

Cover Art: Sephira, Grade 5.
Cardinal Newman Catholic Elementary School, Niagara Falls

Annual Report

2011 — 2012



Family and Children's
Services Niagara

Les Services à la famille
et à l'enfance de Niagara



Our **MISSION**

Our mission is to protect, support, and strengthen the lives of children, youth, adults and families.

Our **VISION**

A community where children, youth, adults and families achieve their full potential in a safe, supportive environment.

Our **VALUES**

We are caring.
We are respectful.
We are collaborative.
We have integrity.
We are accountable.

- 1** FACS will be collaborative in service planning, program development and problem solving (internal and external).
- 2** FACS will be a leader in the provision of effective services responsive to the needs of children, youth, families, adults and communities in Niagara.
- 3** FACS will strengthen organizational health and accountability.
- 4** FACS' governance model/framework will be aligned with strategic directions and its mission, vision and values.
- 5** FACS will continue to proactively build awareness of its range of relevant, high quality, helpful services.
- 6** FACS will create opportunity to speak up and advocate on behalf of Niagara's children, youth, adults and families.

Strategic Planning - Values in Action

A Message from the Board President and the Executive Director

2011-2012 has been an extremely busy and productive year for our Board of Directors. We rolled up our sleeves and completed a critical governance review to align our approach with the agency's strategic plan. We made a smooth transition to our new policies and governance style, and are proud to have our Board represented on the Governance Committee at the provincial level.

The hard work and focused efforts of the Board and the Senior Staff have resulted in the successful completion of the first year of our strategic plan. Our collective vision is beginning to come to life. Without their time and talent we would not have been able to achieve what we have this past year.

As our board and staff come together to create and realize the vision of our organization, our focus must begin within and transition to the community. What is it that we want for the children and families of Niagara? What are our community's needs and challenges? And what will be our contribution, as an organization, in making this a stronger Niagara?

We know that the recent economic downturn has challenged many families, creating stresses and hardship like never before. We know that our community does not currently have adequate services to respond to these crises and thus, we have a "gathering storm" of need coupled with a shortage of resources to meet those needs.

Our challenge and our call to action are to be agents of change. We must be leaders and partners in igniting collaboration with others. We must be advocates for ourselves and on behalf of others, to attract support, and build the kind of services and resources that Niagara's families need.

We believe that the strength of a community can be measured by the health and well being of its children and its families... and that is central to what we do each and every day.

Joseph E. McLaughlin (L)
President, Board of Directors

Chris Steven (R)
Executive Director



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Board of Directors 2011 – 2012

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Mr. Stanleigh Palka

Mr. Frank Parkhouse

Mr. Sean Worthington

* Member of The Executive Committee

Keeping kids safely at home ...

Family and Children's Services believes that the best place for children is with their families. Of the thousands of families we work with each year, in **85%** of those cases, children never leave their home. In **15%** of our cases, children are placed with kin or in foster care. Of the small number of children actually admitted to agency foster care, 64% will return to the care of their parents or kin.

- 5,279 referrals to FACS (2011-12)
- 77% directly related to the safety and well being of a child
- 3, 878 families receiving child protection services

Reasons for Service

- 37% caregiver capacity/addiction/mental health
- 25% domestic violence/emotional harm
- 19% physical/sexual abuse
- 14% neglect



85% - cases where children remain at home

15% - cases where children are placed with kin or in foster care

Children in Care

– family based with a view to reunification

- 567 children as of March 31, 2012
- 70% were placed in family based settings
- 64% of children in foster care are reunified with their families or kin



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Safe Kids, Strong Families, Youth and Adults at their Best

Made in Niagara - Solutions for Kids and Families

We are striving to create a more seamless service delivery, and to be a more cohesive resource for our families. We are looking to build "Made in Niagara" solutions, ensuring that our response is closely aligned with the needs of our community and we are supporting our staff to meet those needs.

The most common reasons for families needing our services are: the ability for parents to provide adequate care for their children, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and mental illness. Collaboration with community partners such as the Coalition to End Violence Against Women, mental health agencies and our school boards generate better solutions for our community's kids and their families.

Cultural competence and respect for diversity is another way we embed collaboration into our service delivery as a reflection of the community we serve. This year we participated in events with the Welland Heritage Council and the Multicultural Network of Niagara Falls Newcomers' Conference.

As part of a multidisciplinary table with our school boards, Francophone service agencies and other children's aid societies, we are working to build our French Language Service capacity, and we continue our efforts to recruit French-speaking child protection workers to serve our Francophone communities.

We continue to work with the Aboriginal community including our advisory committee and shared educational opportunities such as our Lunch and Learn events, to better understand and respond to the unique needs of this important community.



