

Joining Hands with Our Community

Community Report 2017-2018



Fostering Healing, Hope and Wellbeing



- **2,648** children, youth and families experienced support, education and advocacy through the criminal justice process.
- **3,204** Grade 8 students and their teachers were inspired and empowered through the Youth Symposium.
- **5,852** people were served by the Child Witness Centre.

"Children and youth who find the courage to tell someone about abuse need and deserve all the support that we, as a community, can give them. The Child Witness Centre provides that support and they need us to join hands so they can continue to be there to help those young people." Angela Moisse, Board Member





This picture, drawn by a child we recently supported, illustrates what we strive to accomplish as we journey with young people and their families. By ensuring children, youth and their families are informed, supported and included, we are fostering healing, hope and wellbeing.

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Joining Hands - Helping Young People Feel Valued and Heard

2017-18 has been an exciting year of evolution and growth for the Child Witness Centre. We have so many to thank who have *joined hands* with us...donors, volunteers, supporters and those we have partnered with to deliver services to children and youth across Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County who are or may become victims or witnesses of crime and their families. Together, we are fostering healing, hope and wellbeing for these brave young people, and their families.

With the launch of the Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) in 2016 we have significantly expanded our work in the community. This year we focused on strengthening our collaborative efforts and continuing to build a seamless wraparound system for young victims and witnesses and their families. We have grown our capacity as an organization and continue to build community awareness, further develop our funding base through our *Safe Hands-Strong Futures* Community Campaign and engage in community initiatives that work towards children and youth reaching their full potential.

This year we worked with **2,648** young people and their families. For many, our work starts with an investigation of abuse and for an even greater number who are victims or witnesses of crime, our work continues through the court process. It has been an incredible journey of advocacy, education and support as we strive to ensure that each young person's voice is heard throughout the criminal justice process.

Our vision is that we live in a community where children and youth are safe, valued and heard, empowering them towards strong futures.

We are hopeful as we work alongside initiatives such as the Children and Youth Planning Table and Wellbeing Waterloo Region, that helping children and youth to be happy, healthy, able to thrive and reach their potential becomes a rallying cry within our community and beyond.

Children and youth are 20% of our population and 100% of our future and we are all part of the village helping to raise our young people. It is with tremendous gratitude and appreciation on their behalf that we thank you for *joining*

hands with us on this journey!

Lisa Allen, Board Chair and Laura Muirhead, Executive Director





Joining Hands – Helping Children and Youth Begin to Heal

Child and Youth Advocate Program – Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

"An outstanding example of collaboration." Waterloo Regional Police Chief Bryan Larkin

In 2016, together with our core partners from Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region and Waterloo Regional Police, we opened the Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) – a best practice, child and youth-focused, trauma-informed approach to investigating allegations of child abuse and ensuring that young victims, witnesses and their families are supported through the process. The Child Witness Centre provides oversight of the CYAC and our Advocates walk with these young people and their families through the investigative process and connect them to supports in the community that help them begin to heal. With this support, the risk of revictimization and trauma through the process is lessened.

Waterloo Regional Police Chief Bryan Larkin called the CYAC an "outstanding example of collaboration," adding it "provides a safe and comforting environment where children and youth who have been impacted by the trauma of abuse are able to receive exceptional support services under one roof. Specially-trained investigators work with community partners to provide invaluable support to young people and their families. We are extremely proud of this partnership, as all agencies work together to support the healing process and promote community wellbeing."

This year:

- There were 543 investigations involving 844 children and youth who found the courage to talk about their experience with abuse.
- Advocates provided uniquely-tailored support to 433 young people and 354 caregivers as they journeyed through the process.

By hearing, helping and supporting children, youth and their families, Advocates work to ensure that these brave young victims can reach a greater sense of safety and wellbeing.



In reflecting on the work of Advocates at the CYAC, Karen Spencer, Executive Director of Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region, described their role as "invaluable...They have the opportunity to greet children, youth and their caregivers warmly during one of the biggest crises of their lives and they remain involved once the investigation is complete to ensure children and youth receive the help they need to begin to heal."

In addition, our uniquely-tailored support for parents and caregivers is fundamental to ensuring their children have a greater chance to heal.

When thinking about how their support impacts families and caregivers, our Child and Youth Advocates recently shared:

We have heard caregivers speak of their own childhood trauma and remark on the difference between their experiences and those of their children. Caregivers with their own trauma histories express feeling completely amazed with the amount of supportive empathy, compassion and guidance they receive from the Advocate and the rest of the team at the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre in walking through similar journeys with their children. These comments speak to the positive impact that our role as Advocates has on the children and youth that we serve in our community.

