

Child   
Witness  
Centre

*Fostering Hope and Empowering  
Children and Youth  
Towards Strong Futures*

COMMUNITY REPORT  
2016-2017

# IMAGINE...

- ■ ■ That you were a child or youth who was a victim or witness of abuse or violence.
- ■ ■ That the accused was someone you knew.
- ■ ■ How this can affect you and your family over your lifetime.

Now imagine that someone is there to walk with you through the investigation, help you and your family get the support that you need, and if charges are laid, support you and advocate on your behalf through the court system. That is the work of the Child Witness Centre — we will be there so you and your family are heard, helped and can begin to heal.

We also provide education and awareness to help reduce the risk of young people becoming victims of abuse and crime.

Together with our partners and our community, we are fostering hope and empowering children and youth towards strong futures.

In 2016-17, the Child Witness Centre helped 5,597 people throughout Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County.

**665**

children and youth supported through the court process in our Child Witness Program

**341**

children and youth supported through the investigation and connected to community supports through our Child and Youth Advocate Program

**1,509**

parents and guardians were given tools and supports to help their child

**3,082**

grade 8 students and teachers gained valuable knowledge at our Youth Symposium

**5,597**

people were served by the Child Witness Centre

# EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUTH TOWARDS STRONG FUTURES



Angela Moisse (Board Chair) and Laura Muirhead (Executive Director)

The Child Witness Centre has undergone significant change over the past three years, and this year we have seen the fruits of our efforts culminate into something very exciting!

As the lead agency, with significant collaboration amongst community agencies and strong leadership from our core Partners — Waterloo Regional Police Service and Family & Children’s Services of the Waterloo Region — **together, we have established the first Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC).**

This new Centre creates a child and youth friendly experience for young people who find the courage to come forward and disclose abuse, and where specially trained professionals investigate allegations of abuse. Child and Youth Advocates provided by the Child Witness Centre walk the journey with these children, youth and their families, ensuring that they are heard and connected to resources to help them begin to heal.

In addition, our Child Witness Program, supporting young people and their families involved with the court process as victims or witnesses of crime, experienced a 22% growth in new referrals across Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County.

Together with these programs and our annual Youth Symposium Program involving more than 3,000 Grade 8 students and their teachers, we are helping children and youth have a voice and fostering healing, hope and wellbeing — empowering them towards strong futures.

*Continued on page 4*

## Strong Leadership



Thank you to our Board of Directors — we so appreciate your governance, guidance and support.

Left to right: Laura Park, Dianne Romano, Lisa Allen (Vice Chair), Angela Moisse (Chair), Doug Tyson, Sherry Currie, Jennifer Robinson (Secretary), Lisa McCuaig, Chris Runstedler, Larry Richardson, Absent: Lara Banks, Paul Lobsinger, Kara MacKinnon (Treasurer) and Jean Markovich.

*Growth means change and change involves risks, stepping from the known into the unknown.*

George Shinn



*Continued from page 3*

With the growth in our programs over the past two years, we have doubled our annual operating cost. In addition to ensuring that this growth is funded, there are also opportunities for capacity building within the agency. We are thrilled to have the support of Social Venture Partners Waterloo Region to assist us in further developing our capacity as an organization.

Our new work in the CYAC has been made possible through significant donations from our community and beyond, as well as seed funding from the Department of Justice. This year there has been a specific focus on developing a solid funding base from which to carry out this work. In addition to \$350,000 received between 2015 and 2017 from the Department of Justice, we have initiated a \$2 Million **Safe Hands-Strong Futures** Community Campaign to sustain our oversight role in the CYAC, provide the support for the CYAC Child and Youth Advocate Program and the ongoing work of the Child Witness Program. As of March 31st 2017, donations and pledges have taken us more than 50% towards our goal. In 2017-18, we hope to join hands with many more in the community and through a combination of events, gifts, pledges and a public call to action, we anticipate we will reach our goal.

We are incredibly appreciative of the support and encouragement we have received thus far, and of the volunteers who are working tirelessly on our behalf. We look forward to more collaboration with our community as we work together to ensure that children and youth who are or may become victims or witnesses of abuse or crime have the support they need to move forward in their lives.

We live in an amazing, innovative, collaborative and generous community and it is with tremendous gratitude that we share this community report with you.

