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Youville Centre is an innovative Centre that inspires, educates and nurtures young mothers and their children to utilize their strengths and achieve their goals.

Youville Centre

Winter 2021 updates

Dear Valued Youville Centre Supporter,

With 2020 in the books, I want to take this opportunity to thank all staff members from all departments including academic, support staff, child development and treatment, for the dedication and passion they bring to every aspect of their jobs.

Youville Centre Winter 2021 Updates

Youville Centre has continued to build on all the great work we achieved, with continuing to offer virtual groups, in-person counselling and case coordination, in addition to the child care and high school. It is truly amazing to watch this wonderful group of employees engage with clients every day, encouraging our moms and children to set goals for themselves and to focus on all things positive. The remarkable resilience that our staff has shown throughout this pandemic is something to celebrate.

The Centre continues to follow strict guidelines in accordance with Ottawa Public Health & Ministry of Education recommendations. This includes, but is not limited to:

- extensive screening procedures prior to entering the building for all staff and clients;
- allowing only children and essential staff enter the Child Development Program area; and
- enhanced cleaning schedules and other safety measures continue throughout the entire building.

Our Child Care Expansion Project is well underway, with a completion date of May 2021. It is so exciting to have the outside structure almost complete and to be at the stage of seeing the interior take place! We have shared updates and photos from our construction partner on our Facebook page and you can find a few photos included below with this Enews issue. We are working on a way to safely celebrate the opening of this new child care space and will share details in the spring! We look forward to the future when we will be able to safely invite guests into our building to showcase this new space for our littlest learners in the building.

Thank you to all of our Youville Centre Community Partners for your understanding, patience and support as we navigate the impacts of the pandemic on our operations!

Please note that our building is not open to visitors, volunteers or in-kind donation drop offs. For up to date information please consult our website and social media posts or contact info@youvillecentre.org.

We are so very thankful to our wonderful supporters, who have continued to donate to us throughout this pandemic. May we be thankful for what we have, for the family we love, the friends we cherish, and for the blessings that will come.

Bev MacKillop
Executive Director

Christmas Campaign Thank you!

Thank you to all of the individuals, corporations, workplaces, and groups that contributed to making Christmas a magical time at the Centre. Our moms enjoyed a special Lone Star Christmas lunch, we were able to provide gifts to each mom and child through our Christmas YouStore, and each young family received a gift card as well. We are so grateful for the generosity of our supporters, especially during a year when it was needed most!
Thank you to everyone who showed their support through our Christmas Direct Mail Campaign featuring Brianna's story. We are pleased to announce that we surpassed our goal of $10,000 with this campaign!

You can still read Brianna's Story here

Education Partner Updates

A focus on digital literacy continues as students develop their proficiencies with various learning technologies.

The Board's (OCSB) mandated use of learning management systems this year (Hapara for McHugh, BrightSpace/Desire 2 Learn for St. Nick's students) has propelled both teachers and students into a digital age where students now access all curriculum material digitally. This has created unique learning opportunities and challenges. We are very fortunate to have the support of Kelly Rasmussen through the partnership with iSisters available a few times weekly as a "technology coach" to meet 1-1 with students focusing on specific digital learning needs.

Career Week was an opportunity for students to identify their "dream jobs." Many are interested in helping/caring professions including PSWs, paramedic, social work, or veterinary technicians. We will work to illuminate possible pathways for jobs in these areas including both formal post-secondary (ie-college/university) options but also workplace pathway options including employment training and train-to-work programs.

This Christmas, many of our special Christmas events couldn't be carried out, at least not in the same way, so we decided to bring in a fun socially distanced activity to kick off the Christmas season. Students had the opportunity to participate in a Christmas themed pottery painting activity, where they got to decorate their own Christmas ornaments. The ornaments from Crock a Doodle were a fun canvas for students to showcase their creativity. They even decided to share the Christmas spirit and fun by decorating a local tree.

Christmas Ornaments decorated by clients, pictured above

In January, our return to school was modified to comply with provincial health measures put in place to help reduce the transmission of Covid 19.

After one week of remote learning, McHugh students were given the opportunity to return to in-person instruction or continue accessing curriculum material digitally over Hapara (an online learning management system), until regular classes resumed.

St. Nicholas Adult High School students continued with remote learning until regular grade 9-12 classes were permitted to return for in person instruction early February. Students were accessing their course material over Brightspace (a learning management system) and received support through video conferencing (Google meet) and emails.

