

CONTACT opens doors

On behalf of CONTACT Hamilton staff and the Board of Directors, we are pleased to present our 2000/2001 Annual Report.

Our theme for this report is "Opening Doors" – and it's one that applies both literally and figuratively to your first year in operation.

We opened our doors just one year ago as a brand-new entity in our community. The past year has been an exciting time of new beginnings, as our organization evolved from being a complete newcomer to the children's and developmental services system to a more seasoned entity, led by a management and governance team strengthened by shared experiences.

Along the way we also "opened doors" to the many individuals and families who sought assistance from CONTACT. We are here to help people get the services they need – a doorway, if you will, to assistance.

Our first anniversary is a time of celebration and of reflection. We think of the many families and individuals who have come to us for help and who have been able to gain access to the children's or developmental services they require.

We hear over and over how frustrated and isolated people have felt in trying to navigate the social services system, and how grateful they are that there is now a single point of access. When families tell us we are making a difference, we know we are fulfilling our mandate.

At our first anniversary we also want to acknowledge the excellent service agencies in this community with which we work. The citizens of Hamilton are very fortunate to have such a variety of longstanding and excellent agencies. These organizations are CONTACT's partners in providing service and we thank them for their support in our first year.



Leila Ryan – Board Chair
Oksana Plawuk Fisher – Executive Director

The people who came forward to serve on CONTACT's Board of Directors also deserve recognition for volunteering more than two years ago to help bring an idea on paper into reality.

We're looking forward to a bright future. As the number of families who seek our assistance continues to grow, CONTACT will be challenged to provide them with a service that remains responsive and accountable. We will continue to develop partnerships and work to increase the community's awareness of the role CONTACT plays. A key milestone for the coming year will be the submission of the first Community Service Plan to the regional office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

The CONTACT board members and staff will continue to be guided by our mandate, mission, vision and values, and we look forward to the many exciting opportunities ahead. To return to the analogy of opening doors, we would like to emphasize that the door is always open at CONTACT. •

CONTACT supports Liz and her family

Liz was trying to exhaust every possibility to get help for her autistic son, and in doing so, she exhausted herself. "I nearly had a breakdown," Liz, 47, says. "I was really struggling and the stress was getting to me."

Daniel, six, has severe autism and has very high support needs. He is non-verbal, but occasionally uses picture cards to communicate. Daniel's restless energy keeps him constantly moving and he wanders away from home if not supervised.

Since Daniel's diagnosis at age three, Liz found herself immersed in the often-confusing world of social services – finding out what help was available, filling out application forms and following up. "There's a lot of red tape," she says.

When she first heard of CONTACT's existence, she was worried that having a central agency involved could mean a reduction in already-scarce services – but one visit from resource coordinator Lea Pollard convinced her that CONTACT was there to open doors, not shut them.

"She came over to talk with me about Daniel but she could see I was also really struggling with the behaviour of my son Mark," Liz says. "I don't know whether it was as a result of the stress on me, or on Mark, but he started having a lot of behavioural problems and I was having a hard time coping."

Diagnosed as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, eight-year-old Mark is prone to acting out. He also has anxiety and depression.

Lea's ongoing involvement in arranging for children's services for both her boys has made a tremendous difference, Liz says. "Lea has been a Godsend. She got me help for Mark and for Daniel. It has been a stressful few years but she just keeps on providing support."

I did as much as I could and I thought I'd tapped into every resource in southern Ontario. Now it's coordinated for me by CONTACT. •

CONTACT Our Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
CONTACT Hamilton exists for children, youth, people with developmental disabilities, and their families. We act to ensure their access to a quality system of services and supports.

Vision
CONTACT Hamilton will be known by the community as the pathway to a coordinated system of services.

Values
The following values will collectively guide our actions as a service coordinating and planning agency, community partner and employer.

- We recognize and respect the individuality and dignity of all people
- We will challenge ourselves to be the best that we can be
- We will listen and respond appropriately
- We hold ourselves accountable to all our stakeholders to be effective and efficient
- We can achieve more through teamwork and will invest honesty, openness and trust in our relationships
- We will make a difference

Angela finally gets the help she needs

Angela Hopf's family knew she needed help but figuring out what services were available and appropriate was a huge challenge.

Angela, 43, was recently assessed by a psychologist arranged through Amity Goodwill Services and was found to be developmentally disabled. Along with a clear diagnosis came a referral to CONTACT Hamilton.

"It really is a single point of access," says Angela's younger sister, Julie Reed. "They went out right away and met with Angie, and decided what kind of help she needed, such as a program for people with behavioral difficulties, and one-on-one assistance from a worker who helps her with life skills such as budgeting, shopping and more. They quickly connected her with services and they kept me informed the whole time. Just recently CONTACT phoned me again to talk about what services she might need in the years to come.

