a tiny, stuffy apartment with her weary pensioner parents to whom the CAS has so far entrusted her baby daughter with the cap of black curls. "Mom's family doctor alerted us about her inability to take care of the baby," explains Junnarkar. "She may be developmentally challenged. We've been struggling to get her psychologically assessed. We've been waiting since March."

Later, Junnarkar complains about lack of resources, "You need a Band-aid when the cut is fresh, not when there's a scab that's days old." Meanwhile, the grandmother remarks from across the room, as the baby snuggles on her mother's lap, "There's mothers that just aren't meant to be mothers." Keeping this 18-month-old girl out of a foster home is Junnarkar's goal and today she will try to determine if this is possible.

Finally, she meets a 14-year-old girl whose mother, concerned she was "socializing" too much, sent her to stay with their pastor and then refused to believe her when she complained about sexual assault. The pastor was subsequently charged with eight counts of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation when others disclosed abuse, including the girl's sister. "You went through a pretty bad experience from what I understand," Junnarkar says to the girl, who chose to live in a foster home for six weeks and has just returned to her mother's apartment where she is meeting with Junnarkar for the first time.

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Executive Director Announces Retirement

January 16, 2007

Dear Colleagues,

It is with deep regret that I inform you that our Executive Director, Carolyn Buck, has decided to retire. Carolyn made her decision last fall and we began discussing the timing of her retirement at that time. We have recently agreed that this new chapter in her life will begin on October 1, 2007.

When Bruce Rivers was seconded to the Child Welfare Secretariat, we asked Carolyn to step in on a temporary basis. When we knew situation, we asked Carolyn to tunity to retire was approaching, ditional years to create a smooth

I speak for all of my colleagues grateful for Carolyn's calm hand, men over these past three years. us through many challenges: a completion of 30 Isabella Street, the Auditor General's report, and Her mark on child welfare has that she has served this agency such as the creation of Long and Youth Services) and Foster the groundwork for the contin-Society of Toronto. I will keep you informed about opportunities to say your own words of goodbye and thanks to Carolyn.



Carolyn Buck,
Executive Director

that this was to be a permanent remain. Knowing that her oppor-she agreed to do this for two ad-effective transition for the Society.

on the Board when I say that we are resolve, and child welfare acu-During this time Carolyn has lead three-year collective agreement, the the move of six locations into one, the introduction of Transformation. been made over the last 30 years and its clients. Her advancements, Term Care Services (now Child Care Resource Services, have laid ued evolution of the Children's Aid

In order to effect a seamless transition, the Board has formed a working group to hire the new Executive Director, with the intention that this individual be in place by October 1, 2007. We have just begun this process and I will be giving you more details as we move forward.

The hallmark of CAS of Toronto is its great people doing great work. The Board will ensure that the next leader continues to build on both this hallmark and Carolyn's legacy.

Sincerely,

Stephen M. Lewis
Board President

Saving the children

cont. ... from page 4

She is mostly unresponsive until, with steeliness in her voice, she asks, "Could you just lock him up?" Junnarkar wants to arrange counseling for this girl and to promote a reconciliation with her mother that will keep her at home. The father lives in another country. We're going to make a referral to the Toronto Abuse Centre," she says. "You guys are going to have someone to talk to." But she also warns, "Your mom is concerned that you're spending too much time socializing and not doing homework. So I might say things you don't like to hear, like getting your homework done and not socializing too much." She arranges to have lunch with the girl and her sister, maybe at McDonald's. "I can help you as long as I know what's going on but I can't read your mind," she tells the girl. "What are you hoping for?" If he says the truth, then it will be okay. If he says, at least, 'I'm sorry, I will not do it again.' He has to say it." Before

Junnarkar leaves, she says, "I think it's really brave of you that you came out and talked about this. For some people, it can fester for years." The girl doesn't respond. Junnarkar continues, "I'm asking, 'What do you think? If it took a lot of courage for you?'" "Yeah."

Junnarkar's biggest reward this day is the relative calm at the home of the wife abuser. The husband says he goes for a walk now when he gets angry and, best of all, the oldest son is doing very well at school again. Junnarkar's challenge now is to help the wife cope with her resentment, now that she is out of danger. "She's having a hard time forgiving him," explains Junnarkar. "This has just come up in the last weeks and saying it to me, that's a huge step for her." The woman and the children will attend a program, Here to Help, for mothers and kids who have experienced domestic violence. Junnarkar is pleased that the husband not only agrees with this but offers to drive them. Nevertheless, the boy confides that sometimes his father still "uses

his big voice."

