



Connections

Early Years Family Centre

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



Connections Early Years Family Centre

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A message from our Board of Directors President



Although there are many reasons why I volunteer with Connections Early Years Family Centre as the Board of Directors President, my driving force is the energetic and positive feeling I get every time I walk through the doors. The staff is eager to greet all who visit the Centre with a friendly smile and warm conversation, and I am consistently impressed by their compassion and willingness to support our families in a way that is respectful, inclusive, helpful and understanding. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our Executive Director, Barb Brown, and all our staff for their continued commitment to excellence.

At Connections, community holds great meaning to all who pass through the doors; it means providing a safe and interactive place for parents and caregivers to engage with their children and other families. I reflect upon my experience at Connections with my son Travis fondly, and remember the opportunities we had to meet families from diverse cultures, languages and backgrounds. Connections is a unique Centre that provided us, as it does so many others, with a strong sense of community and numerous resources for our growing family.

In 2016 we were able to make great strides towards achieving our strategic priorities. In our quest to become more accessible, we actively began the search for a new location that will promote ease of accessibility for all the families that join us at Connections; this exciting development will quite literally open the door to new possibilities for our community! We also held our annual Trivia Night and Friends of Connections Golf Tournament which helped raise funds for our program development and established a Fund Development Committee to ensure we have consistent management of our fundraising to sustain our high level of service to the community.

At Connections we strive for excellence in our programming. We want to consistently not only meet, but exceed, the needs and expectations of our families and we welcome any suggestions that you feel can help us to achieve this goal. Thank you all for making 2016 a year of progress and success. I look forward to seeing the difference we can make in 2017!

Sincerely,

Krista Loughhead



Our Mission

Connections Early Years Family Centre is a progressive family-centered organization providing integrated support, learning and early identification/intervention services to advance the healthy development of families and their children (birth to six years) in Windsor-Essex County.

Our Vision

To be a progressive organization that is:

- ◆ Recognized locally, provincially, and nationally for its integrated model of early learning supports
- ◆ Physically accessible and user friendly for all
- ◆ Enhancing the structure and capacity of the organization to deliver services
- ◆ Focused on advancing relationships within and outside the organization

Our Values

- ◆ **Family-centered:** we believe in a respectful family-professional partnership, working together in the best interest of the child, and providing a supportive environment that encourages family to family support and provides opportunities for everyone to contribute to the excellence of the organization
- ◆ **Inclusive:** we recognize individual strengths, respect opinions and honour diversity
- ◆ **Responsive:** we believe in the capacity to listen, reflect, understand and respond to the changing needs of children, families and the community
- ◆ **Progressive:** we believe in the courage and leadership necessary to explore all possibilities, innovate and initiate to best meet family and community needs
- ◆ **Integrity:** we believe the inherent strength of the organization comes from the integrity of the Board of Directors, staff and volunteers and their ability to create a culture of performance and accountability
- ◆ **Partnerships:** we believe in seeking out partnership opportunities with social service, education and health organizations that will strengthen the capacity of the agency to provide services

Our Strategic Priorities 2014-2019

1. Accessibility

To meet AODA requirements to provide an accessible environment for all families with young children

2. Organizational Development

To support continuous professional learning and enhance our service delivery model

3. Fundraising

To develop strategies that support best practices and clear financial targets



Our Team 2016

Board of Directors

Krista Loughead
Pam Barnett
Mike Hebert

Kate Holland
Ericka Greenham
Joe Guthrie

Priti Patel
Diane Tower
Mike Tower

Staff Members

Executive Director:

Linda Edwards
(January — April)

Executive Director:

Barb Brown
(April— Present)

Christie Antovski
Maha Aoun
Kirstin Clement
Carole Collins
Terri Cooper
Cathy Coppens
Kelly Dame
Ashleigh Deslisle

Sheila Devaney
Renee Fiacco
Krysta Fuerth
Sherry Gibson
Natalie John
Karen Johnson
Laryssa Landale
Amy Lesperance
Joan Moser
Juanita Nolf
Sharon Paolini
Kathleen Parker
Amanda Phillips

Nichole Summerfield
Amy Taylor
Elisa Travo
Toni Travo
Eva Tsakalis



Placement Students

Kirstin Clement
Rebecca Colini
Amanda Filbey
Lisa Flank

Prachi Mohile
Heather Nantau
Deena Oozer
Shannon Price

Gelsea Pizzoto
Alexa Sampson
Karissa Sardinha
Souad El-Shobasy
Evangeline So

Placement students in 2016 were from the University of Windsor, St. Clair College, Lambton College and Wayne State University.

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” --Helen Keller



Our Volunteers

A heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers who have generously given their time, energy and talents to the programs we offer. Without each of you we would not be able to provide the communities we serve with the standard of excellence our programs provide.