Joining Hands with the Community to Open the CYAC





Left: On October 24, 2017 in conjunction with Child Abuse Awareness Day and #BreaktheSilence, we, along with our partners, officially opened the Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC). **Right:** To further raise awareness, the Kitchener Rangers led a group of community champions through Victoria Park, Kitchener on #BreaktheSilence - Dress Purple Day.

Joining Hands on the Journey through the Court System

Child Witness Program

Imagine that you were a young person who had to testify in criminal court because you were either a victim or a witness to abuse or violence. Imagine that the perpetrator was someone you knew. Imagine the worry, anxiety, stress and sleepless nights that a young girl could experience thinking about telling total strangers about what happened to her. Imagine this young girl being cross-examined. Imagine how her parents could be feeling.

When criminal charges are laid our caring, compassionate professionals provide advocacy and support for young people and their families from across Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County as they journey through the court process. For investigations through the Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) that result in criminal charges, there is a seamless transition of support for children, youth and their families to the Child Witness Program.

Over the past three years, demand for this service has increased by **71%**. This growth is partially due to the joint investigation process that takes place through the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre.

This year:

- We received 590 new referrals.
- 792 young people and more than 1,050 parents and caregivers were actively supported.

By ensuring that children, youth and their families are informed, supported and included throughout the court process, our Caseworkers are fostering healing, hope and wellbeing to lessen their risk of revictimization and trauma.

Mark Poland, Crown Attorney for Waterloo Region, described our work as "critical to assisting children navigate the difficult path that is presented to them within the criminal justice system. Frankly, we would not be able to do our work in prosecuting cases involving physical abuse and sexual abuse without the assistance of these programs. Most importantly, children are supported, and have someone 'in their corner' throughout the process. The benefit associated with helping these children come to terms with the trauma and difficulties that they have experienced over the long term is immense."

Those sentiments were echoed by Guelph Police Chief Jeff DeRuyter: "It is most reassuring to know that we can rely on trained professionals to work with these young people to help them cope with the fear and anxiety of testifying and minimize the risk of revictimization."

Support for parents is just as crucial as it is recognized that children and youth who have been victims or witnesses of abuse or crime are better positioned to thrive when their parents or caregivers receive support as well.



As one parent said:

"Your Caseworker played a fundamental role in preparing us for this experience. We were supported through the whole process. Your Caseworker was amazing and acted as an advocate for my daughter, including arranging a meeting with the Crown Attorney. This meeting made all the difference for us in having a subsequent positive court experience."



"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." Young victim supported through the Child Witness Program

In thinking about his role working with these young victims and witnesses, Adam Hodgins (a Child Witness Program Caseworker) shared:

"The words 'privilege' and 'honour' best describe what this job means to me. A child who has been the victim of a crime has often been left with a heavy emotional load to carry. Navigating the criminal justice system, including testifying at a trial, is an additional burden which should not have to fall upon children and their families by themselves. I am thankful that our services are available to these children, and I am honoured to help them through all stages of the process."

Joining Hands to Empower the Next Generation

Youth Symposium

Since 2004, the Child Witness Centre's Youth Symposium has been inspiring, motivating and challenging Grade 8 students to make the most of their high school years, and beyond. Over its 14-year history the Youth Symposium has welcomed **32,000** students and their teachers from across Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County.

The Youth Symposium is a day-long program held on two consecutive days, once in Guelph and once in Kitchener, ensuring students have an opportunity to hear some of Canada's top motivational speakers address topics like goal setting, bullying, addiction, community citizenship and healthy dating. Scheduled each April to reach students as they prepare to enter high school, the Youth Symposium is, as one volunteer shared, an opportunity to "help inspire and educate them with life examples that help them to navigate their futures with confidence, positivity and to know how to make good choices."

By sharing information about the work that we do at the Child Witness Centre, students also know that we are a resource to them if they are ever a victim of, or witness to, abuse or crime.

Key messages heard throughout the day included:

- Make a difference in the lives of others!
- Use goals to turn dreams into reality!
- Be respectful in dating relationships!
- Find creative solutions to life's challenges!
- You are not alone!



"You have taught us a lot, and we are grateful to have you motivate us and teach us what we have to do to be better people." Youth Symposium Participant

By *joining hands* with our **14** presenters, **36** volunteers, **10** sponsors and **18** police officers from Waterloo Regional Police and Guelph Police Services, we were able to welcome **58** schools and **3,204** students and teachers to the 2017 Youth Symposium. Each of these partners played a vital role in a program that equips students with the tools and motivation needed to meet many of life's opportunities and challenges.

