Youville Centre: Making a Difference in Our Community - Twenty Years of Success!

In 2007, the Youville Centre invites you to join in celebrating its 20th anniversary. Since 1987 when the first school location opened its doors to students, children and staff, this innovative centre has been making a difference in the lives of two generations.

The Youville Centre vision originated when a group of concerned citizens met to find housing for young single mothers and their children. They were soon planning to provide education and childcare for twelve mothers and their babies as well as shelter for four of these families. Rooms were decorated and furnished by dedicated community groups and volunteers, many of whom continue to support the Centre to this day.

Throughout its history, the Youville Centre has sought to respond to the comprehensive needs of young mothers for education, early child development, parenting skills as well as social and housing support. Over the years, the range of services has expanded to include life skills, access to public health nurses and legal aid, crisis support, food bank and nutrition advice, clothing swap shop as well programs to assist alumnae such as career counseling and bursaries for post-secondary education.

The Centre has marked several important milestones in the last two decades. A Young Fathers' Program was initiated in 1997 through which dads meet weekly for an informal evening of dinner, a sports activity and a parenting presentation. A move to a new home on Mann Avenue in Sandy Hill in 2002 amalgamated all programs under one roof and created opportunities to expand outreach to the community.

Partnership with other community organizations is an important part of the Youville approach. The Centre is part of the Young Single Parent Support Network in Ottawa and has worked in recent years with community organizations such as iSisters Technology Mentoring Inc. that helped Youville students learn technology skills.

The Youville Centre works to graduate young parents who are committed to creating a better life for themselves and their children. This 20th anniversary year is an opportunity to applaud the accomplishments of Youville students, alumnae and their children. Over 500 Moms have gone through the Centre and more than 300 have graduated with high school diplomas. Many graduates have gone on to post-secondary education; others to the world of work. Beginning in 2005, three bursaries for university education have been awarded to the children of Youville graduates.

As it looks to the future, the Youville Centre will be responding to a need that continues by exploring ways to address its waiting list, expand the range of services for young mothers and build closer links between education and the workplace, including coop placements and apprenticeships.

The Youville Centre wishes to thank the groups and individuals who have supported its efforts over the past 20 years. Anniversary events planned throughout 2007, listed in this newsletter, will be occasions to celebrate together and to build new friendships in the community.
Youville Centre News

Alumnae

Dates to Remember

Graduate/ Alumnae Picnic
June 21, 2007
4:00 - 6:30 p.m.

20th Anniversary Reunion event
in the fall

Canada Education Savings Program

Lenore Burton, a Youville Board member and Director General at HRSDC, made a presentation to our young mothers in November. Along with information kits, Lenore provided our Moms with information about investing in their child’s future through RESPs and the Canada Learning Bond. Most of our Moms are now in the process of obtaining SIN numbers for their children and availing themselves of this wonderful opportunity to save for their child’s post-secondary education. We are grateful to Lenore and her staff, who also made a presentation to newly-graduated alumnae.

Updating Alumnae Information

We are in the process of updating our Alumnae information. Former students will be contacted by a volunteer for a short telephone interview.

Alumnae Reunion

Plans are underway for an Alumnae Reunion event in the Fall. If you have suggestions for the type of event you would like to attend, please call Caterina at 613-231-5150 ext. 107.

Volunteers Celebrate 20 years with Youville

Youville Centre has some company celebrating 20 years in the community. Two long-time volunteers of Youville have also reached the 20 year mark and we are pleased to acknowledge their efforts.

Father Bill Penney has been helping Youville Centre since his ordination in 1987. For 20 years Father Bill has engaged his parishioners in this ministry of supporting our young mothers. Folks in Almonte, Corkery, Packenham, Barrhaven, Hunt Club and most recently in Richmond and Dwyer Hill have provided dinners, hampers, toys and gifts for our Centre’s clients. How fitting that Father Bill and Youville can celebrate 20th anniversaries in the same year!

Bill Lewis, a long-time Kiwanis member, has been helping out at Youville for almost 20 years in almost as many ways. Bill sets up our sound system and plays the keyboard accompaniment for our Moms each year at graduation. Over the years he has tutored, managed swap shop, and helped with the Capital Campaign. For a long time, he borrowed Kiwanis sound equipment for us and recently convinced Kiwanis to make a gift of equipment to us. He can be found at Youville at any time of day doing whatever needs doing: sharpening knives, awarding bursaries, linking us up with new supporters of Youville, and most recently making a visit from Santa possible for our childcare toddlers. Age and family responsibilities have not slowed Bill down and we continue to benefit from his spirit of generosity and kindness.