The Niagara Crown Ward Championship Team is a partnership with our school boards, Niagara College and Brock University that helps us achieve better educational outcomes for our youth.

We are excited to be working with Pathstone Mental Health Services to create a new program enabling Niagara's youth and children to receive comprehensive mental health services right here in their own community. This initiative will provide eight residential beds that may enable us to return some youth to Niagara, who may currently be served outside of the region. We hope that this program is just the beginning in creating a much needed network of services here in our community. ■

The Grandmothers share their wisdom and guidance on how best to support our Aboriginal Community.

Volunteer Services - Part of a Caring Community

In 2011 we had more than 275 volunteers assisting us as tutors, mentors, drivers, evening receptionists, child care program assistants, and clerical helpers.... just to name a few! Our drivers logged over 2 million kms transporting children throughout the Niagara region. One of our 37 tutors says, *"I have been tutoring the same girl for 5 years and I have seen her grow not only intellectually, but from a girl to a young adult. To know that you are making a small difference in a child's life is a wonderful feeling."* ■



Foster Care - Family Based is Best

Foster families enable us to meet the needs of our community's children in a safe and secure setting – a family setting, when we find they can no longer remain at home. Our goal is to find homes that best meet the needs of the children needing care.

Active recruitment and meaningful recognition are two ways that we attract and keep these extraordinary individuals who care for our community's children. We are committed to bringing our recognition event to more communities in Niagara and recruitment will be focused on attracting a broader range of applicants.

We are seeking applicants who reflect the diversity of the community that we live in, including: married couples, individuals and single parents, same sex couples, and people from all cultures, religions and backgrounds. ■

Regional Adolescent Centre

The Regional Adolescent Centre provides care to youth with complex needs that cannot be met in a foster home setting. We provide a safe living environment, supported by staff 24 hours a day, until youth return home, transition to a foster home or into the community. We provided supervision, support and a structured program to 53 youth this past year, as well as an on-site classroom for those children unable to return to their community schools.

The Centre promotes physical activity with help from Canadian Tire's Jump Start program and the local YMCA. Our youth also received gifts and Christmas stockings donated by

staff of the Welland Crown Attorney's Office, complementing our annual holiday celebrations.

We were pleased with our 2011 Ministry Licensing review. Interviews with staff and youth reflected that the youth felt very comfortable at the RAC and that it "feels like home." Their needs are being met and they are aware of their rights and how to address any concerns.

We are excited to be expanding our vegetable garden program at the Centre, providing more of our residents with an opportunity to learn about horticulture while enjoying the fruits of their labour. ■



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New Outlooks and Beginnings

The New Outlooks and Beginnings program supports youth in acquiring life skills to prepare for a successful transition to independence. Youth workers provide individual and group support, and crisis intervention to youth in foster care and those now residing in the community. NOB serves youth aged 15 through 21, a total of 89 youth this past year. Financial literacy, housing and setting goals for their future are among our top priorities with youth.

Our groups focus on problem solving, leadership skills and mutual support through a network of peers and opportunities in the community through guest speakers and “field trips.” Hands on activities are most popular with youth – cooking, home repair and a visit to a local radio station. Youth report NOB has made them feel more confident, better at saving money and “more understanding about how to get through life.”

The Youth Advisory Committee gives youth a voice locally and provincially. Our youth helped develop a web site with The Niagara Crown Ward Championship Team, a partnership focused on educational outcomes for youth. They are also working on a presentation to educate their classmates about what it means to be “in care.” ■



Staff and youth celebrate together at Home for the Holidays.

Adoption - Campaign for Permanency

We have completed one of the busiest years in the history of the agency, with 44 adoptions finalized as of March 31, 2012. Our ongoing “Campaign for Permanence” has resulted in several sibling groups, older children and special needs children finding permanent families.

We believe that there is a permanent family out there for every child in need. We were very pleased to find committed families for a number of children with special needs such as Autism and FASD. Collaboration with our provincial partners, participation in the Adoption Resource Exchange and the use of the AdoptOntario website were instrumental to our success.

The community’s commitment to Niagara’s children is also evident as we currently have 47 families who have completed our application and approval process and are awaiting an appropriate adoption placement. There are currently 30 children placed on adoption probation, awaiting finalization to make their placement permanent. ■

Community Programs - How can we help you?

Family Counselling Centre and Specialized Programs

The Family Counselling Centre offers professional counselling services for families and individuals who struggle with life's challenges. With United Way support we are able to offer fees geared to income, while some services are available at no cost to the client. We offer core counselling, specialized programs and employee assistance programs.

Our **Niagara Falls Walk-In Clinic** located at 5017 Victoria Avenue provides counselling on a first-come, first-served basis, at no cost to the client. For those people experiencing distress seriously impacting their personal and family lives, and productivity at work; this service is very successful in diverting individuals away from other more costly, intrusive services.

