



# FACS

Family and Children's  
Services Niagara



## 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

### A TIME OF TRANSITION

The field of child welfare is constantly changing and evolving. We are always facing new pressures, service demands, funding issues. In the coming year, FACS Niagara will experience a major transition in leadership as Bill Charron retires after nearly 20 years as executive director. Bill leaves a legacy of growth, innovative programming and support to youth. In June of 2008, Chris Steven will join us as executive director, bringing with him a host of experience, fresh ideas and his own unique perspective. We are confident that FACS Niagara will move forward with the excellence in service and focus on children, youth and families that the community has come to expect.

### JUST THE FACTS

Family and Children's Services is your local Children's Aid Society- mandated by the Child and Family Services Act to investigate the abuse and neglect of children and to provide protection, foster care and adoption services. FACS also offers a wide range of programs to prevent and respond to the problems of abuse and neglect and to support the children, youth and families of our community.

Serving Niagara from offices in St. Catharines, Welland and Niagara Falls; we are a charitable, non-profit agency reporting to the community through a volunteer Board of Directors. Funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, our vision - *Every Child in a Caring Family.*

### CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SERVICE

Working closely with the community we are developing service initiatives with the local Aboriginal community and in the area of Domestic Violence. With four international ports of entry in Niagara, services to children who present with immigration issues is an area we are developing in collaboration with Canada Border Services. We are also working with the Francophone community to develop collaborative responses to families in need. A key partner with the Niagara Regional Police Services in the response to child maltreatment, FACS welcomes the opening of the Child Advocacy Centre to the Niagara Region this year.

In 2007/08 FACS responded to 5 684 child protection concerns and conducted 3 272 investigations. Ongoing protection service was provided to 1 285 families.

*For help or to report your concerns about a child, you can call your local office of Family and Children's Services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at (905) 937-7731.*

### FOSTER CARE

FACS Niagara is pleased to be on board with ONLAC (Ontario Looking After Children). This comprehensive plan engages the child, the family and the foster family in setting and reviewing goals to meet the social and emotional needs of each individual child. The average number of children in care is 527 in 222 approved foster homes, 267 children were served in kin placements with extended family and community members. We need homes for teens and homes of all cultural backgrounds.

*Please call if you can open your home to a child in need- (905) 937-7731, ask for home finding.*

### ADOPTION

Support to post and pre-adoptive homes is well established. We enjoy a multi-regional effort that promotes consistent practice and widens our opportunities to better match children with adoptive families, including school-age children, teens and 'hard-to-place' youngsters. In 2007 we finalized 39 adoptions and placed a further 30 children with adoptive families.

### SERVICES FOR YOUTH

Last year 64 youth were served at our **Regional Adolescent Centre** - a youth home and treatment centre. With the capacity for 20 youth (aged 12 to 16 years), placements range from overnight to several years. The Centre is staffed 24 hours a day with an on-site classroom, psychiatric support, a visiting nurse and case management. Our goal is to assist young people in crisis with a successful transition back into the community. This year we will pilot a dedicated social worker to enhance programming at the Centre to ensure the best experience and best outcomes for the young people staying there.

**New Outlooks and Beginnings** assisted 85 youth in care with the transition to independent living. Communication skills, budgeting and self-esteem are just a few of the topics discussed at the group level. The Youth Advisory Committee works with board members to improve the in-care experience for all children and youth. We hope to expand the program in the coming year to meet the needs of a growing number of youth reaching this transitional age. New initiatives include creating social opportunities for our youth and support for post-secondary education.

### EARLY LEARNING AND PARENTING CENTRES CHILDCARE PROGRAMS

It has been a challenging year for our programs. While busy at some sites, others experienced low enrollment, a major factor in the closing of four programs. Effective June 30th, 2008 - Rainbow in Welland, Fallsway in Niagara Falls and St. Martin Childcare in Smithville will close, as will the after school program at Central (St. Catharines).

Last year we served 94 children and 79 families in our programs. Our Early Learning and Parenting Programs offer transportation, parent groups, and accept children as young as 18 to 24 months. Our childcare centres accept children of varying ages. Childcare subsidies may be available through the Regional Municipality of Niagara, Children's Services Division.