"My brother, mother and I don't live anywhere near Hamilton and it would have been hard to know what was available," Julie says. "CONTACT Hamilton puts it all in place for us and for Angie." •



The Fraboni family finds a warm welcome from CONTACT



Statistics

Number of referrals to CONTACT from June 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001

Children's Services	750
Adult Developmental Services	450
Other Services	235
TOTAL	1,435

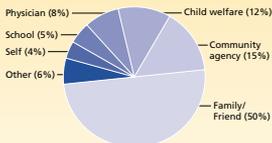
Residential Placement Advisory Committee reviews:

	81
<i>from June 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001</i>	

Number of active clients on March 31, 2001

Children's Services	460
Adult Developmental Services	199
TOTAL	659

Breakdown of Intake Calls (by Caller)



Statement of Revenue and Expenses CONTACT Hamilton for Children's and Developmental Services

Revenue	Period ended March 31, 2001	Period ended September 30, 2000
Grants		
Ministry of Community and Social Services Affiliated Services for Children Association of Agencies for Treatment and Development	\$ 442,900	\$ 474,614
Transfer from Contact Niagara	70,937	153,187
Interest Income	204	55,973
Other Income	446	446
	10	10
	514,041	684,230
Expenses		
Salaries and Benefits	278,479	231,083
Amortization	44,926	15,383
Other	212,496	146,519
	535,901	392,985
NET EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES (EXPENSES OVER REVENUE)	\$ (21,860)	\$ 291,245

\$267,867 of net expenditures have been invested in capital assets. Actual remaining surplus is \$1,518.
A copy of the audited financial statement is available upon request.

Moving from Ottawa to Hamilton was more than a change of scenery for the Fraboni family – father Phil, mom Renee and their three children. They also found a marked difference in how children's services were organized.

"In Ottawa we were involved with a number of agencies but there was no central location to help plug you in, so it was really hit or miss," says Renee. "It was an exasperating experience."

But when the family moved to Hamilton in February of this year, they quickly discovered CONTACT Hamilton. Renee and Phil's son Thomas, nine, has cerebral palsy. He is visually impaired, prone to seizures and hydrocephalic (an excess of fluid around the brain). Meanwhile, son Jacob, eight, has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), combined with phobias, anxiety and depression.

"Shortly after I called CONTACT, someone came out to see us and things moved very quickly after that," Renee says. "I'm already feeling as if I'm getting connected to things here and have a number of appointments and assessments set up for both boys."

"Hamilton is pretty rich with resources for children," she says. "The city has a lot to offer and CONTACT is just amazing. It's the perfect solution when you're moving to a city you don't know." *

Macy finds respite support

Macy is used to coordinating everything for her 20-year-old daughter Sara, who has Down's syndrome, but she doesn't complain. Yet all caregivers need a break sometimes, and that's when this dedicated mom looked into CONTACT.

"The first time I called was for a summer respite program. I had to go on a trip and I needed respite care for Sara. I was desperate – I called everywhere and nothing seemed to be available. I called CONTACT and the next thing you know, there was respite service available for Sara. The resource coordinator really acted fast and she was wonderful."

Sara also goes to Charlton House one weekend every two months, which provides her with an opportunity to be with her peers and gives Macy a little time to herself.

"I'm all right most of the time, but occasionally I do need help to find out about a new service, and then I call CONTACT," Macy says. *

Looking Back

Highlights from 2000/2001

- June**
 - June 1st – Opened our doors
 - Transfer of responsibility for children's residential screening and the Residential Placement Advisory Committee from the Association of Agencies for Treatment and Development (AATD)
 - Established working groups to assist us in developing the single point of access, common intake and case resolution processes
- July**
 - Assumed responsibility for single point of access for the developmental services system
 - Moved into our permanent office space in Effort Square, downtown Hamilton
 - New community funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services, enabled CONTACT to facilitate a planning process to provide accommodation supports to people with a developmental disability
- October**
 - Progress report to the community
- November**
 - Led a community planning process for the out-of-home respite initiative (children's services)
 - November to May – Worked with school boards to ensure that students who have a developmental disability have a transitional plan in place on graduation
- December**
 - December 5th – Celebrated our official opening
- February**
 - Consolidated the waiting list for people who requested supports from developmental services agencies
 - Assumed responsibility for single point of access for children's services. Exception: Chedoke Child and Family Centre to be implemented at a later date

Looking Ahead

Our future plans

- Complete the implementation of our mandate
- Continue to shape our processes to ensure they are responsive and accountable to the people we work with
- Continue to develop community partnerships
- Increase the community's awareness of CONTACT's role
- Encourage membership in the organization
- Submit the first Community Service Plan to the MCSS Regional Office
- Implement the Performance Measurement System – a province-wide system to evaluate the access mechanisms for children's and developmental services
- Implement a joint information system with our partners in Contact Brant, Contact Niagara and Contact Haldimand-Norfolk (a division of Haldimand-Norfolk R.E.A.C.H.)

Board of Directors (to March 31, 2001)

Lella Ryan – Chair
Steven Stewart – Vice Chair
Rick Helm – Treasurer
Oksana Plawuk Fisher – Secretary/Executive Director
Mary Burnett
Patrick Fernando
Brian Guest
Leslea Peison
Shirley Mitchell

Employees (to March 31, 2001)

Oksana Plawuk Fisher – Executive Director
Lea Odoarici Pollard – Manager, Client Services
Dayna Setzkorn – Executive Assistant
Livy Della Luna – Administrative Assistant
Jay Chauhan – Receptionist

Resource Coordinators:

Deborah Alexander
Lynne Foote
Martha Harvie
Kamille Ten Brinke
Sharon Warcholak
Gary Winslip

Contact HAMILTON
For Children's and Developmental Services
pour les services à l'enfance et à l'adaptation

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