The **Adult Protective Service Worker** program supported 127 adults who have a developmental disability to live more independently in the community. Additional funding was granted this year enabling us to expand our services and better support clients with social inclusion, the development of Person Centred Plans and offering a regular Violence Prevention Group Program.

The **Child Advocacy Centre Therapist** helps children who have been physically or sexually abused as well as their supportive caregivers and family members. Service is provided at the CAC located at 8 Forster Street in St. Catharines and at our other sites in the Region. In collaboration with the CAC we are developing a series of educational workshops for caregivers.

Family Group Conferencing brings together children, family members, friends and service providers to develop a plan that optimizes the best interest of the child/children who are in need of protection.

Foster Kinship Support Services offers a 10-week psycho-educational group and a monthly support group for caregivers of children with, or suspected of having, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

"Side By Side" and "For Me and My Mom" programs assist children and mothers exposed to domestic violence. This year we helped 210 children and 258 women.

Partner Assault Response supports and challenges participants to change their abusive behaviors towards their partner. This 16-week group format also helps their partners access services and facilitate safety planning.

Caring Dads offers a psycho-educational group format to men who have, or are at risk of abusing or neglecting their children. Men learn more about children, their needs and the impact of their own behaviour on their children's lives.

How many were Helped?

CORE COUNSELLING

1246 cases served (individuals, couples or families)

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING

265 participants, 17 conferences held

CHILD WITNESS/FAMILY VIOLENCE

258 mothers, 210 children served

PARTNER ASSAULT RESPONSE

124 men, 115 partners served

CARING DADS

25 men, 54 children assisted

ADULT PROTECTION SERVICE WORKER

127 vulnerable adults served

WALK-IN CLINIC

211 people served

CHILD ADVOCACY COUNSELLOR

61 families served, 115 people (children and adults)

FOSTER AND KINSHIP SUPPORT

33 caregivers, assisting 53 children



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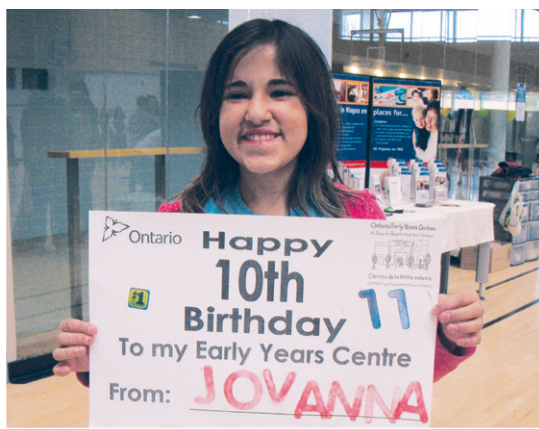
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Community Programs

Ontario Early Years Centres -

Celebrating 10 Years of Service

FACS is the lead agency for the Niagara Centre service area (Welland, Pelham & Grimsby). Since 2002, the Early Years Centre Hub Sites have served 27,024 parents, caregivers and 33,456 children from newborn to 6 years of age.



Kids and adults alike have enjoyed countless early learning activities together, fun and educational Learning Circles, workshops and interactive programs. Our registered Early Childhood Educators have witnessed powerful parent-child engagement outcomes – a greater understanding within parents and caregivers of how children grow and learn, the realization when they see first-hand how important their involvement is to their child's development and that they really are their child's first and most important teachers. You can drop in, make an appointment to see an early years specialist, participate in access visitation, a Family Group Conference or be referred by your doctor or paediatrician - everyone is made to feel welcome.

Prenatal supports, newborn hearing clinics, breast feeding supports, infant massage, Stay & Play Together Program, Grow & Learn Together developmental series, Toy Lending Library, Parents as Literacy Supporters and the School's Cool school-readiness programs - families have access to a wide variety of programs. Thanks to our relationships with Public Health, Speech Services Niagara, the Family Counselling Centre and local schools; we can bring supports to families all under one roof. Welland, Fenwick, Fonthill or Grimsby – we provide programs that families need and want, right in their neighborhood.

Child Care Programs Our child care programs have undergone tremendous change this past year in response to the implementation of the Ministry of Education's Full Day Early Learning Programs and local trends in the child care community. We restructured our service and staffing models and moved our Bunting program to Lincoln Centennial School transitioning to full day child care. We are discontinuing our transportation this year and will be closing our Central Child Care program.

Despite these challenges, we have maintained a quality early learning program providing sound educational experiences for young children and developmentally appropriate opportunities. Special attention is given to social skills, motor skills, speech and language development, and kindergarten readiness. Children enjoy creative activities, music and movement, science and discovery, stories, and many other fun and educational activities that assist in healthy development. All Child Care staff are trained in the Quality Child Care Niagara Initiative and implement Developmentally Appropriate Programming for the children in their care.