Our volunteers donated more than 2,472 hours of their time to help make our programming possible!

Pauline Abwander
 Israa Alareed
 Mike Alexander
 Janicka Auguste
 Pam Barnett
 Jennifer Barry
 Madison Best
 Carlysle Bortolotti
 Stefan Branov
 David Brown
 Steve Brown
 Cathy Chartier
 Monica Coelho
 Rebecca Colini
 Avery Daamen
 Jovana Davidovic
 Brianna Delaey
 Souad El-Shobasy
 Luna Emogene
 Kristy Estabalaya
 Montunrayo Fabusuyi
 Emily Finlayson
 Courtney Fleming
 Sandy Friesen
 Jocelyn Gates
 Xiaojun Giao

Katie Glos
 Ericka Greenham
 Matthew Guarino
 Joe Guthrie
 Tim Hampson
 Dawn Hassan
 Mike Hebert
 Katrina Holland
 Vania Jimenez
 Jane Jones
 Haylee Karenya
 Preet Kaur
 Doug Krystia
 Kristen Laughton
 Carly Lisinski
 Krista Loughead
 Ying Luo
 Maria Matuscak
 Madison McMullin
 Prachi Mohile
 Charlotte Murray
 Cristina Murray
 Mike Naismith
 Heather Nantau
 Jason Nassr
 Tina Ngyen

Mobola Olorunfunmui
 Deena Oozer
 Priti Patel
 Amanda Phillips
 Emily Phillips
 Shannon Price
 Katarina Richter
 Claudia Rubio
 Cooper Sabo
 Alexa Sampson
 Jacqueline Sangabriel
 Karissa Sardinha
 Lindsay Schmidt
 John Scobie
 Irene Sekersky
 Madhu Sharma
 Evangeline So
 Emily Stiles
 Ashley Swan
 Kemi Thontten
 Melissa Turnbull
 Ana Vrsachi
 Cicong Wang
 Sarah Waugh
 Ellen Zhao



“Volunteers don't get paid; not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.” -- Elizabeth Andrew



Funding and Community Partners

Total Funding: \$2,064,956

Our Sources

- ◇ **The Ministry of Child and Youth Services** provided **\$1,658,286** which supported the following programs:
 - ◆ Preschool Speech & Language: \$1,164,225
 - ◆ Infant Hearing Program: \$414,275
 - ◆ Blind-Low Vision: \$79,786
- ◇ **The City of Windsor** provided **\$345,245** which supported the following programs:
 - ◆ Ontario Early Years Centre: \$293,532
 - ◆ Be Back Soon: \$51,713
- ◇ **Donations and Fundraising Activities** provided **\$27,594** for the Centre.
- ◇ **Additional funding** provided through various grants and seed funding provided the Centre with **\$33,831** for special projects.

Thank you to the Ministry of Child and Youth Services, The City of Windsor Children's Services and all individual and community donors. Your support of our Centre is paramount to our continued success.

Our Community Partners

| | |
|---|--|
| A Book of My Own Program | Ontario Early Years Centres Windsor-Essex |
| Aboriginal Child Resource Centre | Pathway to Potential |
| ACCESS County Community Support Services | Prince Edward School |
| Canadian Mental Health Agency | Raising the Bar Windsor-Essex |
| Child Abuse Prevention Committee of the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society | Ready Set Go |
| Children and Youth Planning Committee | Regional Children's Centre |
| Children First | Ska:na Family Learning Centre |
| Community Counseling Alliance | St. Clair College |
| Forgotten Harvest/ Downtown Mission | St. John's Ambulance |
| Giles Campus School | Summit Centre for Preschool Children with Autism |
| Great Beginnings Child Centered Co-operative Inc. | The City of Windsor Children's Services |
| Greater Essex County District School Board | The City of Windsor Fire Department |
| Healthy Babies Healthy Children | United Way, WE Volunteer |
| John McGivney Children's Centre | Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board |
| Media Safe | Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society |
| Midwives of Windsor | Windsor-Essex Community Health Centre |
| Multicultural Council of Windsor | Windsor-Essex County |
| Leamington District Memorial Hospital | Child Care Supervisors Network |
| New Canadians' Centre of Excellence | Windsor-Essex County Health Unit |
| Ojibway Park and Nature Centre | University of Windsor |



Community Supporters

Thanks to your generosity \$12,812 was raised. Without these funds we would not be able to sustain our high level of outstanding service to our community.

