



YWCA
CAMBRIDGE

ANNUAL REPORT 2010 - 2011



THIS “W”

OUR MISSION

YWCA Cambridge, a member of a world-wide network, is a non-profit organization working with and for women and their families. Through proactive leadership, we offer high quality programs and services, advocate for social and economic change and work towards the empowerment and self-determination of all women.

A NATIONAL MOVEMENT

YWCA Canada is the country's oldest largest women's multi-service organization. With 33 Member Associations operating in more than 400 districts and communities across the country, our Turning Point Programs for Women™ - which address personal safety, economic security and well-being – reach out to 1 million women and girls in nine provinces and one territory. YWCA is the largest national provider of shelter to women, serving 25,000 women, children and teen girls including 6,000 fleeing domestic violence each year. We are the largest provider of literacy, life skills, employment and counselling programs in the country, and the second largest provider of childcare services. YWCA Canada is a member association of the World YWCA which unites 25 million women and girls worldwide and spans 125 countries.

A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

The World YWCA is a global network of women leading social and economic change in 125 countries worldwide. It has been at the forefront of raising the status of women since it was founded in 1894. Developing the leadership of women and girls to find local solutions to the global inequalities women face is the YWCA's core business. Each year, the World YWCA reaches more than 25 million women and girls through work in 22,000 communities. The World YWCA affirms that women's human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

A WOMEN-LED ORGANIZATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Valerie Healey, **President**
Kristen Watson, **Vice-President**
Darlene Sigel, **Treasurer**
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REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year YWCA Cambridge has focused on storytelling. Many staff, volunteers and program participants have offered stories about what the YWCA means to them. These stories are meant to inspire and empower our community to continue to work for change. We continue to weave the storytelling theme into all that we do.

Our story this year has been one of change and growth. September marked the opening of our new child care centre at Ryerson School, which is also a pilot site for the Seeds of Empathy program. On November 4th we celebrated the opening of our new location and new space for the Women's International Gift and Gallery (WIGG), a social enterprise of YWCA Cambridge.

This spring young women came together to form the YWCA Girls Council - for girls, by girls - to be leaders and share their stories about what it means to be a young woman in Cambridge. A young woman myself, I recognize and value the initiative these girls have shown. It takes courage to stand up for the things you believe in and these girls definitely embody girl power!

We have welcomed many new board members this year, some who are past Women of Distinction Award recipients and others who are learning about the YWCA for the first time. We appreciate their experience and enthusiasm and hope that they will share some of their stories with the community.

Looking back, I never would have thought we would be able to accomplish all of this in one year. Thank you to our outstanding staff, volunteers, board members and donors for your commitment to supporting the needs of women and girls in the community. I hope you enjoy some of the stories you will read and maybe you will share with us your story of how YWCA Cambridge has been important to you.

2010, like many other years in the history of the YWCA, was one where we celebrated our successes and we faced issues that will test our creativity, adaptability and resiliency over the next few years. The political and economic climate drives not only the demand and the types of programs and services we offer, but also our advocacy work.

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Our biggest celebration was in September when we moved into our new home at 55 Dickson Street. Not only did we move our administrative offices but we opened our social enterprise, the Women's International Gift & Gallery (WIGG), a global gift store featuring the work of women artists, artisans and entrepreneurs with an assortment of Fair Trade items.

We continue to work through the impact of the Ontario government's Early Learning Program on our child care programs. The decisions being made by our local school boards are testing our viability and resiliency more than ever before. We continue to work with parents to keep them updated with current information and encourage them to participate in our advocacy initiatives so that they have a voice and choice in their child's care.

In September we celebrated the federal government's decision to preserve the long gun registry. Long guns are the most common type of firearm used in spousal homicides. Our celebration, however, could be short-lived as the Conservative government, in its election campaign, promised to end the long gun registry. The consequences for Canadian women could be devastating.

What happens at the YWCA is a result of the hard work, commitment and dedication of an amazing group of women – board members, volunteers and staff. Their enthusiasm and energy continue to inspire me and I consider it an honour to work with them and to learn from them. Whether we are celebrating or strategizing, what has remained constant is our commitment to improving the lives of women and girls. YWCA Cambridge will continue to be a strong, vibrant organization in our community.



For a person who walks in with nothing in my hands, I sure came out with so much - from self-confidence, friendship, a sense of belonging - lots of little treasures and plenty of knowledge for everyday living.

-- Small Steps to Success Participant



Amy Slack Small Steps to Success Coordinator

This past year truly came in like a lion. Faced with an uncertain future Small Steps to Success (SSTS) started this past year on unstable ground. But with the unwavering support and advocacy of staff, supporters and past participants we have seen our way through the storm and the year that came in like a lion has left as a lamb. For this support and belief in the program we would like to thank you all.

Early in the year Employment Ontario announced it would be restructuring the employment programs it provides funding for. As a result SSTS lost its main funder. But with the hard work and dedication of YWCA Executive Director, Kim Decker, SSTS secured a new contract with the Region of Waterloo.