Right: We are grateful for the incredible volunteers who help make the Youth Symposium a success. We couldn't do it without you!



"As an educator I initially came to volunteer after witnessing the impact of sexual abuse on a student who did not have the support of such a resource. Equally rewarding for me is volunteering for the Youth Symposium every spring, which helps Grade 8 students demystify the ingredients for a healthy transition to positive secondary school and life experience. This armed students with information to make wise choices and to seek out help when needed, as well as looking out for those around them. My husband and I feel very strongly about providing annual financial support to this invaluable agency in our community." Judy Martin

In 2017, in collaboration with the Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation and the Government of Canada as part of the Community Fund for Canada's 150th, the Youth Symposium marked our country's anniversary by engaging students in a discussion about what makes Canada an extraordinary place to call home. We heard comments like "we go to elementary and high school for free and have many resources to help us achieve our goals" and "our diverse communities show that we are an accepting country and I enjoy meeting new people that have had different experiences."

At the close of the Youth Symposium, the conversation continues in classrooms across our communities. As one teacher shared, "there is so much for teachers too, which can be taken back and incorporated into individual classrooms and schools to spread the message further."

With presenter feedback from students like "thank you for sharing your personal experiences and teaching us to start our journeys today" and "you have taught us many things and comedically helped us see the brighter side" we're already looking forward to next year's opportunity to *join hands* again with our partners to welcome, and empower, the next generation of community champions.

When We All *Join Hands*, So Much Can Be Accomplished

Community Partnerships

At the Child Witness Centre, we have seen the proverb "it takes a village to raise a child" come alive in our community every day.

This year, a village of donors, volunteers, supporters and businesses *joined hands* by partnering with us in our *Safe Hands-Strong Futures* Community Campaign and helping to raise the funds necessary to ensure that every child and youth, along with their families, received the support they needed to begin to heal and thrive. Through these partnerships, we also helped to raise awareness and inspire conversations about child and youth victims and witnesses and why our work in the Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) and the Child Witness Program serves a vital, growing need in our community.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to each person whose vision, dedication and efforts through these events will resonate for years to come:

- 2018 Leejay Levene Calendar
- A Blooming Affair Fashion Show 2017
- Belmont Vibe 2017
- Canada: A Plugin Happening
- Child Witness Centre Pancake Lunch
- Hat Walk Event 2017

- Magnet Forensics' Bowling Fundraiser
- Valentine's Card Fundraiser
- Waterloo Mattress Customer Appreciation - 2017
- Westmount Tradition Charity Doubles
 Tennis Tournament 2017

Collectively, these events welcomed more than **5,375** participants, involved at least **85** volunteers from the community and raised over **\$195,000**. The success of these events included extensive partnerships with almost **150** sponsoring businesses from across the community.



Belmont Vibe - 2017: On a beautiful September 14th evening, Belmont Village came alive as it hosted the sold-out Belmont Vibe. This event featured decadent hors d'oeuvres and food samplings, cocktail tastings, live music and the sound of community coming together. Led by the inspiring vision of Diefenbacher Donovan Sieber Dental, the dedication of the Belmont Vibe Organizing Committee and the generosity of sponsors and participating businesses, this event raised over **\$75,000** to support our work with children, youth and their families.

Child Witness Centre Pancake Lunch: Our village included almost 600 business and community leaders from across Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County who joined us for the 20th anniversary of the Child Witness Centre's Pancake Lunch celebrating another year of accomplishment and impact. This signature event raised an incredible \$28,000 in a few short hours.



2018 Leejay Levene Calendar: Since 2008, the Leejay Levene Art Calendar has been created each year in memory of Leejay Levene, who died tragically in 2007 while undergoing routine dental surgery. Each calendar is a celebration of Leejay's extraordinary artistic talent with funds generated from sales supporting a local community group. The Child Witness Centre is proud to have been chosen by the Levene family as the 2018 calendar partner, raising more than \$20,000.









"With gratitude we thank each person whose gift of time, money, expertise and passion for our work is helping to make our village a place where children and youth are safe, valued and heard." Laura Muirhead, Executive Director

Joining Hands... Creating Strong Futures



In the fall of 2015, the Child Witness Centre initiated the *Safe Hands-Strong Futures* Community Campaign to raise a minimum of \$2 million to support our work leading the implementation of the new Waterloo Region Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC). This year we experienced an incredible outpouring of support for our work with nine community-run fundraising events and many pledges and gifts from the community helping us reach a total of **\$1.95 million** pledged and donated.

On behalf of the staff of the Child Witness Centre, and the children, youth and families who we have the honour of walking with, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our Founding Supporters who have led the way with commitments of \$75,000 or more! Thank you for *joining hands* with us.

