



YORKTOWN CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE
YORKTOWN SHELTER FOR WOMEN

ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

Speak Up *Youth and Community for Change*



YORKTOWN CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

YORKTOWN SHELTER FOR WOMEN

Our Mission

Yorktown Family Services uniquely combines a children's mental health centre and a women's shelter to strengthen and support children, youth, individuals and families to make positive change.

2009 / 10

2009/10 AT A GLANCE....

Yorktown Child and Family Centre

- 1037 individuals and 600 families received service.
- 61% of clients were living in single parent mother led families.
- 70 % of clients had experienced some significant loss or disruption in their lives.
- 67% of clients came from countries other than Canada.
- 60% of clients spoke a language other English in their homes.
- 100% of clients receiving or participating in treatment achieved positive outcomes from their service at Yorktown.
- 2126 youth were contacted by Yorktown Youth Outreach Workers, 849 of those youth were referred to community resources for support.

Yorktown Shelter for Women

- 53 women and 43 children received shelter.
- 43% of residents remained in the shelter for less than 90 days.
- 21% of residents remained in the shelter for more than 7 months while they waited for subsidized housing to become available..
- 74% of the residents spoke a language other than English as their first language.
- 256 women and 98 children in the community received support from Yorktown's Women and Communities Against Violence and Transitional Support Workers.

Yorktown Volunteers

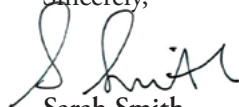
Volunteers are crucial to Yorktown's success. This year 186 volunteers devoted 6370 hours to Yorktown by supporting client programs, assisting with events, fundraising and administrative activities and serving on the board and committees. To all our volunteers, a very special thank you on behalf of the children, youth, women and families you helped us serve this year.

President and Executive Director

MESSAGE

*In keeping with the Speak Up theme we're delivering
our message as a RAP.*

Sincerely,



Sarah Smith
President



Karen Engel
Executive Director

Twenty-ten was the year
That we **holding the crown**
It's Yorktown and we **holding it down**
On top, number one, we can't **settle for less**
We the best, accreditation, **we surpassed the rest**
Set the bar, check the colors **cuz we flying high**
Yesterday you can have, **but today's ours**
Going hard at the office, but **we see the flowers**
Helping clients to succeed, **put in mad hours**
Feeling good about today, **hear the youth speak**
Here's a taste of the future, **it ain't bleak**
Doors opened to the HUB, and it's **down the street**
The dream's real, I can see ahead **better days**
Go ahead evaluate us **and be amazed**
We check the Board for directions, **everyday**
Love our team and the youth **yes in every way**
Doors open cuz we can't keep you, **far away**
D. Brooks, C. Donnet for the **raising of funds**
We wanna thank y'all, from the **bottom of hearts**
All the staff and the YOW's **keep on raising the bar**
Get on board **for this ride here**
Destination **is the sky there**
Join a team, volunteer, you can **do-nate**
We don't discriminate
About the movement, **the newness of true grit**
The truth is, we simply **listen when the youth speak**
Speak Up, share **your thoughts on how we do things**
Pushing youth to succeed **is the key**
What do **you think?**

Diane Brooks Speaks Up

"It has been a delight to work with Diane. She brings skills, experience and a "can do" attitude that just makes things happen. She is a true asset to our agency."

Karen Engel,
Executive Director

Yorktown is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors whose dedication, skills, leadership and resources set the direction and provide the capacity to ensure that the organization an effective, efficient and relative resource to our community. An interview with Board Vice President and Development Committee Co-chair Diane Brooks illustrates the passion of Yorktown's board members.

Speak Up! (SU!) – Tell us a bit about your background and education. "I was born and raised in Toronto. Following high school I studied for my undergraduate BA from Victoria College at University of Toronto and went on to study law getting my Juris Doctor Law Degree from Queens' University and an LLM from Osgoode Hall Law School. I joined the downtown Toronto law firm Blaney McMurtry LLP where I am currently a partner engaged in the area of corporate/commercial practice."

SU! – Why did you decide to volunteer? "I have always felt blessed by the circumstances of my birth; my health, my education, my family. One of the ways that I can express my gratitude is to try and give back. It is important to me that I give my time as well as financial donations."

SU! – Why Yorktown? "There are two reasons; one is that I think helping children is one of the worthiest things we can do and two, the plight of less fortunate women strikes a cord with me. Yorktown does amazing work on both counts."