**Angela Moisse & Laura Muirhead**

# OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE FOR ALL YOU DO...

“One of the deepest secrets of life is that all that is really worth doing is what we do for others.”  
Lewis Carroll

266

donors and funders ensured our program services were accessible and available to all

72

volunteers provided over 1,900+ hours of time and expertise to help support the work we do

20+

justice partners and community agencies helped us deliver our services

30+

professionals across multiple agencies collaborated for the Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

500+

people helped raise more than \$24,000 at our annual Pancake Lunch

8

third party events were held on our behalf to raise funds

70

pledges and gifts were made to the *Safe Hands-Strong Futures* Community Campaign, moving us well on our way to reaching the \$2 Million target to support our work. This campaign is about capturing the hope and opportunity that many safe hands, working together, can bring to these children and youth by hearing, helping and healing.



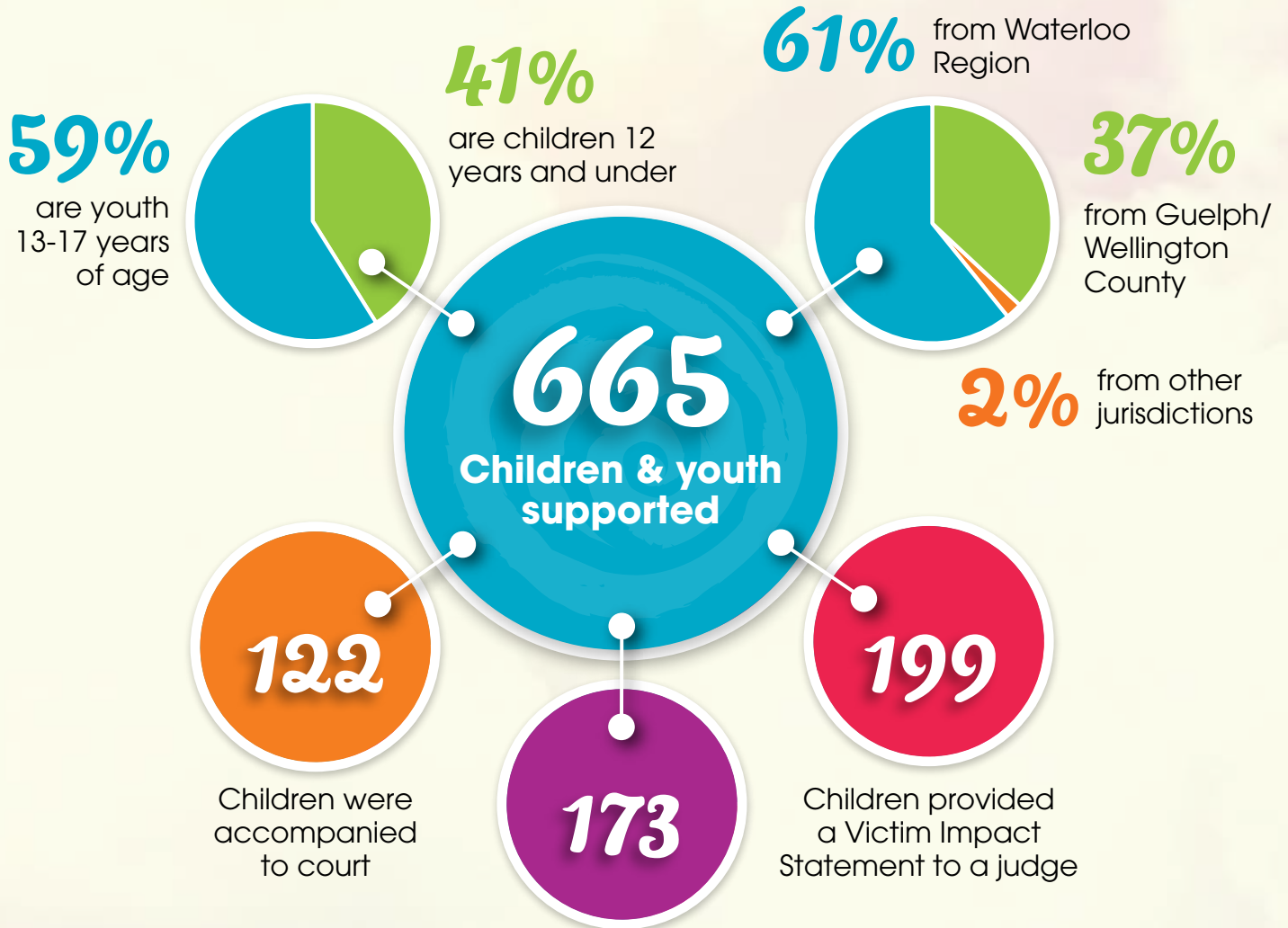
## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FOUR FOUNDING SUPPORTERS IN THIS PAST FISCAL YEAR

- Bob & Judy Astley • Astley Family Foundation
- The Fairmount Foundation • Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc.