This year we served 170 children and 133 families in our 3 licensed child care programs.

Bunting Child Care Program

(905) 937-0170

Location: Lincoln Centennial School

348 Scott Street, St. Catharines

Western Hill Child Care Program

(905) 684-6288

Location: Edith Cavell School

1 Monck Street, St. Catharines

Central Child Care Program

(905) 687-7393 *closing June 30, 2012

Location: Connaught School

28 Prince Street, St. Catharines

West Niagara Resource Consultants

Our Resource Consultants provide support to children up to age 6 years, who have or may have a developmental delay. Consultation is provided at their preschool or child care program, or at their Ontario Early Years Centre in West Niagara. Regular visits, developmental screening and ongoing goal planning help us monitor a child's developmental progress and needs. We recommend referrals, collaborate with community agencies and support children's transition to school.

In 2011, we supported 80 children and their families. Support is provided based on referrals and at no cost to families.

For more information, please call
(905) 945-3303 or 1-(905) 937-7731
(toll free: 1-888-937-7731) Ext 2215



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FACS supports Community Care's penny drive



John and sister Shelley celebrate the grand opening of the Shelley MacBain Centre of Family and Children's Services

FACS in the Community

Pleased to be a part of...

- FACS Family Day Free Skates • Suitcases for Kids
- Community Care's Fill the Jar Penny Drive
- Tim Hortons Camp Foundation • Run for the Cure
- Canadian Tire's JumpStart Program
- United Way Workplace Campaign
- Bethesda's 75th Anniversary Dinner
- Niagara Region Community Services Stakeholder Forum

Foundation Highlights

Hundreds of supporters joined us September 23rd, 2011 for the Grand Opening of the Shelley MacBain Centre of Family and Children's Services at 7900 Canadian Drive in Niagara Falls. We were pleased to honour Niagara Falls natives and philanthropists, John and sister Shelley, as they travelled from Switzerland and BC respectively, to witness what their extraordinary donation from the McCall MacBain Foundation had achieved in this outstanding facility for families in our community. We are grateful to all our donors who have contributed nearly \$1.7 million to this important project.

We enjoyed a very successful charity golf tournament and gala event once again this past year. We continue to provide happy summer memories for more than 300 children through our summer camp program and help ensure post secondary education opportunities for approximately 20 youth each year. This year we also supported the production of an educational video with Public Health about Shaken Baby Syndrome and provided a grant to our Ontario Early Years programs to assist in their 10th Anniversary celebrations. ■

2011-2012 Foundation Board

Mary Iannazzo, President
 David Demoe, Vice-President
 Anne Kemp, Past-President
 Chris Rupp, Secretary/Treasurer
 Tina Antonio, Michael Boucher,
 Susan Graham, Chris Steven
 Ann Godfrey, Manager

To make a donation or otherwise support the work of the Foundation - please call (905)937-7731 or

visit: www.facsniagara.on.ca



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2011 - 2012 Financial Report (unaudited)

*This is a summary of details of 2011 -12
Financial statements to be audited by Durward Jones Barkwell*

REVENUE – CHILD WELFARE

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Province of Ontario | \$ 43,290,687 |
| Other Income & Expenditure Recovery | \$ 2,856,226 |
| Total Income | \$ 46,146,913 |

EXPENDITURES – CHILD WELFARE

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Salaries & Benefits | \$ 23,355,063 |
| Children's Boarding Costs | \$ 13,686,536 |
| Client Support Services | \$ 4,168,026 |
| Administration | \$ 3,997,867 |
| Total Disbursements | \$ 45,207,492 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| CHILD WELFARE EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE | \$ 939,421 |
| OTHER PROGRAMS EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE | \$ 212,909 |

| | |
|---|--------------|
| OPERATING FUND BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR | \$ 2,428,865 |
| Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue over Expenditure | \$ 1,152,330 |
| Capital Purchases and Transfers | \$ 1,276,729 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| OPERATING FUND BALANCE, END OF YEAR | \$ 2,553,264 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|

| | |
|---|--------------|
| PRIVATE & CAPITAL FUND BALANCE, END OF YEAR | \$ 8,537,978 |
|---|--------------|

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| TOTAL FUND BALANCE, END OF YEAR | \$ 5,984,714 |
|---------------------------------|--------------|

FACS Niagara gratefully acknowledges the following for their financial support:
Ministry of Children & Youth Services • Ministry of Community & Social Services
 • *Ministry of the Attorney General • Niagara Region • United Way (Family Counselling Centre)*
 • *FACS Niagara Foundation • Our Generous Donors*



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