A Journey to Success

One of our programs most memorable successes this past year is that of a middle aged woman who joined us struggling with low self esteem, and a lack of motivation. She has been a recipient of Ontario Works for over a decade, is a single mother and guardian of her grand daughter. She had dentures but refused to wear them. Not only was this a barrier to employment, but it slowly ate at her self worth, confidence and esteem. Within days of meeting we learned that she didn't wear her dentures because they did not fit and were very painful. With some persistence and support she began to visit a dentist.

Her transition from toothless to wearing teeth was difficult. There was frustration, tears and at times abandonment. But with persistence, support and a desire for change she made it through.

With her new teeth and positive new outlook success is on her horizon. Currently she is attending Conestoga College, enrolled in a Women in Skilled Trades IT Program. She is feeling very happy and very proud of this, as are we. We are proudly anticipating her graduation. Where she will become the first in her family to be a college graduate!



One of the women gave all of her sisters in the group these bracelet watches at graduation, a reminder of what they shared and all they mean to each other.

Kaitlyn McQuaid, Girls Programming Coordinator

This has been a significant year for girls programs at YWCA Cambridge. The girls' council, a new initiative, has begun with 7 members ranging in ages 11-18. The council members are excited to begin their work in the community. Council members were present at the all candidates' debate for the federal election to ask candidates about post-secondary education costs, and the participation of women and young women in politics. In partnership with Equal Voice Canada we hosted "Experiences National Campaign School for Girls and Young Women".

In 2011 we were successful in our application to Status of Women Canada for a two year grant allowing us to develop girls and young women's

leadership Cambridge. The grant has allowed us to hire another young woman part time, Jennifer Campbell, as a girls program assistant.

With help from community partners the S.T.E.P.S program is now in two schools and we are looking forward to starting S.T.E.P.S in September at the Alison Neighbourhood Community Centre

YWCA Cambridge once again had an opportunity to work with YWCA Toronto on a community safety scan. From the results we hope to develop a new program for girls and young women called Safe Sisters. This program takes a unique, holistic approach to violence prevention in considering physical, emotional, social and environmental factors. It encourages girls to make healthy choices in all areas of their lives, empowering them to have a say in their environment.



Members of the YWCA Cambridge Girls Council attended the 2011 Federal All Candidates Meeting to have their voices heard and ask the candidates about issues that matter to them.

CHILD CARE & SUMMER CAMPS

Vicki Warren, Director of Child Care Services

This has been a year of uncertainty for organizations that provide child care across the province. As Premier Dalton McGuinty continues to roll out the implementation of Full Day Early Learning in schools throughout the province the impact is being felt by child care centres. As schools are converted to full day learning they are also providing an option for extended day care for children in Kindergarten through grade 2. In some schools and neighbourhoods these children were previously cared for by third party operators such as YWCAs. Child care is a fine balance of trying to maintain reasonable fees while meeting expenses. The younger the child, the greater the expenses associated with providing care largely due to staffing ratios and space/equipment requirements. For years these younger children have been subsidized by the older children in the centre. As these older children are removed to the school system child care operators have to manage with less income while continuing to incur the higher expenses of the younger children. The staggering costs of operating a child care centre in a new school are not in line with change in available income for those



centres. Organizations are therefore trying to develop resiliency plans in order to continue to provide much needed care for the 0-3 age group.

YWCA Cambridge was successful in securing a grant through the Waterloo Region Resiliency Initiative to develop such a plan. We are fortunate to have Suzanne Burns, retired Director of Child Care Services, return to work on this project. Suzanne will be developing a plan examining options that will provide resiliency to the organization during these changing times in child care.

Summer Day Camp at Shade's Mills Conservation Area is fortunate this year to have one of our Child Care Supervisors assume the responsibility of Camp Director. This year we will continue to use the Grand River Conservation Authority Staff. Their expertise added to the programming provided by our own counsellors giving the campers a well-rounded experience.

Our focus is on helping all the children reach their full potential and on providing a sound base for future learning



I wish to thank all of our staff for their commitment to operating such wonderful child care programs amidst the changing climate of child care. It is because of your hard work and dedication that we continue to provide high quality of child care for families and children.

ROOTS OF EMPATHY



The stories of our Roots of Empathy participants demonstrate how a baby can touch the lives of adults and children to create an atmosphere of caring and inclusion in the classroom



“The Roots of Empathy program represents a proactive approach to teaching children that caring for others results in a happier and more quality environment for their peers and for themselves. It results in a stronger bond amongst students and greater tolerance for the differences we all have.”

-- Roots of Empathy Principal

“The program is wonderful. Leena and I are really enjoying being part of such an informative and interesting program. And the kids really love seeing her each month!”

-- Roots of Empathy Family



Sharon Burzotta, Roots of Empathy Coordinator

Empathy is increasingly recognized as the foundation of social competence, moral development and a sense of justice. The Roots of Empathy program in Waterloo Region has continued to support

and educate students in developing these skills in 19 schools and 36 classrooms. The volunteer efforts of 21 instructors and 36 families are the heart of Roots of Empathy's success. The program has been supported with enthusiasm and dedication by YWCA Cambridge and local funders.