Less promising is the family where the grandparents are caring for the 18-month-old child. There's tension between the baby's mother, who says very little and her own mother, who says a lot. And there's confusion about who has and should have responsibility for the baby and for chores. It's not entirely clear, either, whether the mother will come and live there. "I'm packing up my stuff," she says, unconvincingly.

"I tell her every day she has to make a choice for her baby," says the grandmother.

Junnarkar tells the young mother she needs to pitch in more. "I'm not trying to be mean to you, but it's hard for your mom, it's too much. And it would be very hard for the baby to be placed anywhere else." The baby, in her pink slippers, is obliviously happy where she is, on her mother's lap. Struggling against sleep, she looks around and sees people who love her, sees toys and pictures, family pictures and one of Elvis, too, and holiday decorations. Over the window a wan banner spells out Merry Christmas.

At the end of her work day, Junnarkar considers the famous saying about families, about how all happy families are alike but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

Yes, yes, it's true, she agrees. There are patterns but each unhappy family is different.

They are all different from each other, she says, except in one way.

"They all want to be happy."

Communicate

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Come Play with Us!

By Chrissy Arhitektonidis, Family Service Worker and Pamela Van, Case Aide

Towards the end of 2005, the East team decided to show their team spirit by taking a section of the reception area at the Scarborough Branch and turning into a “child-friendly” and “child-safe” zone. We received lots of positive feedback about our idea from staff, clients and community members and were quite eager to get started. We spent almost a full year meeting, planning, talking and coordinating our schedules until finally, one magical day, the stars aligned and we were ready to pull our KidZone together. It’s the East Team’s first step towards our vision of a child-focused, family-friendly work place that feels less like an office and more like a pleasant place to visit.

The unveiling of the KidZone was held this past fall. The East team spent the evening before putting together the area in anticipation of the grand opening. We were pleased to see such a great turnout of staff, families and community friends. We loved the fact that everyone was just hanging out informally, enjoying themselves.

We are all very much aware that this project could not have been completed without the help of several people. We would like to thank the Children’s Aid Foundation for their generous monetary donation which was used towards the purchase of the playhouse, picnic table, DVD player, paint and other key items. The beautiful mural was painted by local artists, Olga Urbansky and Darren Villeneuve, who generously donated their time and talent to make the KidZone colourful and welcoming. We would also like to thank the wonderful Property Department, namely, Harry Thomas, Leonard Hogan and Steve Burnet, who built and installed such lovely cabinets and cubbies for the toys and books. Finally, we would like to thank our own volunteer department, headed by Fiona Koo, who supplied us with many of the toys and books that bring such joy to the children.

We have received numerous compliments from parents, visitors and the children who all love the new space. To everyone who was involved in the process and to everyone who just gave us the encouragement we needed, thank you!

Since it was opened, the KidZone has provided many children with hours of safe, comfortable play with their peers. We invite everyone to come to Scarborough Branch to experience the KidZone firsthand. We look forward to seeing you there.

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Back row (left to right): Karen Townend, Tim Phan, Lesley DeFreitas-Kelly, Chrissy Arhitektonidis, Angie Corrado, Faudia Azeez, Pamela Van, Sarvenaz Riahi
Middle row: Susan Gaynes
Front row (left to right): Taia Giecko, Annette Ballentine, Dan Cadman

CHILD’S PLAY

A part of human development and relationships

Peeek-a-boo, hide-go-seek and tag; games that evoke memories of a leisurely childhood filled with amusement. Although images of children at play often seem simple and fun, on closer inspection, the imaginative activities that fill up childhood days, teach children skills that serve them well into adulthood.

Interacting with children during play is an important component of establishing love and trust, effects that can last a lifetime. Babies develop from head to feet. Parents should stimulate babies with colourful toys so they can follow along with their eyes. At six weeks, parents should respond to babies vocal sounds, by making sounds themselves.

It doesn’t take a lot of money or fancy gadgets to entertain children. A little imagination and love will do the trick. Play develops children’s imaginations and creativity. For a four-year-old, meat and potatoes are boring but imagination turns dinner forks and spoons into wands, swords and canes, making for an eventful mealtime.

Four factors that make playing important:

- Children learn how to learn through the games they play. Toddlers make most of their discoveries through trial and error and by copying others,
- Play expands on children’s imaginations and creativity. A box becomes a portal to another dimension, and finger paints turn a two-year-old into Picasso.
- Play helps children work through stressful situations. Children play out the scenarios in their everyday lives, using their toys and some imagination. This helps sort out their feelings, and helps them cope better.
- Children learn social skills through play. Fair play and being compassionate to others is taught through different games. Nobody likes a cheater, and this helps children learn that playing fair is more important than winning.