# THE CHILD WITNESS PROGRAM

Providing advocacy and support for children and youth who are victims or witnesses of crime and their families in Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County.

## Impacting our community



Children and their families were provided with post court debriefs

“... I feel court really helped my way of thinking and feeling about the whole thing. I actually barely ever think about it now like I did before. I think all I needed was for court to happen, to face him, and to be able to express the truth in front of him and all those people. Since that day I’ve felt so much happier and better about that situation.”

*A former client*

## A story of hope

"The Child Witness Centre helped put my mind at ease. When I had questions, I always got an honest answer. When I wanted to know things that I did not want to ask the police, or share with others, I felt okay asking my caseworker. It was my safe place in a shattered world.

For years, I tried to repress the traumatic experience I went through. Court processes are lengthy, and scary, especially for a child like I was. As I got older, I started understanding what happened during this experience of my life, and how it has impacted me. Doing so, I realized I needed to give back.

So, I reached out to the Child Witness Centre. I wanted to volunteer at the organization that helped me so much in the darkest days of my life. This organization gave me hope in the midst of despair. They helped turn my shame and sadness into an opportunity."

*A former client*



# THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE PROGRAM

A collaborative, best practice model for investigating reports of child abuse and providing wraparound support to these young victims, witnesses and their families.

## *Impacting the community...*

More than once every single day, a child or youth in Waterloo Region reports physical or sexual assault. **Child abuse is often a hidden act in our society.**



Waterloo Region Child & Youth Advocacy Centre

As the lead agency in the implementation of the Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC), we have been working collaboratively with our partners since 2014 to develop our local solution to transform the way we investigate child abuse, support these victims and witnesses and their families, and work to change the trajectory of their young lives.

The core CYAC team includes dedicated and specialized professionals from both Police and Family & Children's Services as well as a new role to the Child Witness Centre — the Child and Youth Advocate, filling a critical gap in our community. The Advocate works as part of the multidisciplinary team within the CYAC supporting the child or youth and family from the point of disclosure until they no longer need our help.

We started a 'soft launch' of the CYAC in May 2016, and the early experience was valuable in fine-tuning processes and gathering early learnings. The CYAC is now anchored in its permanent location at 400 Queen Street South (Carizon Family and Community Services) in Kitchener. This space creates a confidential, comforting, child and youth friendly, trauma-informed experience for these young victims and witnesses, supporting the multidisciplinary team and the unique service delivery aspects.





# Advocate program stats

In the first 11 months, professionals from the Police and Family & Children's Services were involved in more than **475** investigations involving more than **660** children and youth who disclosed abuse or were witnesses to domestic violence.

**341** of those young people were supported by the Child and Youth Advocates and over 90% received direct support during the initial investigation with many also receiving referral support, to help them begin to deal with the trauma they experienced and begin to heal.

## CYAC community collaborators

Child Witness Centre

Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS)

Family & Children's Services of the Waterloo Region (FACS)

Office of the Crown Attorney for Waterloo Region

Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence  
Treatment Centre through St. Mary's  
General Hospital

Lutherwood

Carizon Family and Community Services



Celebrating the CYAC: Laura Muirhead, Child Witness Centre; Chief Bryan Larkin, Waterloo Regional Police Service; Alison Scott, Family & Children's Services of the Waterloo Region.





## *Extending a guiding hand*

"I feel like what I do impacts the families on many levels. I've seen the look of relief on parents' faces when they learn there is someone else there to help them support their children when they may be emotionally struggling. When they need to leave their children alone to speak with WRPS and FACS, they are relieved someone is there to assist with their children.

One of the biggest impacts I have experienced within the role is the support we can offer to youth who are feeling alone and struggling with what happened to them. A lot of the time they don't need anything concrete from us, they just like that someone is checking in on them — someone who knows what they have experienced and isn't going to judge them in any way."

Rebecca Heibein-Kursikowski  
*Child and Youth Advocate*



## A story of hope

### HELPING TO BREAK THE CYCLE

*Dianne, a survivor of childhood abuse recently shared...*

"If I had been heard, 6-8 sessions of counselling would have probably been good enough. However, I wasn't heard, and the abuse continued. In my teens I dropped out of school, used drugs, participated in self harm, was in an abusive relationship, had a baby when I was 18, lived on housing assistance and had years of counselling.

Think about the unnecessary costs, the impact on my life and the ripple effect my life had on others in our community. Had I been heard and helped as a child, my path would have been significantly different.