SU! – What are the most important skills you bring to your board role? "Most important is my general competence for getting a job done. I like a challenge and find I can rise to whatever is asked of me. I also enjoy working with people and love to communicate – I'm good at both. "

SU! – What do you like most about your volunteer role at Yorktown? "I enjoy how involved everyone is. This is truly a board where everyone contributes. It is an extremely functional board. Board members are constantly challenged to bring their best game. Surprisingly, I am finding that I really enjoy the fundraising. I had initially thought that it would be difficult, but I have grown to find it very satisfying."

SU! – Describe how you benefit from volunteering. "I get a personal satisfaction from contributing to the community in which I live. I also like the example it sets for my children to see me giving of my time to benefit others."



Victoria Speaks Up

When I came to Canada from Ghana I had a wonderful husband, Mensuh and a beautiful son Mathew. Life in our new country was good and we were all very happy.

Then the unthinkable happened. Mensuh went to visit his brother in the United States and suffered a heart attack and died leaving Mathew and I alone in Toronto. The loss of Mensuh was devastating but I knew that for Mathew's sake we had to go on. Fortunately, I had my job in the hospitality industry to support us. The next years were a tough time for us but we were able to get along.

After several years, I met and fell in love and married Geroy. Once we were married and Geroy was granted his Canadian papers, he changed quickly and dramatically – and not for the better. He ignored Mathew completely. He became argumentative and verbally abusive to me. Regardless of what I did or said he was angry with me. He would push me down and hit me. I could do no right by him. I was confused and frightened.

About a year into our marriage, our twins Adam and Darlene were born. Geroy's behaviour did not change. I realized that this was my life and I didn't like it. I didn't want my kids to live this way. I was afraid for how witnessing woman abuse was affecting them – what will they become?

When Geroy accused me of adultery and of trying to poison him and he threatened me, I knew I had to do something. That night, when he left for work, I took the kids and went to a friend's. Next day I called legal aid about arranging to get custody of my kids. They advised me to contact Yorktown Shelter for Women – we moved to the shelter that day.

I was so scared. I felt lost. I had no idea what would happen to me or my children. I was at the lowest point in my life ... but that began to change when we walked through the shelter door. I couldn't believe how we were welcomed.

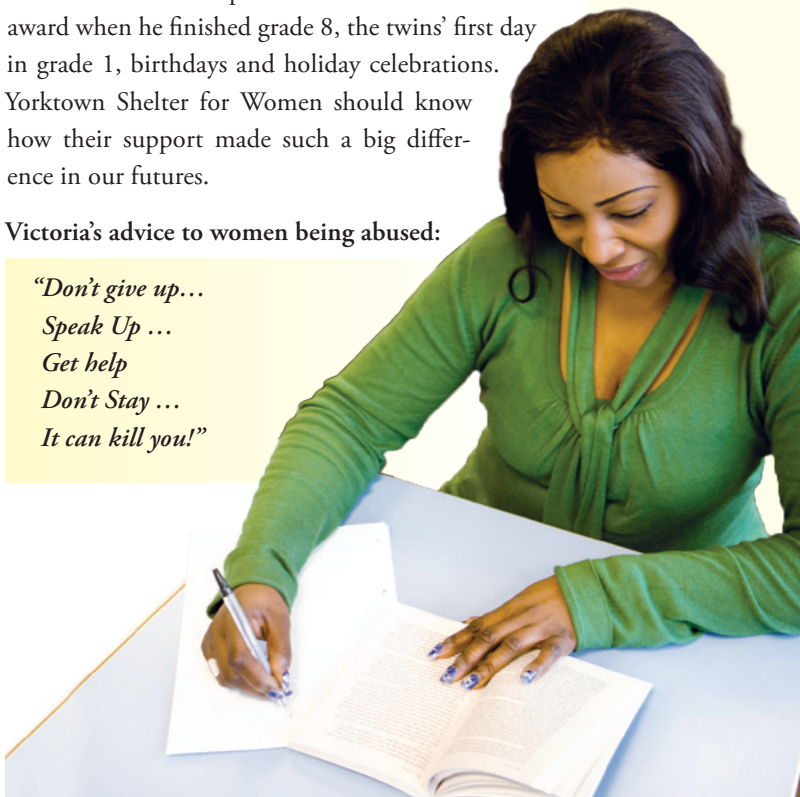
The Shelter became the home we wanted and really, really needed. The staff were always there for us ... to help and answer questions ... to teach us. They really cared about us. If we cried they'd hug us. They made us feel that we were not alone. Through the next few months the shelter staff helped me to regain the self respect that Geroy had stolen from me. The programs I participated in provided me with the understanding and skills I needed to become confident and independent and to start a new life.