Call the location in your area to register your child:

**Bunting:** Ina Grafton Gage, 413 Linwell Road, St. Catharines (905) 937-0170

**Central:** Connaught School, 28 Prince Street, St. Catharines (905) 687-7393

**Western Hill:** Edith Cavell School, 1 Monck Street, St. Catharines (905) 684-6288



### ONTARIO EARLY YEARS PROGRAMS

A community-based bilingual program, serving 4 700 families, caregivers and children (0-6 years) at our **Main Site at 12 Young Street in Welland**. Promoting healthy child development and positive parenting skills, our Early Childhood Educators plan early learning and literacy activities, lend resources, offer informative and fun workshops and make referrals to other services. The ECE team leads the Grow and Learn Together series, Infant Massage, Roots of Empathy program and the school readiness program, "School's Cool." All programs and services are free of charge at all sites.

Our **4 Satellites in Fenwick (1), Grimsby (2) and at Centre de santé (1)** served 4 019 parents, caregivers and children. Interactive Play, Grow and Learn, Infant Massage and school readiness programs are all very popular and well attended.

The **Mobile Resource Program** offers Interactive Play at 4 neighbourhood locations in the Welland, Pelham and Thorold service area, 5 days per week to 1 586 families. Early learning and literacy programs are offered year-round at these sites: the Niagara Centre YMCA, the Church of the Nazarene in Thorold and the Fonthill Public Library.

The **Toy Lending Library** travels to 12 locations across Niagara serving 527 families. Locations include the 4 OEYC Sites (Welland, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines and Port Colborne), the Centre de santé in Welland, Bethlehem Early Learning Centre in St. Catharines, the MacBain Community Centre in Niagara Falls, Crystal Ridge Public Library, the Fenwick and Grimsby Satellite Sites, Cornerstone Community Church in Virgil and the Niagara Centre YMCA.

*Make the most of your child's early years. Call us at (905) 734-3563 to find out where you can access Early Years services in your neighborhood.*

***"I have been fortunate in having a great case worker Kim P, who has guided me through everything,"*** Danielle, 18 - youth in care, bursary recipient

## VOLUNTEERS

In 2007 our special friend volunteers provided our kids with 3 200 hours of mentoring, recreational and educational outings! Our tutors, drivers, evening receptionists and other volunteers gave 41 440 hours of their time and expertise. This year we recognized two volunteers for 30 and 35 years of service. To commit your time, energy and talents, please contact our Volunteer Department.

## THE FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRE

New in '07 - "Foster and Kinship Support Services" for caregivers supporting children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). We hosted a conference on FASD and launched a 10- week psycho-educational group and monthly follow-up support group. We look forward to expanding this program in the coming year.

We have a new group program for developmentally disabled women at risk to be in abusive relationships - a collaborative effort with Design for a New Tomorrow. We also helped train staff working in other developmental service agencies.

Confidential counselling services address personal, relationship and other issues like depression, anxiety, anger, stress, grief, parenting, trauma and violence through our Core, Employee Assistance and Walk In Clinic counselling services. Our Child Advocacy Counselling program supports child victims of physical and sexual abuse and their families.

"Side by Side" and "For Me and My Mom" are for women and children who have experienced family violence - we served 277 mothers and 273 children. "Partner Assault Response" helps men overcome abusive behaviors and attitudes- we enrolled 91 men in the group program and provided support services to 79 partners. Our Adult Protective Services Worker program helped 128 developmentally challenged adults live independently in the community.

Family Group Conferencing (FGC) brings together family members to develop a plan of care for their children to address concerns identified by child welfare and children's mental health professionals - 163 people participated.

"Caring Dads" is for men who have, or are at risk for abusing or neglecting their children. We enrolled 33 men in the program and 79 children were impacted by their fathers' decision to examine their fathering. They increased their awareness of child-centred fathering and of their responsibility for abusive and neglectful fathering. We are helping fathers improve their relationship with their children.

Some programs are fully funded; others have fees geared to income. The Family Counselling Centre has the ongoing support of the United Way.

For more information call (905) 937-7731 extension 3345



**"FACS has given me a chance... to make something positive out of my life. I will be the first person from my birth family to go to university,"**

Danielle, 18 - youth in care, bursary recipient



**"I enjoy being a foster sister and hope these kids find a safe and happy home,"** Brooke, 10

This was an exciting year for the FACS Foundation as we funded the construction of a new playground at our Welland facility. Our golf tournament exceeded all expectations by doubling our first year's proceeds from \$20 000 to \$40 000. We enjoyed another successful Fall Gala and in 2008 will celebrate our 10th anniversary Gala event.