Now I'm in my 40s, have a family, and am finally starting to seize the opportunities ahead of me as I am halfway through a two-year program at Conestoga College."

With the support of the CYAC, we can ensure that when young people like Dianne come forward, they are heard and get the help that they need to begin to heal... potentially changing the trajectory of their lives and fostering hope for their strong futures.



# YOUTH SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

Empowering strong futures through education, inspiration and conversation.

## *Changing lives - Inspiring hope!*

We have reached more than 30,000 youth since 2004! Each year, more than 3,000 Grade 8 students, teachers and parent volunteers participate in our annual Youth Symposium. It is a full day program run on consecutive days in Guelph and Kitchener. Inspirational, well-informed speakers engage the students, challenge them, and provide them — and their teachers — with ideas and experiences to spark ongoing learning on issues relevant at this pivotal time in the lives of these young people.

"I enjoyed the (theme of) enduring hope no matter the challenges that we all face. Helps young people realize the positive outcomes they can achieve."

"If these powerful and positive messages even reach only one student it is valuable."

"It helps teenagers to recognize that their peers and adults are experiencing the same issues they deal with, and that they needn't be self-conscious about them."

"It inspired me to act, to change how people act in the world, to make a difference."

"Very empowering and worthwhile — touched on very real issues happening right now in schools."

"The speakers presented valuable messages that, in some cases, may change the life of the children in attendance."

"The message delivered to students is extremely valuable. Be yourself, you are somebody, you make mistakes but it is how you react and move on from them that defines you."

"I liked how all the presentations had a story to tell, but they told it in different ways, and they related their stories to us in order to teach us a lesson."

## *Special thanks to our sponsors and volunteers!*

You are helping thousands of youth in Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County. Youth are our future and your commitment to the program helps them develop a stronger sense of wellbeing and enables them to become stronger members in our community!

THE KEY TO  
SUCCESS IS  
PERSPECTIVE!

*You can be the change!*

BECOME MORE  
INVOLVED!  
TREAT EVERYONE  
WITH RESPECT!

**HOPE!**

*Use your voice!*

*Make good choices!*

*Rising above  
challenges!*

IT ONLY TAKES **ONE** TO  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

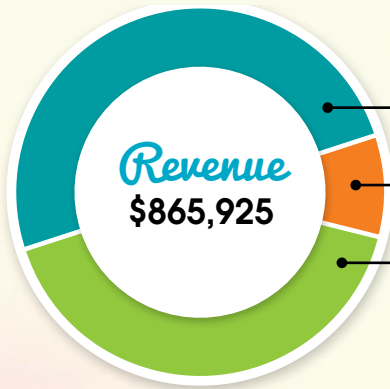
FIND THE **HERO** INSIDE!

ALWAYS GIVE 100%!

EMBRACE EACH *Follow your dreams!*  
AND EVERYONE'S UNIQUENESS!

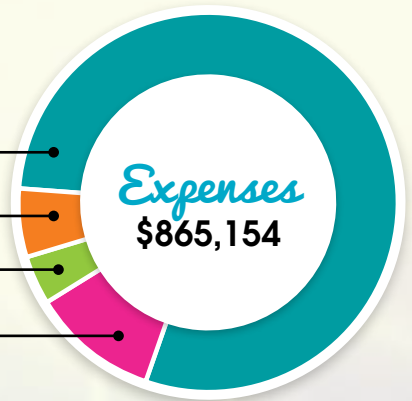


# 2016-2017 FINANCIAL SUMMARY



**Revenue**  
\$865,925

- Community Donations and Fundraising • \$434,108 • 50%
- United Way • \$75,141 • 9%
- Government • \$356,676 • 41%



**Expenses**  
\$865,154

- Staffing Expenses • \$678,631 • 79%
- Direct Program Expenses • \$53,724 • 6%
- Resource Development and Marketing • \$34,779 • 4%
- Facility\* and Administration • \$98,020 • 11%

*\*includes amortization*

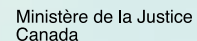
**Excess of Revenue over Expenses: \$771**

Three overlapping speech bubbles containing testimonials. The top-left bubble is pink, the top-right is orange, and the bottom one is teal.

"Keep up the good work on behalf of the children who need support at a difficult time in their lives."

"Children are the most vulnerable and precious members of our society. Thank you for the work you do on their behalf."

"I'm very positive about the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) because the return on investment in the lives of the affected young people is very strong. I believe early care and support pays big dividends."