The Pregnancy and After Care (PAC) Program aims to support and educate young mothers, helping them plan their pregnancies and parent safely and effectively. There are certain questions workers ask, can this person parent? Is the child safe? Will the infant thrive and develop at the right pace? Infants thrive when they have physical contact and affection from their parents. Holding, caressing and talking, is a key ingredient for healthy babies.

cont. ... page 9

The Pregnancy and After-Care Program (PAC)

Hallmarks of PAC Service: Prevention, Advocacy, Caring & Protection

By Kathy Taunton, Supervisor; Jacqueline Pullan, Family Service Worker; Corina Clippingdale-Marshall, P.A.C. Worker; Sharon Summers, Supervisor; and Dr. Deborah Goodman, Supervisor

CAS of Toronto's Pregnancy and After Care (PAC) Program is an important example of a key Transformation Agenda strategy: early engagement with flexible, differential service that links prevention, advocacy and support to protection, when required. Our PAC service is somewhat unique to the child welfare field, as many CASs don't offer this type of program. The PAC program has undergone a number of changes over the last few years. Here is a refresher:

Whom does PAC serve?

The PAC program primarily provides services to pregnant women and their partners, whom have been identified in some way as "high-risk" for parenting (e.g. mental health, substance abuse or transient issues). PAC aims and succeeds at engagement of these women early in their pregnancy. Preliminary analysis of PAC worker surveys found that 73% of the PAC mothers were in their first or second trimester when engaged by PAC. Other PAC services include services to women (and their partners) who wish to voluntarily relinquish their children for adoption. As well, PAC workers consult with many agency staff and community resources about PAC services (the majority of PAC referrals come from medical/PHN professionals).

What is PAC's mandate?

One is early engagement of the high-risk pregnant woman (and if appropriate, her partner), by taking a harm-reduction approach with a strengths and empowerment perspective throughout the pregnancy to develop the best care and permanency plan for the newborn. PAC workers are very skilled in working with these often marginalized, frequently difficult-to-engage, pregnant women. For example, examination of 13 PAC cases found nearly one-third (31%) of the women were rated "very high risk" and 61% were viewed as "high risk". PAC is also intended to help actualize parents' plan for the adoption of their baby when appropriate.

What is PAC's objective?

PAC's premise is that by engaging the mother (and her partner where applicable) during pregnancy, decisions about the child's care can be well thought-out prior to the child's birth, facilitating more timely planning for children's immediate and long-term needs.



What is PAC service?

By engaging these high-risk pregnant woman so they understand our support role during the pregnancy (and if necessary, our protection role after), PAC workers conduct thorough prenatal assessments to identify risk and develop plans to mitigate it. PAC ensures appropriate services are in place to promote the delivery of healthy newborns (e.g. good prenatal care, plan for safe delivery, ensure sound plans are in place at the time of the birth). When necessary, PAC assessments focus on the most suitable and timely permanency plan for those children believed to be in need of protection. Emphasis is on early links with Adoption and Kinship Care, so to formalize long-term placement ASAP, and where possible, avoid placement in foster care. Finally, PAC helps parents' actualize their plan for adoption of their newborn.

How is PAC implemented?

PAC currently functions within a decentralized, community-based branch model.

The PAC staff by branch:

Toronto Branch

Worker - Michelle Gahwiler, Supervisor - Chantal Lee

North Branch

Worker - Jacqueline Pullan, Supervisor - Sharon Summers

Scarborough Branch

Worker - Corina Clippingdale-Marshall, Supervisor - Kathy Taunton

Etobicoke Branch

Worker - Michelle Winterburn, Supervisor - Valerie Enright



Jennifer Bouskill, Domestic Violence Intake Worker, facilitating a session on domestic violence and its impact on families at a recent conference for early years professionals. Several of our staff presented at this conference and Cindy Himelstein, Community Development and Prevention Worker, played a critical role in planning this event. The conference focused on family support programs where parents, caregivers and their children can participate in early learning activities. These programs are run by community-based organizations, voluntary and reflect the local needs of the families and communities they serve. Often the first point of access, these programs provide much needed parenting supports thereby eliminating the need for child welfare intervention.

Lessons in Determination and Hope: Ann Fitzpatrick's Experience in Tanzania

By Sherry McGratten, Communications Summer Intern

When Community Development worker Ann Fitzpatrick visited Tanzania last spring she was deeply inspired by this once-in-a-lifetime learning experience. Visiting a continent ravaged by deep poverty and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, Fitzpatrick was hosted by two housing organizations to share their skills, challenges and accomplishments in advancing the housing rights and conditions of women, children and families.