In addition to the annual support to our summer camp and bursary programs, we funded a Duffle Bag project for kids in foster care, supported a conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and provided support to our youth in care to assist them with the transition to independent living.

In all, more than \$560 000 was donated to the Foundation, including some significant bequests and estate gifts. In the coming year we look forward to supporting a building project in Niagara Falls to better serve children and families in that community.

Special thanks to our 2007 Foundation Board of Directors: Chris Rupp, President; Anne Kemp, Vice President; Phil Sheehan, Secretary-Treasurer; Mike Boucher, George Hostick, Gino Paolone, Mary Iannazzo, David Haddow and Bill Charron.

Have you remembered the Children's Aid Society in your will? Please call the Foundation office for more information, to make a donation or to find out how you can help kids and families in need. (905) 937-7731 ext 3304

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2007/08 has had its share of changes and challenges as will the year ahead. Significant events include the retirement of Bill Charron after 20 years as executive director of FACS Niagara. We thank Bill for his many contributions and welcome Chris Steven as he joins us from the Oxford County Children's Aid Society.

Agencies across the province have experienced significant effects from the Ministry's Transformation Agenda resulting in a reduction in service volumes and consequently, a reduction in funding. We are advocating for fair and appropriate adjustments to the funding formula and "Niagara's Fair Share" for families and children in this community.

We look forward, with excitement, to a new location in Niagara Falls. In 2008 staff will relocate

from overcrowded conditions on Queen Street to a renovated facility on Canadian Drive. This new location provides a wonderful setting for the children and families we serve. We anticipate a capital project to add a "family centre" addition in future.

It has been my privilege to serve as president of the Board this past year. We have such a talented team of staff, foster parents and volunteers all striving for the good of our community's children and families. I want to personally thank our Board members, including those leaving us this year.

Much has been accomplished, much remains to be done. We could not do it without you. The kids are counting on us.

Larry J. Kent, Board President

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007

### OFFICERS

**President**  
**Past President**  
**Vice President**  
**Treasurer**  
**Secretary**

Larry J. Kent  
Thomas A. Bielby  
Catherine Mindorff  
Wade C. Stayzer  
Joseph E. McLaughlin

**"I will be giving back to the people who have given me the opportunity to pursue my dream,"** Ryan, 19  
- youth in care, bursary recipient, aspires to be a police officer

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sharifa Al-Harazi  
John F. Bird  
Blair Campbell  
Sandra Felton  
Mary G. Iannazzo (appt. Apr. 08)  
Tammy L. Morden  
Milan Plentai  
Christine Bartlett  
Michael Boucher  
Cynthia J. Dunne  
David Haddow (resigned Feb. 08)  
Kelly Maidens  
Frank Parkhouse  
Rena Posteraro (resigned Feb. 08)

**Executive Director**  
Mr. William J. Charron (retired May 08)

**Executive Director**  
Mr. Chris Steven (effective June 08)

Financial Highlights FACS Operating Fund for the 12 months ended March 31, 2008 (in \$000)	
Child Welfare Program Revenue	37,026
Province of Ontario	2,545
Family Allowance, Other Income and Recoveries	39,571
<b>Total Child Welfare Revenue</b>	<b>39,651</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
<b>Total Child Welfare Expenditure</b>	<b>(80)</b>
<b>Child Welfare Deficiency of Revenue over Expenditure</b>	<b>(97)</b>
<b>Other Special Programs (net)</b>	<b>(177)</b>
<b>Deficiency of Revenue over Expenditure</b>	<b>(787)</b>
<b>Fund Balance, Beginning of Year</b>	<b>(177)</b>
Deficiency of Revenue over Expenditure	(53)
Funding Adjustments	(393)
Capital Purchases and Transfers to Private Funds	(1,410)
<b>Fund Balance, End of Year</b>	<b>(1,410)</b>



**FACS**  
Family and Children's  
Services Niagara

**All Locations: 905-937-7731 or Toll Free: 1-888-937-7731 • All Faxes: 905-646-7085**  
**All Mail: Box 24028, St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 7P7**  
**Email: info@facsniaagara.on.ca Website: www.facsniaagara.on.ca**

82 Hannover Drive  
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A4

654 South Pelham Road  
Welland, ON L3C 3C8

4635 Queen Street  
Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6Z2  
(MOVING: Summer/Fall '08)

7900 Canadian Drive  
Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6S5  
(NEW LOCATION: Summer/Fall '08)