The focus on digital literacy this past fall has been critical in ensuring students are well prepared to manage this switch to remote learning. Also, every effort has been made to ensure students have access to the technology needed to be

able to continue their coursework from home when necessary.

Intensive Treatment Support Program Updates

What a few months it has been!

Clients participating in Self-Care Week activities organized by the SOS Team

In November the Intensive Treatment Support team of Case Coordinators and Counsellors continued to make adjustments to support clients throughout the pandemic. Our first event was War Veterans week, highlighting Canadian women who served for our country. During War Veterans week the clients joined the virtual Remembrance Day Ceremony. The following week, in efforts of promoting positive mental health, our Sources of Strength team oversaw a Centre wide Self-Care week allowing both in-person and virtual participation.

During this challenging time to keep morale up amongst clients, a virtual youth engagement group was offered with weekly themes chosen by clients. Fantastic Fridays allowed clients to stay connected and have fun! Our first ever virtual Lunch & Learn in partnership with the Ottawa Famous 5 and TD, allowed clients to hear a career pathway of an inspiring woman within our community

The Children's Mental Health Ontario (CMHO) Conference was virtual this year, allowing the entire ITSP team to participate throughout the month of November.

The month of December was jam packed full of holiday activities, allowing both our virtual and in-person clients to participate. The festivities started with a COVID friendly Mom & Me photo shoot! ITSP hosted our annual Christmas YouStore, allowing ALL clients the opportunity to use their Youbucks to purchase new items for their loved ones during the holiday. In addition, SOS hosted daily holiday events and Creativity Cafe made wreaths! Instead of celebrating with a traditional lunch due to the unconventional year, clients choose to have a fajitas lunch. The month ended with 10 days of Christmas, sending clients home with a special treat donated by our generous community, including Toy Mountain, Caring & Sharing, PJ elf and many more. Recent Alumnae clients were also given the opportunity to receive some of the items given away throughout the 10 days of Christmas!

ITSP made another pivot back to virtual support in January, offering on-going food bank/ supply deliveries, virtual Creativity Cafe and Fantastic Fridays. Organizing a virtual event this year, Bell Let's Talk Day, was overseen by our Sources of Strength team, with a focus on mental health.

on her journey to becoming a Leadership Coach. All while enjoying a delicious lunch!

With cold weather just around the corner, ITSP offered a SWAP pop-up shop, giving clients the opportunity to grab some cold weather items for both themselves and their babes. In addition, ITSP adjusted Food Bank to accommodate for COVID-19 guidelines, weekly creating individualized hampers and offering delivery to clients who were self-isolating due to the pandemic.

In November we continued to offer in-peron and virtual treatment groups: Mental Health Cafe, Creativity Cafe, Pregnancy Circle and Circle of Security to improve infant mental health. The pandemic has not only affected our client's mental health, but our treatment team too. We encourage all staff to participate in professional development to continue to support their mental health.

Bell Let's Talk Day 2021 activities pictured in the collage above.

ITSP recently received a micro grant from Crime Prevention Ottawa (SHINE). The team is looking forward to running the Shine Project that focuses on anti-racism and community youth engagement initiatives using creative outlets and piloting a new self-esteem group called Empowerment Circle.

Child Development Program Updates

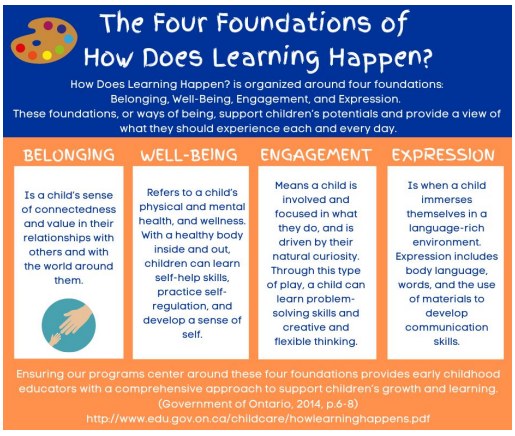
Merry Christmas wishes from the children in the CDP!

Youville Centre is a special place over the holidays and this year was no exception. The staff worked very hard to make sure that the spirit of the holidays was still felt throughout the Centre, even with the challenges of COVID-19. The lobby was filled with

Our return in January brought added challenges with the news of increased lockdown measures, restrictions and school closures. However, the Child Development Team returned refreshed and eager to welcome back the young children into their care. They continue to provide an essential service to our young families and are excluded from the Stay at Home Order. We have always known our Child Development Team was an essential component for our services but now they are being recognized sector wide for their vital impact on our community.

children's artwork, holiday decorations and Christmas carols. The students engaged in holiday challenges with the staff, such as Guess How Many Ornaments Are On The Tree, during their active daily screening process. The children created beautiful, unique canvases to be gifted to their moms. The creations proudly displayed the creative expressions of even our youngest learners, some who are only a few months old. Although we could not participate in our annual Mom and Me Christmas party and sing a long, the Educators created take home booklets that included the children's favourite song lyrics and simple activities they could do at home to keep their children busy throughout the holiday closure.

