



Monday, May 25, 2009

For Immediate Release

Summary of 2008 CDIF Projects

Project	Project Descriptions with Actual Numbers Served
After School Programs (3 projects)	After school programs provide a safe and positive environment that promotes positive social, emotional and physical development of children residing in selected social housing sites in York Region. This project expanded the After School Programs and served 176 individual children from more than 139 families. This project also increased services at the Ja'Fari Islamic Housing Site to five days/a week for children ages six to 12 years.
Application Support Worker Pilot project	This project helps Ontario Works and Non-Ontario Works individuals with support to complete the complex ODSP application, including accessing required documentation and supporting clients in the ODSP appeal process.
Community Development Project	This project strengthened three Housing York Inc. communities (totalling 1,291 households) that needed greater cohesion by developing a framework to assist residents' abilities to support and help each other and sustain the communities' growth.
Community Enhancement Initiative (formerly Winter Needs)	This project assisted 11 community agencies with equipment and supplies for meeting the needs of homeless and at-risk clients. The goal of the initiative is to increase the responsiveness of community agencies in York Region to emergency needs of residents.
Community Housing Support Worker Program (3 projects)	These three projects served almost 1,000 homeless families and individuals. 1) Blue Door Shelters helped make the transition from emergency shelter to permanent housing in the community or to other temporary housing. 2) Pathways assisted youth that access their drop-in service to find shelter. 3) The Salvation Army, through the Sutton Youth Multi-Service Centre, helps homeless youth to find housing.
Community Information (4 projects)	1) Blue Door Shelters promoted its new name and services through updated brochures. In addition, 5,000 brochures were produced in six non-traditional languages to communicate with visible minority groups. 2) Red Cross communicated important information to youth by reprinting 10,000 copies of the updated 2009 <i>On Track York/South Simcoe Youth Directory</i> , in addition to 40,000 bookmarks were printed. 3) Yellow Brick House created an Employment Readiness pamphlet that provides information and guidance for women seeking employment. 4) York Region partnered with the community to host a forum and present a photo display to raise awareness of homelessness in York Region.

<p>Early Child Development & Parenting Supports (AOK) – (2 projects)</p>	<p>This project provided early child development and parenting programs for parents and caregivers with children from birth to six years of age. Programs improved learning, behaviour, health and social development for children through 22 community locations and served 2,863 families with 4,133 children. Additional funding enhancements included a multilingual DVD, which included suggestions for the linguistic development of the child. Also, a new site was established that addressed the needs of 40 immigrant families and 54 children.</p>
<p>Early Years Professional Development</p>	<p>An Early Years community event promoted numeracy interest in families/parents and provided practical applications and information to encourage numeracy-rich early childhood settings such as kindergarten classes, child care centres and parenting programs.</p>
<p>Emergency Shelter Service Study</p>	<p>An independent consultant was retained to conduct a financial assessment of the Region's emergency shelter system, complete a peer municipal review and provide funding model options related to the sustainability of emergency shelters, potentially benefitting 2,450 people who used these services.</p>
<p>Emergency Shelter Service Sustainability (2 projects)</p>	<p>These projects maintained critical emergency shelter services for homeless individuals at Blue Door Shelters and the Sutton Youth Shelter. These shelters served 2,211 residents in 2008.</p>
<p>Employment Supports</p>	<p>This project offered pre-employment programs and job-specific skills training to homeless youth. The project provided aptitude/skill assessments, instruction for creating/revising resumes, job search knowledge, tips and practice in completing job applications and being interviewed. More than 100 youth benefitted from this program and 59 found employment.</p>
<p>Enhancing/Expanding Poverty Relief Services Community Partnership Initiative</p>	<p>This project increased the ability of the Women's Centre of York Region (WCYR) to develop and implement homelessness prevention strategies, by supplying the basic food and clothing needs of vulnerable women. An estimated 814 vulnerable women and dependent children benefitted.</p>
<p>Essential Skills Builder Program</p>	<p>This project addressed the essential skills of individuals who are interested in entering or returning to the workforce and included eligible OW clients. A total of 125 participants were referred to the program and 93 of those completed a Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES). This determined individual levels of literacy, numeracy and document use skills.</p>
<p>Exploring a Trade: "So you want to be a ..."</p>	<p>This project provided a series of six Apprenticeship Workshops to increase awareness of career opportunities in trades. 55 participants gained knowledge of six specific apprenticeship requirements, dialogued with potential employers and consulted with supporting community agencies and 34 attended a related job fair.</p>