The purpose of the 10-day exchange was to share knowledge, experiences and tools that have been used successfully in the area of housing advocacy, lobbying and community coalition-building among workers from Tanzania and Canada. In addition, the participants had an orientation on some of the housing development issues in their respective nations.

The international exchange was sponsored by Rooftops Canada with funding from CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). The host organization was Human Settlement Trust (WAT-HST) based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. WAT-HST is an organization dedicated to improving housing rights, increasing opportunities to increase access to affordable housing, upgrading housing conditions and promoting healthy human settlements.

"It was an amazing learning experience. We recognized common challenges we all face in our work, despite the different international contexts and we were able to share strategies that we could try to adapt at home," according to Fitzpatrick. The parallels for Fitzpatrick between the north and south hemispheres included the following example: Tanzania passed a national Land Law in 1999 giving women the right to own land, but local and national enforcement has been weak so women are far from realizing their rights. WAT-HST has been trying to educate local leaders about these rights and also has trained some "paralegals" to provide support in the country.

Similarly, Canada has made international commitments to the right to housing, and has made a patchwork of national commitments towards housing and homelessness support, however, there are log-jams in implementing the programs and not enough new housing units are being created to meet community needs.

"My African hosts were shocked about rates of homelessness and poverty in a rich nation like

Canada, and they were surprised that Canada invests such a small percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – about 1% - into housing initiatives." Fitzpatrick shared information about the national campaign to have Canada, the provinces and municipalities spend 1% more on housing – the "1% Solution."

"We learned that in all our countries, achieving policy reform takes years of work and dedication among organizations, coalitions and community members. We talked about the importance of building strong, diverse networks and alliances to build support for policy and program reforms. However, there was a common recognition that one of the biggest challenges in housing reform is to ensure that promises are translated into action," Fitzpatrick recounted. The participants agreed that organizations have to monitor the implementation of laws at a community level and continue to mobilize community groups and members to push for improvements to policies and programs.

During her exchange, Fitzpatrick took the opportunity to describe the role that the Children's Aid Society of Toronto, along with our networks, has played in promoting poverty reduction and housing rights of children, youth and families. There was a discussion of coalitions that are making the links between housing and poverty issues and showing the impact of housing and poverty policies on children's welfare. Similarly, WAT-HST and HPZ talked about the importance of strong and diverse coalitions to build support for social reform and gain political and government support. WAT-HST views housing solutions and poverty issues as closely linked; in fact they ensured that housing was included in Tanzania's national plan to eradicate poverty.

Compounding the housing shortage is the effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic that is ravaging communities and destroying families across the African continent, leaving poverty-stricken orphans struggling to survive and all too often resulting in grandparents or children as young as 8 or 10 parenting younger siblings. When a family falls victim to HIV/AIDS, maintaining their housing and maintaining any income is compromised.

In Tanzania about 8 per cent of the population has HIV/AIDS. Since 2001, 810,000 children have become orphans due to the AIDS epidemic, with the burden of their care falling to grandparents or neighbours who are also mired in poverty.

Fitzpatrick says she was "deeply moved" when she visited the New Life Orphans Home, where more than 70 children between the ages of 4 and 17 were living in a space with about four small rooms, about 1,000 square feet in size. The Home was organized and run by a small group of dedicated volunteers doing the best they could to feed and clothe them, entirely on private donations. "The children were eating lunch when Mercy from WAT-HST and I arrived. A meal was being served with meat, vegetable, and a traditional dish called ugali, prepared from corn maize. The children had their heads shaved to prevent the spread of lice. Several children had bad coughs and preventing the spread of germs would be challenging in these very overcrowded conditions. It was a profoundly sad moment because these children in the orphanage were the 'lucky' children who had adults taking care of them, while they continued to go to school. There were so many more children in Africa who had lost parents to HIV/AIDS and who had no one to care for them." Fitzpatrick learned that there are no governmental child welfare laws or mandatory care provided for children who have lost their parents.

Fitzpatrick concludes, "For me it was valuable to connect our common international struggles and to learn from and support one another. It made me realize that we have to do more in Canada to connect our local work with the work in other countries in promoting global standards to reduce poverty, improve human rights and ensure housing rights."

TAKE ACTION TO IMPROVE HOUSING IN AFRICA

Make a donation to Rooftops Canada (www.rooftops.ca) to support groups like WAT-Human Settlement Trust in Tanzania. Small donations can go very far with the revolving housing fund. Your gift is tax creditable within Canada.