The health and safety of our staff, children and families remains our top priority. All persons entering the building must continue to undergo an active screening, including temperature checks. Our CDP Team wears the necessary PPE including eye protection and medical masks. We have increased our cleaning measures and continue to operate at a reduced capacity to promote physical distancing. Our Educators continue to build on and implement the How Does Learning Happen pedagogy, with a primary emphasis on the children's physical and emotional well being.



Family Literacy Day 2021 activities pictured above, including safely donated books from Ottawa Police, organized by our School Resource Officer (SRO) Cst. Arbuthnot and the Neighbourhood Resource Team (NRT)

Each day, we learn from watching the children at play, that there are still many positives we have to be grateful for.

Even with the many challenges of COVID, it is evident that the children continue to feel safe and secure in the care of their Educators. The pitter pat of excited feet, the smiles and laughter heard from the children and educators are a welcome reprieve from the daily struggles we are all facing. We are beyond thankful that we are able to continue to serve our young families in these trying times.

Our Capital Expansion construction project continues to move along at a steady pace. The children excitedly watch the progress from the windows of our Toddler program or while playing in the playground. We are still anticipating and looking forward to a Spring 2021 completion so we may welcome new families into our very special program.

Visit our Facebook page to see a series of stories aligning with the Four Foundations of How Does Learning Happen?

Please visit our Blog for more updates on what's happening with Youville Centre:

http://www.youvillecentre.org/blog/

Child Development Program Expansion Updates

Construction work for our new Toddler room is moving along nicely. CSV Architects and McDonald Brothers Construction are helping us navigate the many unexpected delays and challenges caused by COVID.

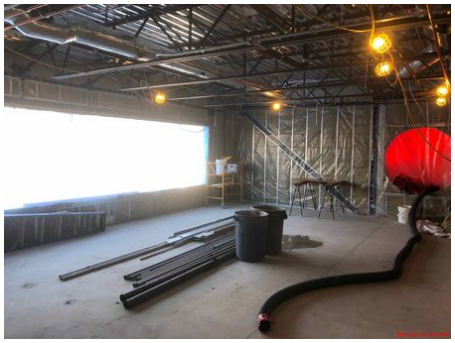
We are still hoping to have the new space ready for use by our young mothers and their children this spring but final touches may take quite some time as we wait for items to arrive and for the weather to cooperate.

A BIG thank you to everyone who has directed donations towards the project. Our hope is to have a donor recognition event when we can safely celebrate the opening of our new space and commemorate the contributions received for the project, inside or near the new space.

We are thankful for all of the support the project has received to date but we continue to struggle with increased costs and challenges unforeseen or impacted by the pandemic. Any contributions to our childcare expansion would be much appreciated and increase the families we may serve.

To read more about this project, please visit

Construction is well underway this winter!



http://www.youvillecentre.org/blog/youville-centre-2020-expansion/.
If you would like to contribute, please email development@youvillecentre.org or donate online to the expansion project on our Canada Helps page.

Photo cred: McDonald Brothers Construction

Follow us on Facebook for construction updates and information about our expansion opening!

We are excited for this new chapter in the Youville story, and we look forward to taking this journey with you by our side.

Upcoming Third Party Fundraising Event

Knights of Columbus 9544 Charity Golf Tournament on May 17, 2021

Youville Centre is honoured to be selected as one of the recipients for this fundraising event! A day on the golf course sounds like a dream come true during this snowy weather!

Visit here for more information and to register!

We are looking for Corporate Donors...

Do you know of a company looking for a philanthropic opportunity? Please spread the word!

We are looking for companies to support our Mother's Day May Matching campaign this year; to match individual donations for the month. Every donation counts - to support our young mothers and their children during this unprecedented year. Logos will be featured on our communications and promotions for the campaign. Help us double the impact of donations in May!

Please send us an email!

By giving to Youville, you are helping us to inspire, educate and nurture our young mothers and their children to utilize their strengths and achieve their goals. Thank you to all of our generous donors, you are making a difference in the lives of 2 generations!

Donate Now

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