Founding Supporters

- Abundance Canada
- Bob & Judy Astley
- Astley Family Foundation
- Belmont Vibe 2017
- The Jim & Lorna Blair Charitable Foundation
- The Savvas Chamberlain Family Foundation
- The Fairmount Foundation
- Kitchener Rangers Hockey Club
- Mersynergy Charitable Foundation
- Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc.

Through our campaign, we have also had the privilege of working with Social Venture Partners Waterloo Region. As an investee, we have received funding, mentorship and guidance from their amazing staff and volunteers!

In addition, the Department of Justice has *joined hands* with us, continuing their seed funding with **\$227,750** this year, bringing their total contribution to date to more than **\$680,000** for the implementation of the CYAC. This funding from the Victims Fund is part of a national program encouraging communities to establish CYACs as best models.

In thinking about the importance of **Joining Hands** with the Child Witness Centre, Sharron Gilbert, President and CEO, Septimatech Group Inc. shared:

"Septimatech is proud to support the Child Witness Centre and their Safe Hands-Strong Futures Community Campaign! Supporting the work in our community that ensures everyone has a chance to thrive is fundamental to our core values. By joining hands with the Child Witness Centre, we're helping children and youth to have their voices heard and receive the support they need to have the brightest futures possible."

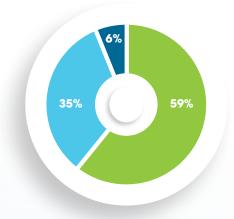
2017-2018 Financial Summary

Our heartfelt thanks to the **77** volunteers from the Child Witness Centre who donated more than **2,300** hours of their time to support our work.

Revenue

- Community Donations and Fundraising* \$669,736 59%
- Government* \$396,242 35%
- United Way \$68,372 6%

Total Revenue: \$1,134,350 *Includes deferred contributions

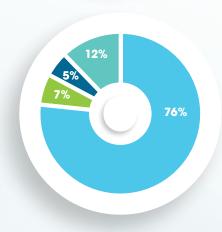


Expenses

- Staffing Expenses \$862,051 76%
- Direct Program Expenses \$73,864 7%
- Resource Development and Marketing \$55,875 5%
- Facility* and Administration \$141,699 12%

Total Expenses: \$1,133,489 *Includes amortization

Excess of Revenue over Expenses: \$861



"Our work in developing digital investigative technology made partnering with the Child Witness Centre a natural fit for Magnet Forensics. By joining hands with the Child Witness Centre, we're working together to ensure our community's children can thrive." Jad Saliba, Founder and CTO, Magnet Forensics







Department of Justice

Ministère de la Justice Canada



You are Simply the Best!

Our heartfelt thanks to each donor whose decision to *join hands* with the Child Witness Centre over the past three fiscal years has made a lasting, positive impact across Waterloo Region, Guelph and Wellington County. Your generosity will help ensure that children, youth and their families are empowered towards strong futures.

Transforming Hands

\$250,000+

The Fairmount Foundation

Leading Hands

\$75,000 - \$249,999

Abundance Canada

Bob & Judy Astley

Astley Family Foundation

Belmont Vibe Event 2017

The Jim & Lorna Blair Charitable Foundation

The Savvas Chamberlain Family Foundation

Kitchener Rangers Hockey Club

Mersynergy Charitable Foundation

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc.

United Way Waterloo Region Communities

Guiding Hands

\$25,000 - \$74,999

Mary Ellen Cullen & Stephen R Menich

Economical Insurance

Randall Howard & Judy McMullan

Kenmore Homes

Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation

Monica & Angelo Loberto

Magnet Forensics

MTD Products Limited

Laura & Bill Muirhead

Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Rotary Club of Kitchener-Grand River

Fran Sandrock

Sertoma/LaSertoma Foundation of Waterloo Region

Social Venture Partners Waterloo Region

Westmount Golf and Country Club Tradition

Charity Doubles Tennis Tournament Event 2017

William Knell and Company Limited

Generous Hands

\$10,000 - \$24,999

BMO Bank of Montreal

Jim Furlong

GHD Limited

Hat Walk Event 2017

Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation

- The Motz Family Endowment

Desta Leavine

2018 Leejay Levene Calendar

The May Court Club of Kitchener Waterloo RRC

Rotary Club of Kitchener-Conestoga

Rotary Club of Kitchener-Westmount

S.G. Cunningham Kitchener Limited

Septimatech Group Inc.

