



Waterloo Region Child &
Youth Advocacy Centre
Community Campaign

Dear Friend,

Imagine hearing from a child that he or she has been abused – likely by a trusted adult. It's a heartbreaking reality in our community and we should all be deeply concerned that on average there is a report of child sexual or physical abuse *every day*. These children and youth face a painful process that is the reality of being a child victim – a process that experts say in many cases re-victimizes the child.

The Child Witness Centre – a respected local charity already making a difference for our kids – has set an amazing goal to open a Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) in collaboration with several community partners. The CYAC brings specially trained investigative and support professionals to one child-friendly hub for seamless, wraparound support. This is a best practice model for kids who disclose or are affected by abuse. There are many Child and Youth Advocacy Centres already established across Canada and throughout the world.

Helping these vulnerable kids begin to heal from this trauma is essential. However, ongoing support is difficult to navigate, especially if charges are not laid. Families are on their own to find the help they need. Under this new model, Child and Youth Advocates will fill a critical gap, ensuring these victims and their families have the supports they need to help them heal and make the most of the opportunities in front of them.

The timing is right for Waterloo Region. We know this is needed in our community.

Because of its collaborative approach, the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre is mostly funded with existing resources, however the community's financial support of this important work is essential. I am very proud to be the Honorary Chair of the *Safe Hands, Strong Futures* fundraising campaign. Our goal is to raise a minimum of \$2 Million to establish and sustain the new Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre and support their ongoing work through the Child Witness Program.

This campaign is about delivering the care, hope and opportunity that many safe hands, working together, can bring to these children and youth by hearing, helping and healing. Together, we can lessen the impact of abuse, ensure our kids are getting the very best care and help them move towards strong futures.

Let's join hands to create hope and empower our kids. Your donation is an investment in the future of our children. You can increase the likelihood that children affected by physical or sexual abuse will come forward sooner, get the support they need faster and grow into healthy, productive members of our community. Please give generously.

Heidi Balsillie, Honorary Chair
Safe Hands Strong Futures Community Campaign

Let's join hands together to create hope and empower our kids!