Ann Fitzpatrick, Community Development Worker, at the New Life Orphans Home in Tanzania

Celebrating Darlene Lopes - A True Team Player

By Sherry McGratten, Communications Summer Intern



Darlene Lopes, Administrative Assistant, Health Services and Tom Rousseau Celebrate Success!

Coaching Special Olympics is a “privilege” for Health Services, Administrative Assistant, Darlene Lopes, whose athlete recently qualified to represent Canada in the World Games of 2007 in Shanghai, China.

The veteran employee of the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto is one of the many proud coaches of swimmer Tom Rousseau, who won a medal for each sport that he undertook during the Summer Games in Brandon, Manitoba. Rousseau won gold for his “signature stroke”, the 25- metre Butterfly, a gold for the 25- metre Backstroke, a gold for the 25-metre Breaststroke, another gold medal with his relay team and a bronze for the 25-metre Freestyle.

Lopes initially developed an interest in coaching Special Olympics athletes when she accepted the invitation of a friend, who has a developmentally challenged son, to watch his son swim. She was captivated and made inquiries on the spot on how to get involved. She’s been coaching for five years and is now the Regional Co-ordinator for the 75 clubs that stretch between Kingston and Durham West, which she says “keeps me busy.”

In addition to coaching, Lopes volunteers as a medical staff member, which she was doing while in Brandon. When she travels to Shanghai for the World Games, she will be there as Rousseau’s national training coach.

Lopes says one thing she appreciates about the Special Olympics is “It’s not about competing against each other, it’s about going out there and doing the best you can. There’s a lot of camaraderie between the athletes and a lot of really good friendships are the result of the Special Olympics.”

As for coaching, she says it’s always a team ef-

fort. Each coach offers his or her strengths and the result is a combined effort that provides a well-rounded experience for each athlete. Lopes has a unique coaching style, as she gets right in the water with her athletes and swims along beside them. She says that when she races Rousseau, “He always leaves me in his wake,” and that the only time she even has a chance of winning is “when he waits outside the pool until I reach the half way mark!”

Describing Rousseau’s big win, Lopes emphatically states, “You can’t be prouder of a person. He has worked so hard, he’s so dedicated. He deserves his success and to be part of Team Canada. I’m so privileged to be a part of this.”

When asked what she would say to anyone considering volunteering with Special Olympics athletes, Lopes enthuses, “You get more out of it than you could ever give. When you leave the bowling alley, the pool or whatever it is that you’re coaching, you’re so fulfilled. It’s so rewarding.”

CHILD’S PLAY

cont. ... from page 6

Early relationships affect how babies develop. Many parents play with children naturally and are not conscious of how important it is. Regular play, interaction and stimulation, helps children develop fully. When babies and parents interact with each other in a pleasant way, babies develop emotional awareness and communication skills. They learn to think and relate to others. Some parents don’t know how to play with their babies. Many parents need to learn how to hold their babies, and they need to talk to their babies. It’s important for a baby to hear its parents’ voices at play so that it connects feelings of safety, security and comfort to its parents.

Trained experts know the stages of child development, and can pinpoint when infants are lagging behind. If we visit a newborn, we look to see if they’re making eye contact. We show mothers how to reposition babies during feedings, so that they are looking at their babies. This is imperative for bonding and development.

High Risk Infant Nurses visit homes; they get down on their knees and play with babies, to show mothers the simple task of interacting with their children. All parents can consult their doctors or a public health nurse for help with baby care and understanding healthy development.

Babies begin to memorize the faces of the people closest to them between ages 0 and 2 months. They also like to watch colourful objects and shapes, and are comforted by massage. You cannot spoil an infant by holding or playing with them. Some parents think that by holding their babies too much, they’re spoiling them. It’s not true. Actually it’s important to hold infants and change their

position throughout the day, so that they experience change and variation.

Pregnancy and Aftercare workers and High Risk Infant Nurses at the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto assess family situations and if parents need more help, workers provide support or refer them to community programs, which are available at no cost to any parent who wants to participate. Programs like Mother Goose, available through LAMP, teach parents about developmental play and interaction.

Never underestimate the importance of playing with your children. It’s important to incorporate play and interaction from the moment your baby comes home. A hands on approach to parenting encourages positive child-adult interactions, and sets into motion strong social skills when children are older. A positive early experience with between babies and their parents will influence children’s own parenting when they are adults. This creates a healthy cycle, which is good for everyone.