Families and Schools Together (F&ST)	The Families and Schools Together project enhanced family social and economic well-being by hosting family strengthening activities improving parenting skills, building social supports, connecting families to appropriate resources, increasing student engagement and reducing feelings of isolation. These services helped 60 families (227 participants) cope more effectively with poverty and build collaborative partnerships in the community.
Family Resource Centre Inclusivity Project	This project included outreach activities, maintaining an expanded drop-in program, creating a culturally sensitive and inclusive environment, parenting education, support and referral, opportunities for parental peer support/ social and early learning programs for children, volunteer opportunities and fundraising initiatives to sustain the project. More than 800 children of 645 families were served. Increased funding allowed additional outreach to more than 100 families. A clothing exchange was implemented in the fall serving 53 families.
Family Strengthening Programs (4 projects)	Almost 900 children and youth aged four to 18 received assistance from York Region and participated in municipal Recreation and Sport Programs. Children with special needs were also able to access the programs.
Focus on Fathers Multicultural Parenting Programs III	Focus on Fathers provided region-wide support in several languages for multicultural families by offering parenting classes for fathers, parents, grandparents, new and expecting parents and parents of teenagers. In addition, the "What a Difference..." workbooks were translated into eight languages. Almost 300 parents participated in programs.
Food for Learning	This project supported nutritionally balanced breakfasts and snacks to the children of York Region in an inclusive, non-stigmatizing environment, thereby enhancing health and classroom learning. The program served more than 33,000 children. The additional CDIF contribution helped this project to maintain services in existing schools and extend the program to five additional schools and benefit 1,740 more students.
Future Possibilities for Kids	This project delivered life skills and leadership development programs to 300 York Region children and youth aged eight to 14 from low-income families attending Performance Plus schools. The children in the program set and accomplished unique 'Goals of Contribution' which were of benefit to themselves and their community.
Helping Kids Settle through Mentoring	A project that reached children aged six to 16 of immigrant families and assisted them in the process of settling in to a new environment by providing mentors who speak the same language. The project served 59 newcomer children through approximately 17 mentors who have also benefited from the project.
Home Base Youth Drop in Centre	Home Base is a one-stop service offering a wide array of supports to youth who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, with the aim of helping them get off the streets. The Home Base programs and support services promote economic sustainability, employability skills, attachment to the workforce and community service. Up to 665 youth benefited from this project.

Housing Help Centre	Maintains a housing registry that can also be accessed online to assist individuals in securing affordable accommodation in the private rental market. In 2008, the project assisted 3,227 residents seeking affordable housing, with 199 obtaining housing.
Identification (ID) Clinic	This project operated Identification Clinics across York Region to assist vulnerable residents in obtaining or replacing their ID in order to access other services. In 2008, the ID clinic introduced a safe bank service that provided a secure location for storing identification.
Out of the Cold	This project supported five sites located in the south end of York Region that provided emergency shelter and clothing to homeless persons over the winter months. The program is supported by more than 230 volunteers and recorded more than 1,900 visits.
Secure Housing Program	This project provides young parents with information and skills to secure and maintain affordable housing and learn to develop practical solutions to obstacles. Approximately 561 young mothers and children benefited.
SOAR/Job Fit (Some Assembly Required)	This project worked with 60 youth aged 12 to 18 years to improve their learning and social development. Participants had the opportunity to learn and talk about learning disabilities, strengths and needs, study skills, transitional skills and strategies to use in everyday life and how to advocate for themselves in order to receive the necessary accommodations academically or vocationally.
Facilitating Agency Relocation and Strengthening Organizational Capacity (8 projects)	This project helped the Inn From The Cold offer food, clothing and emergency shelter during the winter. The York Region Alliance to End Homelessness joined a service hub for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness. Blue Door Shelters completed an IT needs assessment to improve its service delivery infrastructure and also conducted two staff training sessions. The Women's Centre relocated to a wheel-chair accessible location to improve service delivery. A project also helped Tom Taylor Place to support tenants who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing by providing them with assistive devices for day-to-day living. Support was given for the merger of the Housing Help Centre and Identification Clinic.
Youth Leadership Camp (2 projects)	This project supports two youth summer camp programs for youths residing in social housing or from families receiving Ontario Works. These programs served 68 youth aged 13 to 17.
Summer Recreational Program for Children in Subsidized Housing	This project provided summer recreation opportunities to children from families living in subsidized housing or receiving Ontario Works. The project was run through nine municipal Parks and Recreation departments. In 2008, more than 380 children benefitted from this program.
Supports and Training to the Informal Child Care Providers	This child care training program enhanced the quality of care received by families and their children residing in York Region and promoted quality and stable child care options. The program provided training for 386 home child care providers.

Swim to Survive	This project provided training to more than 3,938 grade three children to survive an unexpected fall into water. Schools with a high population of low-income families and/or recent immigrants were recommended by the public and Catholic school boards.
York Region Abuse Program	This project helped the Abuse Prevention Program deliver theatrical and classroom presentations in six elementary and six high schools reaching an estimated 4,850 elementary school and more than 650 high school students.
York Region Street Outreach Van Program	The York Region Street Outreach Van provides mobile outreach services for homeless people on the street including those with mental illness. This project served approximately 1,500 people. Additional funding in 2008 helped the agency to set up at a fixed site and to extend services to seven days a week.
Young Parent Program/ New Parenting and Personal Development program (2 projects)	Young Parent Programs provided access to individual/ group counselling and self-help training to support the early transition to parenting. A New Parenting and Personal Development program was implemented for young mothers who were involved with child welfare. More than 50 families used the new programs.
Youth Recreation and Promotion Program	The agency developed and promoted activities designed to reach out to homeless youth. Programs for life skills, social interaction skills and recreational activities were implemented for the benefit of 488 participants.
Youth Volunteer for Youth	This project was designed to positively impact economically challenged newcomer youth and children through the implementation of innovative recreational activities, leadership/mentoring opportunities and experiences that low-income, newcomer children would not have access to. Volunteer students were available to tutor and mentor these vulnerable York Region youth. Approximately 230 youth participated in programs.

- 30 -

Media Contact: Alyssa Petrillo, Corporate Communications, York Region
Phone: 905 830-4444 or Toll Free 1-877-464-9675 ext. 1207
Email: alyssa.petrillo@york.ca