SOCIAL ACTION & ADVOCACY

Since its establishment, YWCA Cambridge has been active on issues that impact women and girls. Locally, our advocacy priorities mirror that of YWCA Canada and include; child care, women's economic security and advancing the leadership of girls and young women.

Child Care

Good quality accessible child care is a foundation of lifelong learning and healthy development for children, essential to support parents' employment and learning, necessary in any poverty reduction strategy, critical to women's equality, an important element of reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples and key to social inclusion for newcomers to Canada. We believe that Canada needs a publicly funded, universal child care program based on the principles of universality, quality and affordability and delivered in regulated non-profit and public settings.

Women's Economic Security

Forty-one years after the release of the "Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada", many gains have been made, but more importantly there are many areas in which we still have a long way to go. Statistics indicate:

- In 2008, Canadian women earned an average total income of \$30,100 up 13% from \$26,300 in 2000. That 13% growth surpassed the 7% growth for men over this period, but men continued to have higher average incomes.
- In lone-parent families headed by women the incidence of low income was 21% compared to 7% for those living in male-headed one-parent families.
- In 2008, 36% of all children living in low-income families lived in a

lone-parent family headed by a woman.

- In 2008, one in 5 homeless women were sexually assaulted, 84% suffered from at least one serious physical health condition and 42% live on less than \$2,500 per year.

Advancing the Leadership of Girls and Young Women

YWCA Canada states that, "Canada has a long road to walk to achieve gender equality in power spheres like politics and big business. Corporate leadership remained massively gender imbalanced at the end of 2009 with men accounting for more than 90% of heads at Canada's largest 500 corporations and occupying 86% of board positions. After almost a century of women voting, our gaping democratic gender deficit means women made up less than 21% MP's and only two of Canada's first ministers at the end of 2010."

Adolescence is a time when gender roles are firmly established and strictly enforced. These gender roles are a significant factor in the lives of girls and women's ability to fully participate in their community, including the cultural definitions that discourage girls and women from taking on leadership responsibilities and roles. YWCA's Girls Leadership Project offers an opportunity for girls to interact with positive women role models while challenging negative representations of women.

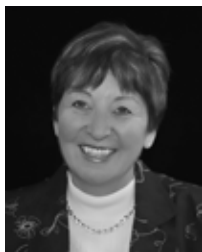
YWCA Cambridge is committed to improving the lives of women and girls in our community through our ongoing programs, services and advocacy initiatives. Each year we celebrate our successes (large and small) and each year we are reminded of the work that still needs to be done to achieve equity and equality for all women and girls in Canada.

WOMEN OF DISTINCTION



For over 20 years, YWCAs across Canada have been holding Women of Distinction events. Since 1994 YWCA Cambridge has honoured 96 women. The event recognizes women who through their own initiative, ability and effort, have made an exemplary achievement in their field; women who are outstanding role models because of their goals and the way they have achieved these goals. Proceeds from the event support the programs and services offered by YWCA Cambridge.

2011 Women of Distinction



Sheila Ainsworth



Kathy Chesney



Frances Garvey



Kathryn Giles



Sytske Haigh



Alison Lavery



Ruth Legate-Exon



Jessie Lund



Dianne McLeod



Sherry McKenzie



Linda Terry



Laurie Wonfor Nolan

The Women's International Gift & Gallery (WIGG) is a social enterprise operated by YWCA Cambridge. It is a global gift shop that features the unique work of women artists and artisans locally, nationally & internationally and includes an assortment of Fair Trade items. Purchases support YWCA Cambridge in working towards:

- Our commitment to supporting women and their families locally, nationally, and internationally
- Our commitment to international Fair Trade and global equity and equality
- Providing job experience for women
- Developing self-sustaining funding to support local programs for women and girls



A New Home

On November 9th, 2010 YWCA Cambridge held a grand opening at 55 Dickson Street for the new permanent home of the YWCA and WIGG. Students from the Graphic Design and Visual Merchandising programs contributed energy, passion and creativity to help design a vibrant, eclectic display that perfectly complements the unique artistic wares featured in the store.

A Store Full of Stories

Kong is a young Cambodian designer who has risen above the adversity that has been the history of Cambodia. She trained as a seamstress and then as a store manager, eventually going on to start her own small business. Feeling strongly about supporting others like her, she invited women and men disabled by landmines to live, eat and work communally in her business. She has trained them in the skills necessary to become wage earners for themselves and their families. Kong's small group is certified under the Artisans Association of Cambodia, an internationally certified fair trade organization.

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 Marilyn Thompson
 Muriel Torrance
 Ariel Walker
 Dianne Winkler
 Jan Woynarski

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 Richard Arsic
 Tripho Bogias
 Michael Brattman
 Patrick Campbell

John Carson
 Jay Chagnon
 Jim Chandler
 Doug Craig
 Kris Cummings
 Jim Danson
 Bill Davidson
 Ed Decker
 Shane Decker
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IMPROVING THE LIVES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS



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