We have been in our own home for 3 years now. To this day, I share our accomplishments as a family with the staff who helped us a Yorktown – Michael's award when he finished grade 8, the twins' first day in grade 1, birthdays and holiday celebrations. Yorktown Shelter for Women should know how their support made such a big difference in our futures.

Victoria's advice to women being abused:

*"Don't give up...
Speak Up ...
Get help
Don't Stay ...
It can kill you!"*

**The names in this story have been changed to protect the family's privacy.*



SPEAK UP

YOUTH & COMMUNITY FOR CHANGE

Weston-Mount Dennis is one of Toronto's 13 priority neighbourhoods where social services infrastructure is particularly lacking and there is a need for focused investment to strengthen neighbourhood supports. It is one of Toronto's most diverse communities. The rate of poverty is high and poor single-parent families are the norm. Drug use, gang activity and gun violence are all too common. Young people in the community face particular challenges. The social environment places marginalized youth at high risk for developing mental health problems and they require additional help to trust adults and connect to services that can assist them with their specific needs.

Against this social background, Yorktown created a Youth Outreach Program (7 workers) in two priority neighbourhoods to reach out and refer youth who were alienated. Yorktown went the next step and introduced an innovative Youth Leadership Program in the fall of 2009 to help youth play a meaningful role in their community. The program provides youth with the social and leadership skills to enable them to identify the issues and challenges facing youth in their community and prepares them to take leadership roles in addressing these issues.

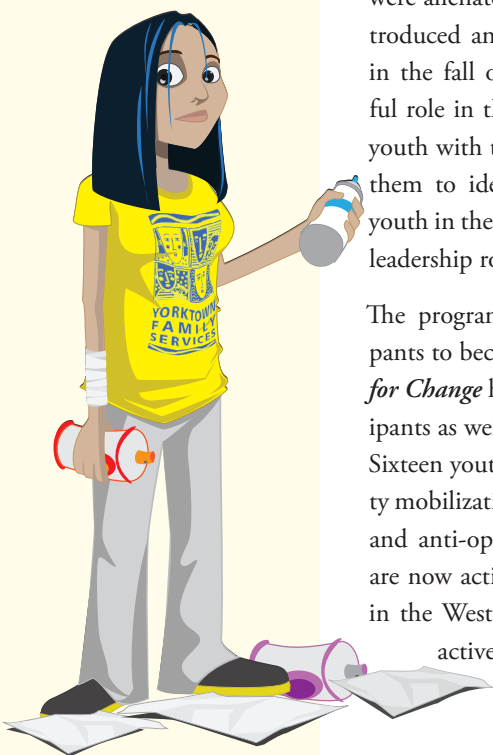
The program, which was renamed by the participants to become *Speak Up – Youth and Community for Change* has had a profound impact on the participants as well as on other youth in their community. Sixteen youth were trained in facilitation, community mobilization, peer mentorship, conflict mediation and anti-oppression practices. These youth leaders are now actively facilitating youth-led focus groups in the Weston Mount Dennis Community and/or actively participating at community planning tables.

All of the young leaders are members of Yorktown's Youth Action Committee. Some are contributing to the process of the York Youth Coalition in developing a Youth Council, others attend regular meetings of Action for Neighbourhood Change, a program funded by the United Way Toronto. The young leaders played a key role organizing Yorktown's 2010 Black History Month Celebration and they have been involved with planning and implementing Yorktown's 2010 Annual General Meeting and Recognition Night. One of the youth leaders has been nominated to become the first youth representative on Yorktown's Board of Directors.

Through their outreach efforts and youth focus groups, the youth leaders identified five gaps in the services for youth in Weston-Mount Dennis: 1) The need for community/neighbourhood youth-focused events. 2) The need for youth to find out about programs available in their community. (e.g. using social media, blogs, twitter, facebook). 3) The need for recreational programs in addition to basketball. 4) The need for more homework support and tutoring. 5) The need for programs for youth that address issues of diversity.

These youth are becoming leaders in their community by being role models and mentors to other youth. Through their efforts they are ensuring that youth have both a presence and a voice in identifying their needs and formalizing a response with concrete recommendations.

Speak Up – Youth and Community for Change is an initial key step in Yorktown's Youth Engagement Strategy that empowers young people to increase youth involvement in setting the direction, development and delivery of youth-inspired programs.



Michael's Story

Michael B.* was like many sixteen year olds in the Weston-Mount Dennis. He was unhappy and frustrated. He knew that he was smart but he had been expelled from school. He had recently become involved with a gang. He had no real plans or hope for his future. He was on the cusp of an all too common spiral that draws young people in the community into a life of drugs, crime and gang violence.