United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin

Maggie Williamson

... and an anonymous friend of the

Child Witness Centre

Caring Hands

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Keith & Sheila Ainsworth

In Memory of Craig Allen

Lisa Allen

Marilyn Berry

City of Cambridge

City of Guelph

Conestoga College Institute of Technology &

Advanced Learning – School of Business & Hospitality Student 2016-2017 Fundraising Projects

Sherry Currie

The Guelph Community Foundation

Ken & Deb Inaram

Kindred Credit Union

Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation

- Balsillie Endowment Fund
- The Jim and Sandy Beingessner and Family Fund
- The Lyle S Hallman Fund
- The John A Pollock Family Fund

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Onbelay Capital Inc

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Laura Park & Tim Bezner

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Larry Richardson & Wendy Lee-Richardson

Elizabeth Sproule

St. Jerome's University

Stantec

The Steele Group Financial and Workplace Services Inc.

Suds & Jiffy Lube

Brian & Trudy Vickers

Waterloo Mattress Event 2017

William Wilson

Ted & Andrea Witzel

...and many anonymous friends of the

Child Witness Centre

Helping Hands

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Kevin Bewick

A Blooming Affair presented by Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest 2017

The C3 Group of Companies

Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation

Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation

- Steele Family Fund

Cambridge Highlands Lions Club

CI Investments

Clarke Starke & Diegel LLP

The Cloverleaf Foundation

CMA Realty Ltd.

Cober Printing Ltd.

Joe Coehlo

Community Foundations of Canada

Cook Homes

The Co-operators

The Co-operators (District Office)

William & Susan Copland

Cowan Insurance Group

Cruizin' By The Pond Car Rally 2017

Custom Leather

Christine Deiulis

Sandy & D'Arcy Delamere

Angelique DeNijs

Diefenbacher Donovan Sieber Dental

Ross and Doris Dixon Charitable Foundation

Glen & Joan Dyrda

Elmira Maple Syrup Festival Committee

Ernst Young LLP

Fidelity Investments Canada

Glasgow Orthodontics

Mike & Jan Hallman

Ken Hanbidge & Alice Schmidt-Hanbidge

Peter Hodson

Hollis Wealth - Young Financial Group Inc

Jo-Anne & Peter Hughes

Ranjini Jha

Julia White & Associates Inc.

Jonathan & Judy Kaufman

Kitchener-Waterloo Civitan Club

Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation

- The McMurtry Family Fund
- The Weiland Family Foundation Fund

Kitchener-Waterloo Sertoma Club

Kevin Kitching

Astrid Kropp

Hartman & Brenda Krug

Terry & Pierre Lapalme

Shirley & Ron Levene

Yvonne Lobsinger

Joseph & Dorothy Joan MacDonald

Karen & Dave Maidment

Manulife

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McCormick, Haney, Brimblecombe & Code LLP

Lisa McCuaig

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MTE Consultants Inc

Jacqueline Mulvey & Don Fraser

Optimist Club of Lakeshore Village

Opus Wealth Advisors

A Plugin Happening Event 2017

Dorothee Retterath & Ric Hewson

Daniel Robinson

Jennifer Robinson

Rotary Club of Cambridge (Preston-Hespeler)

Rotary Club of Cambridge-Sunrise

Rotary Club of Fergus-Elora

Rotary Club of Guelph-Trillium

Chris Runstedler

Sager Fingland Wealth Management

Melisa & Mike Sandrock

Sally Sarachman

Scotia Wealth Management

Bill Seegmiller

Tim Sothern

Stacey Muirhead Capital Management

Cliff Steele

Sun Life Financial - Matching Gifts Program

Swan Dust Control Limited

Carl & Beverley Thiel

Nancy Thompson

Toronto Dominion Bank

Transit Petroleum

Doug Tyson

Karin Voisin

Waterloo Biofilter Systems Inc.

Waterloo Regional Police

Rita Westbrook

Westmount Signs & Printing

Dr. & Mrs. Ian & Terry Wilson

Yanke & Associates Insurance Agency

Zehr Group

Zonta Club of Guelph Area

...and many anonymous friends of the

Child Witness Centre

A full listing of all donors is available on our website. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If an error has been made, please accept our apologies. If you would like more information about our donor listings, how to make a gift to the Child Witness Centre or would like to update your name, please contact us at 519-744-0904 or admin@childwitness.com.



Our vision is a community where children and youth feel safe, valued and heard, empowering them towards strong futures.

Our mission is to provide support, education and advocacy through the criminal justice system for children and youth who are, or may become, victims or witnesses of abuse or crime.

Our caring, compassionate professionals walk with children, youth and their families on their journey through the criminal justice process, helping them have a voice and fostering healing, hope and wellbeing.

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