

Society Member Update

Fall 2011



Message from the Executive Director



I am very pleased to send this update to you as a member of our Society. Happy Fall and I hope you are well and that you are ready for the weather to turn from autumn to winter.

On November 25th our agency will make the long awaited move to our new head office at

275 Eramosa Road! If you have driven by the construction site over the last couple of months you will have witnessed a true transformation of the building that we purchased four years ago into one that will be our home for years to come. Our architect has done a wonderful job responding to our description of the services delivered by F&CS and has created a space that will meet the needs of our staff, foster families and volunteers; our community partners; and, most importantly the families, children and youth who we serve every day. Planning for this building started more than a decade ago and it has involved board members, staff, community members, politicians and a host of other people. It is thanks to the collective vision (and fortitude) of many peo-

ple that we are at this stage today. I want to thank everyone involved and we will invite you to an open house once we have settled into the building to help celebrate this milestone for our agency.

As you read this member update you will see that we have been busy at F&CS. In our busyness though we remain committed to looking for opportunities to improve our services and participate in activities that improve the lives of families in our community so I hope you are able to find a few minutes to complete the survey we have developed to support the creation of our new strategic plan. Your feedback, support and contribution to F&CS is very valuable to us – thanks very much!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Daniel Moore'.

Daniel Moore



Strategic Planning: Your input is needed

The Board of Directors is in the process of reviewing and updating the agency's Strategic Plan, which was last done in 2005. The process includes looking at the agency's strengths, areas where there could be improvement, and the priorities to be considered in developing goals for the next five years. A plan is underway to connect with staff, foster parents, and community members to gather input. It is expected that the plan will be completed and approved by the Board of Directors in the spring for presentation at the June Annual General Meeting.

Input is needed from Society Members! You are asked to please complete the following on-line survey by November 30th.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/fcsgw-org-survey>

If you have any questions, or if you would prefer to complete the survey by hand, please contact Colleen Reardon, Executive Assistant, at 519-824-2410.

New Head Office Address

Effective November 25th, 2011 the new street address for the agency headquarters will be 275 Eramosa Road in Guelph. The Victoria Road and Delhi Street offices will be closing. The mailing address for all offices will remain the same as will the main phone numbers. However, **all extensions will be changing.**

Head Office

275 Eramosa Road, Guelph, ON

Shelldale Centre

20 Shelldale Crescent, Guelph, ON

County Office

6484 Wellington Road 7, Elora, ON

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 1088, Guelph, ON N1H 6N3

Phone: 519-824-2410 or 1-800-265-8300

www.fcsgw.org

Children First Campaign

Family and Children's Services (F&CS) is embarking upon a fundraising campaign to raise funds to sustain and build programs not currently funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

The **Children First Campaign** has a \$400,000 goal with the public rooms in our new head office building and in our county facility located in Elora available as naming opportunities for leadership gifts of cash and pledges. We are also able to accept gifts of shares and are available to assist those interested in making a gift in the form of a bequest. To visibly acknowledge contributions from individuals, families, businesses and corporations, one of the walls in the new head office reception area is being designated as a Donor Wall.

For more information on the **Children First Campaign** or F&CS donation opportunities, please contact: Carolyn Tait-Guest, Fund Development Coordinator at 519-824-2410 .



Purple Ribbon Campaign

October is Child Abuse Prevention Awareness month across Ontario, and children's aid societies throughout the province distribute purple ribbons and information on the importance of reporting concerns about child abuse and neglect.

Over the past few years F&CS has worked hard to engage with community partners to include them in our message regarding child abuse prevention. At this year's event Mayor Karen Farbridge and Warden Chris White were on hand to offer their words of support for the work of F&CS. Several leaders attended the launch along with Board members and staff.

Volunteers from The Co-operators were on hand to help hand out ribbons at Old Quebec Street Mall, as were F&CS volunteers and students. The events were covered in newspapers in Guelph and Wellington County and it was a wonderful opportunity to get our message out regarding child maltreatment and the services offered by F&CS.



Cindy Ridi (Co-operators), Victoria Wells (F&CS Volunteer), Bobbi Henneker (F&CS Volunteer), Robert Morgan (Co-operators), Renee Carpino (F&CS Student Placement), and Mimi Giancotta (Co-operators)

Foster Parent Recognition Event

Our annual Foster Parent Recognition event was held in October at Ariss Valley Golf and Country Club. It was a wonderful evening of inspiring stories with many highlights. There were two young people (both no longer in care) at the event who took to the microphone to talk about their appreciation of their respective foster parents who were being honoured at the event that evening. It is hard to imagine just how proud those foster parents were to hear those words of appreciation and to know that they had that kind of long term impact on the life of a child.

Cathie and John Ridgeway were honoured for having fostered for 30 years; Susan and Phillip Moore were honoured for 25 years of fostering; and, Shelley Fletcher-Halls and Terry Halls were honoured for 20 years. Ann and David Clark, and Sherri MacIntyre were recognized for 15 years of fostering. Brenda and Charlie Albert, Lisa Stahlbaum, Danika and James Brown, Lesleigh Hunter and Glenn Martin, and Helena Rooyakkers were honoured for 10 years of providing foster homes for children and youth. Jan and Mike Baynton, Philip Brace, Jackie Cribb, Linda Hepburn, Patricia Hotsonyame and Lori McDonell were recognized for five years of service.



John, Jamie, & Cathie Ridgeway



Barbara Hurren & Sherri MacIntyre

Strawberry Social



The Agency's second annual Strawberry Social was held on June 14th at Riverside Park. This event is our opportunity to recognize the many

accomplishments our children in care have experienced in school over the past year. Along with honouring our graduates (grade 8 and high school) the Children's Foundation presented the Promoli scholarships and non-academic achievements in sports, arts and citizenship were highlighted. The Strawberry Social provides an opportunity to have a fun, relaxing event that is completely focused on the children and youth.

Volunteer Recognition

Our Agency has over 150 volunteers who are engaged in a variety of activities including: driving, special friends, parent aids, office support and fund development. A couple of years ago McLean's magazine named Guelph as Canada's most caring city because of the high rates of volunteerism. Our clients and staff benefit tremendously from the impact of our volunteers. As part of a program sponsored by the Volunteer Centre, F&CS was able to participate in the making of a film that highlights our volunteer program. This film was shown at a special event, along with 9 others, at the Volunteer Centre's Time to Give event in April at the Galaxy Theater.

You can view the film at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvzyQKG4KNU>

I Am Your Children's Aid

As you will have noticed in our Annual Report, the Agency has created its own "I Am Your Children's Aid" material to correspond with the OACAS provincial campaign. In addition to using the images in our Annual Report, they have been used for posters that will be hung in the new Head Office and for Agency thank you cards. We very much appreciate the enthusiasm of our foster parents, staff, adoptive parent, volunteer, and former youth in care who provided their stories and participated in photo-shoots. Our campaign has been well received and we will continue to use this material to inform our community of the impact that F&CS has on children, youth and families in Guelph-Wellington.