Michael's life was about to change. Through a friend, he learned about the new Yorktown Youth Leadership program and was intrigued by the words in the program flyer that invited youth to *"Come voice your concerns and have your say while learning the tools you need to make a difference"*.

Cautiously, Michael attended his first group session with other local youth. He was surprised by the openness of the group. Other youth just like him were expressing their opinions. As the weeks passed Michael's enthusiasm for the program grew. He was excited to participate in the skills training workshops. Michael began to realize that his new understanding of and skills in facilitation, community mobilization or conflict mediation could be used to accomplish positive change and he began to see that he could lead that change.

He has developed social skills and met new people that have increased his confidence and sense of hope and options for his future. With the help of Yorktown's Youth Worker, Michael registered with an alternative school. He is interested in school, attending regularly, his grades are up and he's enjoying it.

Michael was asked to represent the *Speak Up* Leadership Program at the 2010 Yorktown *Humanitarian Awards Dinner* in April, where many corporate, media and political representatives were present. After the dinner, Michael said, *"When my name was called to stand and represent my group, I felt my life change."* He said he never imagined that he would attend such an event, and be asked to represent a group of youth that were making positive change happen in his community.

When he shared this story with Charles Coffey, a past recipient of *Yorktown's Humanitarian Award* and host of the table, Coffey said, *"Michael, it sounds like you're the kind of man that would benefit from a scholarship"*. As a result, Michael has become Face Book friends with Charles Coffey and is pursuing various scholarship options.

Quote from Michael

"This program has changed my life. I've met people I would never have met, and been given opportunities I would never have imagined possible".