Learning Through Play

0-4 months:

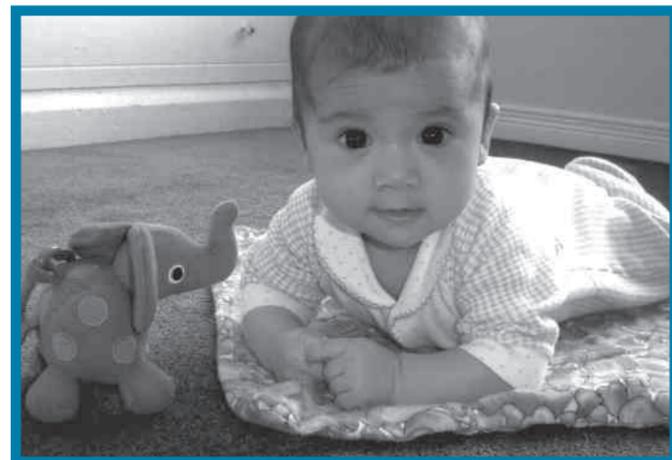
- Hang mobiles, or a bull’s-eye of contrasting colours within baby’s sight.
- Lay your baby tummy-up. Hold legs by the calves and gently move them as if riding a bicycle.
- Shake a rattle above baby’s head.
- Let your babies look at interesting things: a mirror or colourful stuffed animal.

5-8 months:

- Cut up fabrics into different-sized shapes. Let baby explore the details and textures.
- Blow soap bubbles.
- Shine a flashlight on the ceiling and make circles.
- Sing favourite nursery rhymes using high, low, soft and loud voices.

9-12 months:

- Show babies how to draw shapes with crayons.
- Encourage babies to explore and play with different objects at bath time to arouse excitement and laughter.
- Expose babies to various noises inside and outside. Show who or what is making the noise, and encourage baby to repeat the word and sound after you.



The Children's Aid Foundation Corner

The Teddy Bear Affair Celebrates 20 Years in Style

The 20th annual *Teddy Bear Affair*, presented by CIBC World Markets Children's Foundation and CGI, reached new heights this year with a soaring, exhilarating and colourful celebration that combined world-class skating and aerial acrobatics to tell the *Teddy Bear Story*.

The Metro Toronto Convention Centre was a bustling celebration of Teddy Bear history on November 11, 2006. The event was a phenomenal success and by the end of the evening, a record-breaking **\$1.6 million** was raised in support of Canada's abused and neglected children.



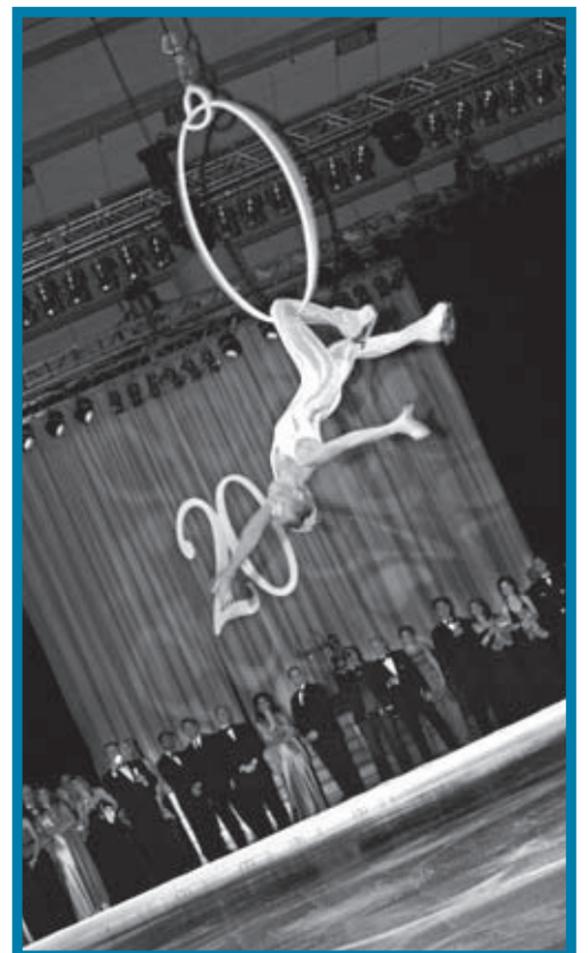
Michael Roach, TBA Honourary Chair, and his wife Deborah, pose with Kurt Browning.

Celebrating our 20th anniversary, guests were left in awe of the very special performances by world-class figure skater Kurt Browning, award-winning performer Michael Burgess, and the phenomenal voices of Sharon Riley and the Faith Chorale. This star-studded cast, supported by ice-dancers and aerialists from the Montreal Ice Ballet provided a once-in-a-lifetime experience worthy of our platinum anniversary!