Our Supporters

Platinum

Fantastic Fathers
Salon Defined
Rotary Club Windsor Roseland
Ontario Clean Water Agency
Robert G. Millson
Professional Corporation



Gold

Dominion House
Owen Crampsie (Coldwell Essential Realty Ltd.)
Essex County Wrestling
Jim Laughton
Knights of Columbus Holy Family
Optimist Club of Forest Glade
Optimist Club of St. Clair Beach
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 12
Royal LePage Binder
The Bourbon Tap & Grill Inc.
Windsor Roseland Golden K
Kiwanis Club

Silver

Bellaire Landscape Inc.
Bernie Renaud CGA
(Assante Wealth Management)
Brian Heikkila (Heikkila Investment Management)
Caesars Windsor
C-G Construction

Chevaliers de Colomb
Consiel St. Jerome 8682
Chris O'Gorman
Chuck E. Cheese
Cool Bus
Essex Appliance
Forest Machine & Mfg. Inc.
Gord & Kristin Laughton
Greg Baggio (Tuscan Wealth Financial Group)
Hiba Fawaz
Janisse Funeral Home
Jean Allan
JP's Awning Cleaning
Katherine Buchner
King Materials Handling
Knights of Columbus Council 4924
Knights of Columbus
FR Paul Watson Council 8919
Kris & Kristin Swayze (Assante Wealth Management)
Krista Loughhead
Lacasse Printing
Larry Pickle (Re/Max Preferred Realty)
Lourdes Daly
Mark Tirone
McGregorette's Ladies Auxiliary
Morton Industrial Sales & Services Ltd.
Nanette Blais (Royal LePage Real Estate)
Otto Buj
Pam Barnett
Pat & Barb Brown
Prestige Hardwood Flooring
Red Lounge
Robert Gruich (Royal LePage Binder Realty)
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 201
Salon Daniel Hair & Aesthetics Inc.

Tammy Williams (Re/Max Capital Inc.)
The Dock & Door Co Ltd.
Unifor Local 1959
University of Toronto
Windsor Salt
Windsor Tent & Awning Inc.

Bronze

Alan & Cathy Redmile
Betty Valentino
Britt Mortensen
Carswell Chiropractic
Charlotte Peters
Dan Snebben
Denise Barlow
Doug Bielby
Effie Milios
Francesca Fiacco
Gail Vehkala
Gary Mifflin
Ivy Rose Motor Inn
Izabela Wozniczka
Jeff Reid (The Wall Docs)
John & Lisa Scobie
Kathleen Parker
Knights of Columbus
St. Mary's Council 9226
Krista Loughhead
Linda Edwards
Loewen Romberg
Mobola Olorunfunmi
Robert & Mrs. Falcioni
Nancy White
Sharon & Phil Paolini
Terri Cooper
Terry Pepper
Toni Travo
Travis Loughhead

Our Grant Contributors





Fundraising

We were able to raise \$14,782 through our fundraising activities

Bearing Up for the Future



Our community members once again showed their passion for investing in the future of families with young children through their response to our annual letter campaign. An incredible **\$3,250** was raised which will go towards enhancing program offerings at the Centre.



Trivia Night

Our 6th annual Trivia Night was a huge success raising more than **\$4,032** for our Centre's programming. Held at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 143, those who partook enjoyed a Trivial Pursuit style game night complete with prizes, raffles, dinner and drinks, and of course bragging rights for the winning team.



Friends of Connections Golf Tournament



The 5th annual 'Friends of Connections' golf tournament was held Saturday, August 6th at Sutton Creek Golf Course in Essex. Participants enjoyed a round of 18 holes of golf, steak dinner and many door and raffle prizes. Thanks to the generosity of all participants **\$7,500** was raised in benefit for the Centre.





Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC)

Ontario Early Years Centres



A Place For Parents And Their Children.

Serviced 11,383 families within our community in 2016
Oversaw 5,810 child visits and 5,573 parent visits in 2016
598 parents attended parenting courses in 2016

The OEYC is a place where parents, caregivers, and children 0-6 can play and learn together. At the OEYC, parents, caregivers and children can take part in a range of programs and activities, feel supported and share parenting information, receive information about programs and services that are available for young children, and talk to Early Years professionals as well as other parents and caregivers.

Our staff, along with our community partners offer:

- ◆ **Drop-in Program** including: Drop-In and Play sessions and Move & Groove
- ◆ **Parenting Courses and Groups** including: Children's Sexual Health, COPEing with Toddler Behaviour, Parenting Matters, How to Talk So Kids Will Listen, Nobody's Perfect, Dads Group, Terrific Toddlers, Parent Interaction Group, Sibling Relationships, and Ten Steps to Positive Discipline
- ◆ **Post Natal Programs** including: Bright Active Babies and You (B.A.B.Y) Group and Infant Message
- ◆ **Emergent Literacy and Numeracy Programs** including: Readers are Leaders-I'm Ready!TM, Family Math, Growing Up and Going to School
- ◆ **Roots of Empathy** at Prince Edward Public School
- ◆ **Leadership Development Program**
- ◆ **Committees** including: Dads Matter Steering Committee and Connections Dads Activities Committee
- ◆ **Volunteer and Student Placement Programs**





Talk 2 Me



Provided service for 1,835 children in our community in 2016
Transitioned 292 children to school in 2016

Talk 2 Me provides resources and programs for children with speech and language concerns from birth until school entry. We work with parents and caregivers to help every child be the best communicator they can be.