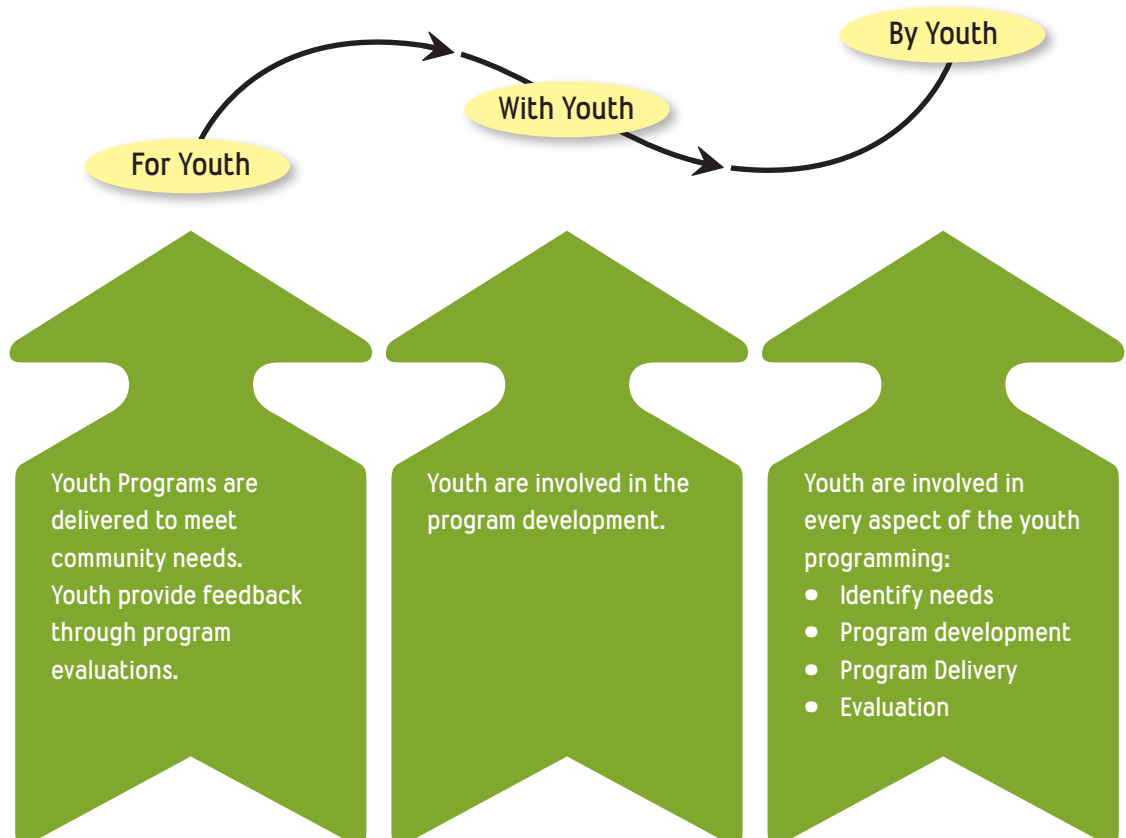


*Not his real name

A Strategy for Youth Engagement

Yorktown's Youth Engagement Strategy is built on the premise that to become community members who are involved, engaged and successful, youth should be given the opportunity to gain tangible skills, make real and meaningful decisions and contribute to their community. With the implementation of *Speak Up – Youth and Community for Change*, Yorktown has begun a journey toward successful engagement of youth in the community by moving along the Youth Engagement Path — For Youth → With Youth → By Youth.

This is a strategy that is transforming the way that Yorktown's youth programming will be developed and delivered. From the current situation where the programs are focused on identified needs of youth in the community, youth will be provided an opportunity to increase their involvement beyond giving feedback about the program offerings to the point that youth identify the need for the program, take leadership roles in developing new programs and then participate in the delivery and evaluation.



Thank You!

Yorktown is very grateful for the significant contributions provided by our funding partners and the generous donations from government, businesses, corporations, foundations, community organizations, individuals, families, staff. On behalf of the children, youth, women and families we serve, we thank all of those generous individuals and organizations for their support during the period from April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010.

Funding Partners

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Canada Post Foundation for Mental Health
CIBC Children's Foundation (Temper Tamers Program)
Kodak Canada Inc. (Finding Solutions)
TD Securities Underwriting Hope Charity Auction (Speak Up Youth Leadership Program)
Telus (Speak Up Youth Leadership Program)
The Catholic Children's Aid Society
The City of Toronto
The Counselling Foundation of Canada (Speak Up Youth Leadership Program)
The Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services
The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services
The Provincial Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health at CHEO
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The Paloma Foundation (Girl Talk)
The RBC Foundation (West End Walk-in Counselling Centre)
United Way Toronto

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Thank You!

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This list includes donations received between April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010.

We also thank those donors who request to remain anonymous and any donor we may have inadvertently missed when we prepared this list.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT SUMMARY

Statement of Operations for the Year Ended March 31, 2010

Yorktown Child and Family Centre

		2010	2009
REVENUE	Government Funding	\$ 1,084,721	\$ 1,145,661
	Other Grants	987,828	1,135,174
	Capital Grants Recognized	20,700	31,253
	Cost Recoveries	165,000	159,500
	Foundation donations, specified programs	34,000	45,200
	Fundraising	186,319	126,932
	Investment Income	3,648	6,349
	Total Revenue	2,482,216	2,650,069
EXPENSES	Personnel	1,864,797	1,991,902
	Program and Operations	232,222	333,412
	Occupancy Costs	171,067	162,530
	Administration and Development	130,508	132,680
	Total Expenses	2,398,594	2,620,524
	EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR *	\$ 83,622	\$ 29,545
<p>\$63,209. of the \$83,622. are donations specified by the Board of Directors for Youth Engagement Activities</p>			

Yorktown Shelter for Women

		2010	2009
REVENUE	Government Funding	\$ 1,956,082	\$ 1,771,582
	United Way	170,730	170,730
	Donations, Interest and Other	27,188	32,779
	Total Revenue	2,154,000	1,975,091
EXPENSES	Personnel	1,340,449	1,197,667
	Program and Operations	349,972	321,563
	Occupancy Costs	273,426	271,261
	Administration and Development	183,161	167,112
	Total Expenses	2,147,008	1,957,603
	EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR	\$ 6,992	\$ 17,488

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Yorktown Child and Family Centre

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Diane Brooks
Jennie Campbell
Caralyne Donnet
Robert Horwitz
Pat Panetta Reinhardt
Angela Scott
Heather Turner
Michelle Garay

Karen Engel, *Executive Director*

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YORKTOWN CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

21 Ascot Avenue, first Floor
Toronto, ON M6E 1E6
Tel: 416-394-2424
Fax: 416-394-2689
Email: ycfc@bellnet.ca
Charitable Business Number: BN 136729597 RR0001

YORKTOWN SHELTER FOR WOMEN

21 Ascot Avenue, first Floor
Toronto, ON M6E 1E6
Tel: 416-394-2950
Crisis Line: 416-394-2999
Fax: 416-394-2942
Email: ycfc@bellnet.ca
Charitable Business Number: BN 891894586 RR0001

www.yorktownfamilyservices.com

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Printing: Media-Vision



Ruth Atkinson Hindmarsh
AWARD
2004 Recipient