Our guests began their *Teddy Bear Story* in an upscale lounge atmosphere where they enjoyed a cocktail reception, had their fortunes read and received the opportunity to bid on some unbelievable auction items. We turned the page with a spectacular reveal that saw guests enter beneath a suspended ice surface. On the other side, trapeze artists greeted them and a five-course dinner followed, created by Executive Chef Angelo Fernandez and Chatelaine Food Editor Monda Rosenberg.

andez and Chatelaine Food Editor Monda Rosenberg.

The highlight of the live auction this year was a one-bedroom condominium donated by Cresford Developments. This downtown property is located, appropriately, at the old Children's Aid Society address and is called CASA. Also included in the auction were once-in-a-lifetime retreats and amazing products. The live auction, hosted by auctioneer Hal Hannaford, brought in over \$460,000.



The evening would not have been possible without the dedication and support of our amazing steering committee and volunteers. This group of talented and resourceful women, led by committee chair Donna Evans, work tirelessly all year bringing in donations and assisting the Foundation's team to ensure the event is a huge success! An extraordinary 200 volunteers gave their time so generously doing everything from technical support, to décor, to greeting guests, to monitoring auctions. The Children's Aid Foundation depends heavily on volunteers to help us deliver a first-rate experience to our guests. We could not continue to achieve our goals without this wonderful team behind us.

An annual and award-winning event, the Teddy Bear Affair has raised \$14 million to date for some of the most disadvantaged children in our community.

One hundred percent of the proceeds go to education programs, enrichment opportunities and the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

The 2007 Teddy Bear Affair will be held on Saturday November 17, 2007.

**For more information please contact:
Ann Barnard Ball at 416-923-0924 ext. 271 or by e-mail aball@cafdn.org.**



In Memorium

Tom Gregory

By Carol Bent, Supervisor, Toronto Regent Park Team



On October 21, 2006, friends and family gathered to celebrate the life of Tom Gregory. Among these friends were members past and present of the Toronto Branch Regent Park team. Tom was a much-loved member of the team for the past seven years.

In February of last year, Tom suffered a stroke. He was recuperating nicely and was hoping to return to work sometime in October. During his

recuperation, Tom kept in regular touch with the team, attending several special occasions. He made a few visits to the office, keeping tabs on the move and scouting out the new territory at Isabella. In fact, he visited us on September 25th full of anticipation of his return. Sadly Tom passed away peacefully on September 30.

A native of Michigan, Tom moved to Windsor in the late sixties. Tom had a long career working with children and youth. In Windsor he worked at Browndale and Maryvale residences. In the early seventies he moved to Toronto and worked at length for Kennedy house and then Covenant House. He joined the CAS team in 1999 as a Children's Service Worker. Tom developed special relationships with the children he served. Several have expressed deep appreciation for the positive difference he made for them.

The team misses a good friend who was kind, burly, blustery, sharp, generous, compassionate, witty, and an excellent story teller. Tom is survived by Ann, his wife of 34 years.

Marilyn Johnston

By her friends and colleagues in Children and Youth Services



On September 4, 2006, Marilyn Johnston, a dedicated and much respected employee of over 35 years, died of cancer.

Marilyn trained as a nurse and taught at the Hospital for Sick Children prior to joining the North Branch Infant Care Department. She worked with children and youth throughout her career with CAS of Toronto.

Her young people knew she cared deeply for them and several maintained contact with her into their thirties. At the same time, Marilyn maintained a strong commitment to her foster parents, birth parents and colleagues. Ever eager for a challenge, Marilyn collaborated with Dr. Paul Steinhauer in 1979 in a research project using a group model of service to foster parents and their children.

Marilyn left us too soon. Her love of life, her devilish sense of humour, her love of family and friends, her ability to reach out and help others in their struggles, and her sheer joy in the moment- that's how her colleagues will remember her. She is an inspiration to us all.

Nurturing Mohammed

cont. ... from page 3

"But because of the shortage of Muslim families, we are training people to learn to accommodate their religious and cultural needs." The CAS launched the kinship program in 2003. It places foster children with a relative or friend who share the child's ethnic background but who may not have the language ability or space requirements to qualify as a foster parent. The program has been very successful, particularly in the Somali community, and this year will expand to other parts of Ontario, Ms. Schnurr-Cabrera says. As well, child-welfare agencies are busy placing ads for foster parents in ethnic newspapers and on Somali radio, hanging posters in mosques and speaking to community groups. But the best way to find Muslim foster families, they say, is through word of mouth.