Talk 2 Me Can:

- ◆ Answer questions about your child's speech, language and emergent literacy development
- ◆ Offer information on typical speech, language and emergent literacy development
- ◆ Give tips on what parents can do to help their child's oral language and literacy skills develop
- ◆ Provide local assessment clinics where you can meet and consult with a Speech-Language Pathologist
- ◆ Provide parent education sessions, group therapy and individual speech therapy

Our Satellite Offices

Great Beginnings Child Centered
Co-operative Inc.
Ska:na Family Learning Centre

School/OEYC sites

Amherstburg Public School, Amherstburg
H.J. Lassaline Catholic School, Windsor
Holy Name Catholic School, Essex
Lakeshore Discovery Public School, Emeryville
Mill Street Public School, Leamington

Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Catholic School, Windsor
Princess Elizabeth Public School, Windsor
Sacred Heart Catholic School, LaSalle
St. Pius X Catholic School, Tecumseh
Talbot Trail Public School, Windsor

Talk 2 Me System Partners

- ◆ Connections Early Years Family Centre (Lead Agency)
- ◆ John McGivney Children's Centre
- ◆ Children First





Infant Hearing, Blind-Low Vision & Be Back Soon



Infant Hearing Program

Screened 4,837 children in 2016

This program offers universal newborn hearing screening, high risk monitoring and services for children identified with a permanent hearing loss.

We offer:

- ◆ Newborn Screening
- ◆ Audiology Services
- ◆ Family Support
- ◆ Play Group

IHP Screening Clinics

- ◆ Leamington District Memorial Hospital
- ◆ Midwives of Windsor
- ◆ Windsor-Essex Community Health Centre (Leamington)

IHP System Partners:

- ◆ Connections Early Years Family Centre (Lead Agency)
- ◆ Chatham-Kent Health Alliance
- ◆ Children's Treatment Centre Chatham-Kent
- ◆ John McGivney Children's Centre
- ◆ South Windsor Hearing Clinic
- ◆ Windsor Regional Hospital



Blind-Low Vision (BLV) Early Intervention Program Windsor Essex & Chatham Kent

Served 38 children in 2016

The BLV program provides specialized family-centered services for children from birth to Grade 1. The program provides education and support for parents so they can encourage the healthy development of their children. Parents learn to help their children develop the skills they need for daily activities at home and in early learning and care settings.

We offer:

- ◆ Family Support
- ◆ Intervention Services
- ◆ Consultation Services

BLV System Partners:

- ◆ Connections Early Years Family Centre (Lead Agency)
- ◆ Canadian National Institute for the Blind



Be Back Soon

Served 360 families by providing child care for 536 children in 2016

This unlicensed child care program offers parents who qualify an opportunity to leave their children ages 0-6 years at the Centre for a short period of time while they attend medical, legal, social service or counseling appointments, job interviews or workshops.



You Can Help

Connections is a not-for-profit, charitable organization; this means we depend on your support in order to meet the needs of our community and continue to provide a standard of excellence that not only meets, but exceeds, the expectations of the children and families that use our programs and services.

How Can You Help?

Our Centre is always looking for donors and volunteers. Your donations and time help ensure we are able to sustain our high level of outstanding service to our community.

Become a Donor

We have four levels of donation for you to choose from:

- ◆ Platinum Donor **\$500+**
- ◆ Gold Donor **\$250+**
- ◆ Silver Donor **\$100+**
- ◆ Bronze Donor **Up to \$100**

Donations can be mailed to the Centre, made online through canadahelps.ca, or made in person by visiting our location. All eligible donations will receive a charitable tax receipt.



Become a Volunteer

Our volunteers play a key role in the operation of the Centre and the services we are able to provide. By offering 2-3 hours of your time once or twice a week you can play a vital role in the effective operation of our Centre.

Participate in one of our Fundraising Events:

- ◆ Bearing Up Campaign
- ◆ Caboto Charity Pasta Night
- ◆ Friends of Connections Golf Tournament
- ◆ Fundscrip
- ◆ Leaves of Love Campaign
- ◆ Trivia Night

Our Charitable Number:

10803 0396 RR0001



To learn more about our fundraising events, to become a donor, or to volunteer please visit our website connectwithus.ca

or contact us at

519.252.9696

or by email at info@smflc.ca