Certain funding is provided by the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General. Views expressed in the publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.

# YOU ARE SIMPLY THE BEST!

Thank you to all those who supported us over the past two fiscal years. Your generous gifts help to foster hope and empower young people towards strong futures.

## *Transforming Hands*

**\$250,000+**

The Fairmount Foundation

## *Leading Hands*

**\$75,000-249,999**

Bob & Judy Astley

Astley Family Foundation

Toyota Motor Manufacturing

Canada Inc.

United Way Kitchener Waterloo & Area

## *Guiding Hands*

**\$25,000-74,999**

Mary Ellen Cullen & Stephen R. Menich

Economical Insurance

Randall Howard & Judy McMullan

The Kitchener and Waterloo

Community Foundation

MTD Products Limited

Laura & Bill Muirhead

Fran Sandrock

Sertoma/LaSertoma Foundation

of Waterloo Region

Social Venture Partners

Waterloo Region

William Knell and Company Limited

## *Generous Hands*

**\$10,000-24,999**

BMO Bank of Montreal

Jim Furlong

The Kitchener and Waterloo

Community Foundation –

The Motz Family Endowment

The May Court Club of Kitchener

Waterloo

Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Rotary Club of Kitchener-Westmount

S.G. Cunningham Limited

Septimatech Group Inc.

United Way Cambridge and

North Dumfries

United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin

1 Anonymous

## *Caring Hands*

**\$5,000-9,999**

Keith & Sheila Ainsworth

Lisa Allen

Marilyn Berry

Conestoga College Institute of

Technology & Advanced Learning

– School of Business & Hospitality

Student Fundraising Project

Sherry Currie

Angela Moisse

Kathie & Harry Must

Ontario Realtors Care Foundation

Laura Park & Tim Bezner

Ken & Norah Rae

RBC

Larry Richardson & Wendy

Lee-Richardson

Rotary Club of Kitchener-Conestoga

Elizabeth Sproule

The Steele Group Financial and

Workplace Services Inc.

Brian & Trudy Vickers

Maggie Williamson

William Wilson

Ted & Andrea Witzel

## *Helping Hands*

**\$1,000-4,999**

Cambridge & North Dumfries

Community Foundation

Cambridge & North Dumfries

Community Foundation –

Steele Family Fund

Cambridge Highlands Lions Club

City of Cambridge

City of Guelph

Clarke Starke & Diegel LLP

The Cloverleaf Foundation

CMA Realty Ltd.

The Co-operators

Community Foundations of Canada

Cruizin' By The Pond Car Rally

Glen & Joan Dyrda

Elmira Maple Syrup Festival

Ernst Young LLP

GHD Limited

Guelph Community Foundation

Mike & Jan Hallman

Ken Hanbidge & Alice Schmidt-Hanbidge

Hatwalk Event

Jo-Anne & Peter Hughes

Ken & Deb Ingram

Ranjini Jha

Julia White & Associates Inc.

Jonathan & Judy Kaufman

Kenmore Homes

Kindred Credit Union

The Kitchener and Waterloo

Community Foundation –

Balsillie Endowment Fund

Yvonne Lobsinger

Karen & Dave Maidment

Manulife

David & Judy Martin

McCormick, Haney & Brimblecombe LLP

Jacqueline Mulvey & Don Fraser

Optimist Club of Lakeshore Village

Opus Wealth Advisors

Dorothee Retterath & Ric Hewson

Jack & Mary Reynolds

Jennifer Robinson

Rotary Club of Cambridge

(Preston-Hespeler)

Rotary Club of Cambridge-Sunrise

Rotary Club of Fergus-Elora

Rotary Club of Guelph-Trillium

Melisa & Mike Sandrock

St. Jerome's University

Stacey Muirhead Capital Management

Sun Life Financial – Matching Gifts

Program

Swan Dust Control Limited

Toronto Dominion Bank

Karen Voisin

Waterloo Biofilter Systems Inc.

Yanke & Associates Insurance Agency

4 Anonymous

**A full listing of all donors is available on our website.**



Support, education and advocacy for children and youth who are or may become victims or witnesses of abuse or crime.

111 Duke Street East  
Kitchener, ON N2H 1A4

Phone: 519-744-0904  
Toll free number: 1-888-544-0904  
Fax: 519-744-5379  
Email: [admin@childwitness.com](mailto:admin@childwitness.com)

[childwitness.com](http://childwitness.com)



**Stay in Touch!** Sign up for a newsletter and connect with us on Facebook.

Communications sponsor [theletterMmarketing.com](http://theletterMmarketing.com)