That is how Khalid Zahar and his wife, Rubina, were recruited. The couple immigrated here from Pakistan with their teenage daughter in 2001. While Mr. Zahar was forced to retrain as an engineer, his wife immersed herself in English classes and thought about doing some babysitting. When a classmate told her about foster care, it seemed like the perfect fit. The couple took a seven-week CAS training course, bought a crib and waited for their first charge. "We don't understand fostering in Pakistan," Mr. Zahar, 54, says from his well-appointed Toronto living room. "But here people are more individualistic and independent and family structures not as strong. The society depends on volunteers. And the best way we thought we could contribute was to foster."

In the three years since they signed up for fostering, the Zahars have taken in a total of 11 babies -- including one Muslim child whose biological parents requested a family of the same faith. And there are two babies in their care now: a seven-month-old whose mother was a drug addict and a three-month-old girl whose mother couldn't care for her.

Mr. Zahar cradles the seven-month-old with wispy tufts of blond hair in the crook of his arm, and begins to feed her a mid-morning bottle, while his wife calls out, "Ammi, Ammi" (mother in Urdu), to the other baby, who lies back in a baby chair. The Zahars have advised other foster parents about raising older children in the faith as well. "We have been bombarded with questions," says Mr. Zahar, who has offered to help find Muslim tutors for foster children so they can start studying the Koran. Following in their footsteps is Reshma Niaz, another pioneer. The 36-year-old information-technology specialist signed up after coming across an ad from an ethnic newspaper about the dearth of Muslim foster parents. "It was like a little light went off," she says. "I realized this is what I want to do."

Mrs. Niazi and her husband, Kamrand, who emigrated from Britain four years ago, already have a three-year-old son of their own. But they decided that becoming foster parents was the right path for them. "For many people from Pakistan and India, even if they have been in Canada a long time, the thought of fostering or adopting a child doesn't cross their mind, unless they cannot have children of their own. But Mohammed himself was an orphan. So that is a great example." As for the child she will care for? Mrs. Niazi is happy to foster a Muslim child, but equally receptive to a child of another faith. "If there are children out there needing care, then Muslims should open up their homes," she says.

The Zahars agree. The most important language for babies, Mr. Zahar says, is love. Once they buy a house, the Zahars plan to become adoptive parents to as many children as there are bedrooms. "Two, at least," Mrs. Zahar says. Not that there is much time to dream of the future. As the seven-month-old starts to fuss, Mrs. Zahar fetches the teething gel and rubs it on her gums. "All my babies are beautiful," she sighs, rubbing the baby's back. "This is the best job in the world."



Request a Speaker

Confused about the role of the CAS of Toronto in our community? Not sure when to call the CAS of Toronto? Need some help learning positive ways to discipline children?

Get the answers to these and many more questions by booking someone from our Speakers Bureau to visit your organization. The CAS of Toronto Speakers Bureau is a group of 100 people, made up of our staff. We routinely visit organizations to explain our role within the community and your responsibility in helping us protect kids from abuse and neglect.

We talk about:

- Everyone's duty to report their suspicions about a child who is or may be in need of protection, to a children's aid society
- Physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect
- Positive discipline
- Our services
- Child protection investigations
- Kids in care
- Rights of kids and parents

We make hour-long presentations to:

- Teachers
- Students
- Daycare workers
- Police
- Camp counsellors
- Community centres
- Hospitals and many others!

We are happy to tailor our presentation to your group's specific request.

Call 416-924-4640 ext. 1-2103 to book your presentation today.

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phone 416-924-4646; fax 416-324-2485; email: inquiries@TorontoCAS.ca

Communicate

Helping Kids Feel Safe

The only way to stop child abuse is to talk about it

The only way to stop child abuse is to talk about it, a new public service announcement created by Nancy Marshall, volunteer, teaches children to tell a trusted adult if they are being hurt. The PSA conceived by Nancy and five other group members was a Centennial College school assignment for the Toronto Child Abuse Centre's Go Purple campaign.

"I'm really happy that it turned out so well. If we are able to send a message to children to tell someone if they are being hurt that will

be amazing," Nancy Marshall said. This opportunity should happen as the PSA will likely appear on Canadian television stations later this year.

Nancy and her other group members worked together to create something that would let children know what to do if they are experiencing abuse. A group of children at Simpson House, our day treatment program, were responsible for creating drawings to encourage children to talk about their abuse. The lively, empathetic drawings were animated and put to music by the generous support of Crush Media.

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