Thank you Father Penney and Bill Lewis.

Youville Centre News
The generous support of the community makes many of our programs and services at Youville possible. We would like to thank the following people and organizations for their generous support:

LA-Z-BOY Furniture Galleries of Ottawa (West Hunt Club Road) for a donation of $400.

Chris Coates of Philips Electronics for a gift of a TV-DVD unit for use in our school program and for our Moms’ leisure time.

Andy Ives and colleagues at Microsoft Canada for the gift of a digital camcorder.

Michael Potter and Véronique Dhiexux for a most generous donation to mark our 20th anniversary.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation for a magnificent grant of $30,000 in each of the next 3 years to provide mental health counselling services for our young mothers. Trillium is filling a gap where funding is not readily available despite its critical need. With counselling support our Moms can face the life challenges presented to them and experience greater success in their goal of breaking the cycles of poverty, dependence and a lack of education. MLA Madeleine Meilleur, Trillium representatives and others who are connected to our delivery of programs and services will be in attendance on February 23 to acknowledge receipt of this generous grant from Trillium.

Youville Chosen as Recipient Charity

We have the good fortune of being the recipient charity at this year’s Chefs Charity Café scheduled for March 2, 11:30 - 2:30 at the Congress Centre.

Several hotels will provide their chefs to create spectacular culinary delights complemented with wine, a fabulous raffle, and silent auction in support of our programs at Youville Centre.

Please consider supporting this event by attending or providing an auction item.

We hope to see you there… this event promises to be lots of fun!

For information please contact Jenny ext. 104. For tickets contact Knock on Wood Communications + Events at 613-236-8452 or email Kristina@kowpr.com.

Did you know that…?

Our web-site www.youvillecentre.org is continuously updated and revised to keep you informed about Youville. Alumnae, volunteers and sponsors are welcome to provide brief testimonials for addition to our website. Send submissions to jenny@youvillecentre.org or call 613-231-5150 ext.104 for information. Special thanks to our wonderful volunteer web-master, John Reeder, for making us look so good!

Congratulations to Youville Centre staff who more than doubled their United Way donations over last year!
Christmas a magical event at Youville

On December 8, 2006 the Sister Betty Ann Kinsella Hall was transformed into a magical room filled with snowflakes, poinsettias, Christmas goodies and the strains of Christmas and seasonal music. The Cumberland Community Singers (CCS) hosted our 2nd Annual “An Evening of Christmas Music” and brought along some friends to kick off the Christmas season.

The guests included Cathy Goddard, Cross Town Youth Chorus, The Atlantic Voices, and Harmonia Choir of Ottawa. The performances by Brianne Luckasavitch, Tommy Martel, Amanda Pinhey and Marta Nuijten were a special treat.

The Cross Town Youth Chorus was joined by the children from the audience who delighted in leading us in an animated version of Good King Wenceslas. The concert was a wonderful success and raised $1620.00 for the Youville Centre. A sincere thank you to: Lynne Stacey, Kurt Ala-Kantti, Mathieu Saindon, Joanne Moorcroft, Tamara Beaudoin and Tammy Hoyle-Shaw and all the performers for their gift of music.

We thank everyone who thought of our young families at this time of year!!!

Thank you to Those Who Opened Their Hearts At Christmas

Team Red coach Steve Malette and the Cumberland Barons Minor Atom B team pitched in to buy gifts. Thanks to Tracey Clary, Austin Bergeron, Dallas Dunne and Connor Clary for delivering them.

We also acknowledge Cosmic Adventures for tickets to dinner and family playtime, St. Joseph High School students for their fabulous diaper drive, Dr. Rorke & staff and Dr. Milne for gifts of money and dental kits.

Gifts of toys were provided by: Members of Nu Sigma Pi (Ottawa U.), Ladies Fixed League of R.A. Curling Club, Heather Munroe, CWL of St. Patrick’s Parish (Fallowfield), Algonquin College Office of Legal Studies, and Jayne O’Neill and staff of BMO College Square Branch.

Canada Revenue Agency Union members for $1000 raised through a “Violence Against Women” project.

Staff at the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Inglis and Mahaffy families for generous donations of money and gift vouchers.

Dawn Paxton and the Senior Administration of OCDSB and Isabelle Lebeau provided Christmas support for young alumnae families.

Special thanks go out to Father Bill Penney, Debbie MacSheffrey and the parishioners of St. Philip and St. Clare Parishes for their “Angel” gifts for 48 families along with turkey dinner and all the trimmings for our Moms.